

Instructor: Christensen, Jens G.

Course: Mathematics and Policy Making

17 surveys / 18 enrolled in FSEM 142 A (MWF 1120)

Student:1

Reason(s): Exploration of possible major or minor
Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement
Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: I dedicate about 30 minutes to an hour a day reviewing over what I went over that same day in this course.

Understanding & Appreciation: This course taught me a lot of the basics of statistics, which was something I was not very familiar with before hand.

Intellectual Growth: Taking this course has improved my ability to effectively gather data and utilize it in a way that is useful.

Quality: I believe Christensen is a great instructor, as he explains topics in class clearly and is always open to additional questions after class hours. If I am confused about something in the class, I am confident that I can seek help from him during office hours.

| Effectiveness Conveying Course Material | Teacher-Student Interaction and Rapport | Course Standards and Challenge | Grading and Evaluation | Student Self-Rated Learning | Other Aspects of Teaching |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1: SA | 3: SA | 8: A | 5: SA | 2: N | 13: A |
| 7: A | 10: SA | 14: A | 17: SA | 4: A | 21: A |
| 9: A | 15: SA | 20: A | 19: A | 6: A | 22: A |
| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: A | |

Student:2

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: Unfortunately I did not put in the effort that I should have in this course. I did attend office hours more than 4 times during the course, but I believe that had I met with Professor Christensen at least once or twice a week I could have gained a better grasp of the material in this course.

Understanding & Appreciation: Being an FSEM, this course did not focus solely on one aspect of learning. We discussed statistics as well as an application of that learning into real world problems our society faces today. Having an opportunity to apply these methods to everyday issues provided a better understanding of the course material.

Intellectual Growth: I do not believe the course contributed to my intellectual growth.

Quality: In my opinion, I believe Professor Christensen provided an incredibly high quality of teaching. He is very organized in the way he goes about class. In my opinion a very important aspect of a course like this is the ability to connect with students in order to make sure the course material is understood. Professor Christensen was an active teacher in class and provided good practices sets for homework.

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| 7: A | 10: A | 14: A | 17: SA | 4: N | 21: N |
| 9: N | 15: SA | 20: N | 19: SA | 6: A | 22: N |
| 12: SA | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: A | |

Student:3

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement
Other requirement

Additional Reason(s): FSEM

Effort: There was only weekly homework in this class which was very nice, so every weekend I would work on it and it would help me understand and keep up with what was going on in class.

Understanding & Appreciation: I had never taken a real stats class before and so this class taught me a lot about why and how stats are useful.

Intellectual Growth: He really emphasized how much of stats can be falsified, and that in life when you see publications you have to check for the legitimacy of the study because often people will strategically alter the stats they present. This was an important life lesson and it was nice that it related to more than just the class.

Quality: The quality of teaching was very high overall. I especially liked his honesty about where he got certain information, or if he

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didn't have a complete enough answer he would just be honest and then come back with more information in the next class. He is also very approachable and wanted to get to know this students which I really appreciated.

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| 7: SA | 10: SA | 14: SA | 17: SA | 4: A | 21: SA |
| 9: A | 15: SA | 20: A | 19: SA | 6: SA | 22: A |
| 12: SA | | | | 11: SA | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: SA | |

Student:4

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: Not too much effort since I already knew some stats from high school, but there were some new things I learned that I had to study.

Understanding & Appreciation: I am interested in stats but I don't think I would major in it.

Intellectual Growth: I was able to learn how stats can often be misleading. Also I learned about the history of college education and STEM education which I wasn't expecting going into this course.

Quality: Prof Christensen is a great professor, my favorite one, who makes me feel comfortable in class. His humor and welcoming personality always make me look forward to his class. I'm so glad I have him as my FSEM professor. His teaching was solid.

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| 7: SA | 10: A | 14: A | 17: SA | 4: SA | 21: SA |
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| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: SA | |

Student:5

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: I took time to study for exams and did research for our projects.

Understanding & Appreciation: Helped me gain a better understanding of statistics and how to apply it to real world scenarios.

Intellectual Growth: Taught me how to apply statistics in the real world and I also learned a lot about the early American colleges.

Quality: I thought Professor Christensen taught the material adequately. Sometimes went a little fast but not too fast. Lectures were sometimes a bit dull but overall he did a good job teaching the material.

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| 7: A | 10: A | 14: N | 17: A | 4: N | 21: A |
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| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: A | |

Student:6

Reason(s): Elective within major or minor

Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Other requirement

Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: You really only had to review the homeworks if you wanted to do well on tests. I paid attention in class and did my homework thoroughly which was enough to get an A. The class was not very demanding, however. I did not put in much work and did well.

Understanding & Appreciation: The course was good at introducing new students to some of the basic statistical approaches that

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you will read in scholarly articles and reports. While it may not have been that interesting, it was definitely helpful to learn the material.

