STT 481 Issues in Statistical Practice, Spring 2014
Professor Raoul LePage, C428 Wells Hall, lepage@stt.msu.edu
Office hours Tu, Th 11:30-12:30 or by appt. *revised as needed (red)
Class meets F A134 WH, 9:10-10:00

| STT 481 Issues in Statistical Practice |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Section | Credits | Hours Arranged | Days | Times | Location | Instructor |
| 001 | 1 | | F | 9:10 AM - 10:00 AM | A134 Wells Hall | R. LePage |

- Classes Begin
- Martin Luther King Day
  University open, classes cancelled
- Holiday-University Closed
- End of Tuition Refund
  Dates can be found by clicking
- Holiday-University Closed
- Middle of Semester
- Spring Break
  Monday, 3/3-Friday, 3/7
- Holiday-University Closed
- Classes End
  Friday, 4/25
- Final Exams
  Monday, 4/28-
  Friday, 5/2
- Commencements
  Friday, 5/2-Sunday, 5/4

No final exam. You do not have to attend.
This syllabus has been posted to

www.stt.msu.edu
Academics
Class Pages List
STT 481
Class Notes

or simply

stt.msu.edu/Academics/ClassPages

Note: I cannot post to the page until it is put up by the STT department.

Course description: You will have written assignments due every week. Submissions must be your original and independent work and you are to cite each reference you use. Each assignment will be graded on 4.0 scale and your course grade before rounding will be the average of all grades except the two smallest. Assignments not submitted will be scored 0.0. The resulting average grade will be rounded 3.2 to 3.7—goes to course grade 3.5, etc. Points may be deducted for missing class (discretion of the instructor).

Submissions carelessly advanced or trivialized will of course be downgraded. Choose your
discussion points with some care and make a case for your opinions, citing or quoting references where it is necessary or useful. Matters presented as fact must be backed up. Grammar and spelling check is important. Originality, interesting insights, especially deeper insights, are highly valued. Grades greater than 4.0 may occasionally be given, especially if a paper is among a group of outstanding submissions as compared with most others. A typical submission runs around a page and a half to three pages typed.

Be prepared to engage in classroom discussion of the major points they raise and respond in writing to questions about them.

Assignments may be given and written solutions prepared and submitted by students in the same class in which they are assigned. These will count equal to other assignments and may come without advance notice.

Your are responsible for material returned to students in class. Make arrangements to have someone pick up your returned work if you do not.

Keep a binder with your graded submissions in case I should ask for them. The contents of that notebook can have a bearing on your course grade.

Your first HW assignment due in class Friday 1-10-14 is to read the references given immediately below and submit your critical review of the major points raised by Dr. Ioannidis in these or other references you discover. Include such things as your understanding of the importance of these results as generally attested to, criticisms you may discover that may have been leveled against them, and your reaction to the timing of Ioannidis’ observations in the history of medicine.

For 1-10-14:

http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/04/25

http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124


Your second assignment, due in class Friday, 1-17-14 is to read pp. 249-255 of the book “the signal and the noise .. why so many predictions fail—but some don’t” by Nate Silver,
touching on differences between Bayesian and frequentist approaches to inference. The book will be kept on 1/2 hour course reserve for STT481 in the Mathematics Library of D-wing Wells Hall. Read also

For 1-17-14 assigned reading in Silver’s book (on 481 reserve in Math-Stat Library D-Wing Wells):


http://www.ted.com/talks/nate_silver_on_race_and_politics.html

Write and submit in 1-17-14 class your own critique of the points raised and argued by Mr. Silver in these seven pages. You are encouraged to refer to other resources if you can locate ones bearing on your critique.

There will be no 481 final exam. I will be present at the scheduled final exam time to answer questions about 481 or statistics in general if you choose to stop by. You are not required to attend that meeting.