Intellectual Growth: It did not really contribute to my intellectual growth beyond exposing me to some of the techniques that you will commonly find in research papers.

Quality: Professor Christensen is a good teacher with good intentions, but sometimes he falls short when it comes to keeping the class engaged. Often he will just be lecturing, and I can't help but notice how easy it would be to doze off. Christensen also does not physically keep the class that engaged either by asking questions.

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|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1: A | 3: SA | 8: D | 5: A | 2: D | 13: SD |
| 7: N | 10: A | 14: N | 17: SA | 4: N | 21: N |
| 9: N | 15: A | 20: D | 19: SA | 6: A | 22: D |
| 12: N | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: A | |

Student:7

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: This course required effort to learn the application of formulas, which was mostly done on the homework assignments. We had homework almost every week, but I never felt overwhelmed because it was assigned well in advance of its due date. Most of the effort put into class was trying to understand the concepts during class.

Understanding & Appreciation: I learned more about how important statistics is to society.

Intellectual Growth: I learned to think of every day things in a statistical way. Statistics can be applied to almost everything we do. The area where it opened my eyes the most was in policy-making- notably how important it is to policy-making.

Quality: Prof Christensen teaches the course in a predictable manner. He writes formulas for us to use and then he goes through several examples of problems using these formulas. His lectures can become quite dull at times. There isn't much of an aspect of class participation, and therefore it is easy to mentally disengage. Prof Christensen's strengths come from his ability to go at the pace of the students, he makes sure everyone understands the content being presented. Prof Christensen is also very accessible and happy to help when students have questions.

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| 7: N | 10: SA | 14: N | 17: SA | 4: A | 21: N |
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| 12: SA | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: A | |

Student:8

Reason(s): Other requirement

Additional Reason(s): We are required to take an FSEM and this is the course I was put in.

Effort: I did not put a lot of effort into this course, because a majority of the material I'd already covered in previous courses.

Understanding & Appreciation: It gave me more practice with basic statistics.

Intellectual Growth: I enjoyed the first portion of the course where we learned about the history of colleges in the United States, because that was a subject of which I had no knowledge.

Quality: I believe the quality of teaching was okay in this course. Professor Christensen made the class interesting, but I found the material quite simple and sometimes hard to pay attention too. A strength I found in the course was that we spent the first couple weeks looking at the history of what we were going to study, but a weakness was that the level of difficulty was not very high.

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| 12: A | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: N | | | | 16: A | |

Student:9

Reason(s): Other requirement

Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s): It seemed to be the FSEM choice that interested me the most.Effort: This course was not terribly demanding, as I had taken classes on Statistics prior to this course. Relearning the subject from a different perspective was beneficial in some ways and confusing in others.Understanding & Appreciation: It gave me a further appreciation for how shaky the laws of Statistics are and how the rules of statistical analysis are not entirely set in stone.Intellectual Growth: It gave me a different perspective from which to view world events and news stories that I did not have before taking this course.Quality: The overall teaching quality was very good, with the exception of the professor's methods of simplification. The emphasis on box models and the more common names for variables only confused those of us that had already studied statistics prior to this course. The box model concept was by far the biggest downfall of the instruction in this course. Other than those things, Professor Christensen was clear and effective in his lectures and explanations.

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| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: A | |

Student:10

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):Effort: Completed all homework assignments, though I wish I had completed some sooner than I did.Understanding & Appreciation: The course gave a greater appreciation for the role of statistical evaluation of data in the realm of policy making, an appreciation which I hope to apply in the realm of political science, my intended major.Intellectual Growth: Taught me the value of working on assignments well before their due date so one can ask questions about anything they are unsure of.Quality: Professor Christensen I believe taught all of the material in a comprehensive manner so one knew what was expected it came to tests and assignments. He tried and effectively implemented real world scenarios to make us think about the practical applications of the subject which I believe was one of the main take aways from the course, that there are applications of statistics outside of simply math and that decisions can and should be made based on data. Professor Christensen's teaching style I believe kept class interesting even when some of the subject material might not have been.

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| 12: A | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: N | | | | 16: A | |

Student:11

Reason(s): Other requirement

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Additional Reason(s): It was required as my fsem.Effort: Im not very good at math, so I didn't put in much effort.Understanding & Appreciation: I don't like math, and I didn't understand much. Therefor, I don't appreciate the course.Intellectual Growth: I didn't contribute to my intellectual growth one bit. This will be the last math class I plan to take.Quality: He was a good teacher and he understands math very well. Although, his teaching methods are very boring and he could engage with the class more.

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| 7: N | 10: A | 14: N | 17: SA | 4: D | 21: N |
| 9: D | 15: N | 20: N | 19: A | 6: D | 22: SD |
| 12: A | | | | 11: D | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: SD | |

Student:12

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):Effort: I would spend about a half hour to an hour on assignments, plus additional time needed to study for exams. I would also occasionally go to office hours if I had trouble understanding the material.Understanding & Appreciation: I am normally not the biggest fan of math, but I appreciated the practicality of learning to use certain statistical tests and excel spreadsheets.Intellectual Growth: I had never taken a statistics class before and this course taught me new ways to solve problems and think critically.Quality: I think professor Christensen always brought a positive and fun attitude to class and was genuinely excited about what he was teaching.

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| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: A | |

Student:13

Reason(s): Exploration of possible major or minor

Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s):Effort: I studied a lot on my own time for the exams, reviewing all my notes and sometimes having to look things up online. I did all the homework, assigned readings, and essays which took some time but were always manageable and we were given enough time to complete them and go to office hours if we needed.Understanding & Appreciation: I took statistics last year so the course was a little redundant, but it did strengthen my understanding and appreciation of the subject. I would definitely recommend this FSEM to others.Intellectual Growth: The course reinforced my study habits. It also taught me a lot about the various resources available on campus, as he took us to the library, had different speakers ,and we used the writing center.Quality: I think the quality of teaching in this course was great. In a typical class, Professor Christensen would review the topics covered in the previous class, remind us of important upcoming dates (for exams, homeworks, etc), introduce new topics, and do several practice problems. I think he explained each topic very well, and he was very available during the week for office hours (more than any of my other professors).

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| 12: A | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: A | |

Student:14

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):Effort: I put a good deal of effort into this course.Understanding & Appreciation: I better understand statistics and how it relates to the world around me.Intellectual Growth: I now know how to analyze different surveys or articles so I can spot any bias in them.Quality: I thought our professor was a fantastic teacher. He was always energetic and would try to make the class more interesting.

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| 7: N | 10: SA | 14: A | 17: SA | 4: SA | 21: N |
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| 12: SA | | | | 11: A | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: A | |

Student:15

Reason(s): Exploration of possible major or minor

Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s): I took this class because I am interested in Applied Mathematics and I thought this course would help me explore this topic with an unconventional application for math. Normally, the applied math courses would have to do with some sort of science, but I thought it was intriguing to learn about its application to policy making.Effort: I had never taken a statistics course before (which was basically what this class was), so I had to put in extra work since most of the students in this class had already had some background in the subject. I had to study more than I had expected for tests in this class.Understanding & Appreciation: This course made me realize that I am not very interested in the study of statistics, but I also gained an appreciation for it. I learned that there can never be 100% certainty in this field, which is a reason I dislike the subject, but I also learned how important it can be to look at correlation and other statistic techniques.Intellectual Growth: It made me realize that many of the news stories that base their evidence on statistics can be skewed in order to get the desired point across. I now am better able to think for myself rather than rely on possibly bias reports.Quality: I thought the teaching was very impressive. Professor Christensen made a very good effort to keep the class engaged, even during slower or more tedious portions of the course.

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| 12: SA | | | | 11: N | |
| 18: A | | | | 16: N | |

Student:16

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Interest in the course material

Additional Reason(s):

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Effort: I put lots of effort into the weekly homework problem sets or writing that were assigned. The homework required effort, but not too much that it hindered other classes. We also had two exams and studying for them was not too much to ask for.

Understanding & Appreciation: This course gave me a new appreciation for statistics, as I have never taken a class on this subject matter before. I hope to take another stats class in my future here at Colgate.

Intellectual Growth: As I did not consider myself a strong math student upon entering this course, this course has built my confidence when working with numbers and has changed the way I think about policy making, as we have learned that statistics can influence such decisions.

Quality: I think the teaching of this course has been very good. Every student in the class loves the professor and he is always open to questions and is easily accessible. Each class, he briefly reviews what we have done the class before, which is helpful. He also related our course material to real policy matters, for example, after the midterm election, we used data from the Florida governor election to determine if there was a dependence on gender and candidate voted for. This made the class more interesting because we could directly apply what we learned to real life.

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| 7: SA | 10: SA | 14: A | 17: SA | 4: A | 21: SA |
| 9: SA | 15: SA | 20: SA | 19: A | 6: SA | 22: A |
| 12: SA | | | | 11: SA | |
| 18: SA | | | | 16: SA | |

Student:17

Reason(s): Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Additional Reason(s):

Effort: I did all the homework and tried to understand everything completely.

Understanding & Appreciation: It improved my knowledge of statistics, what they say, and how to calculate them.

Intellectual Growth: It taught me how to read data better for other areas of study.

Quality: I think that classes were structured in a good way, but I think if we had a few minutes in class to ask questions about the homework before it was due that could be good.

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