For more information, go to course website: <https://amgps.jima.me/>

While data analysis can be challenging, applying data analysis methods to empirical social science studies adds a layer of complexity. This course has three major focuses:

1. A set of statistical concepts and measures that are core to evidence-based policy analysis. Understand when and how to use them, and how to interpret them. (~50% efforts)
2. Process of qualitative empirical policy research. Know the typical stages and have a hands-on experience. (~30% efforts)
3. A customized learning module that helps you build your skills for future career. (~20% efforts)

Primary practice/software tools:

* Guided statistical calculation on paper by hand: [“Paper Practice”](https://amgps.jima.me/assignments/#21-paper-practice)
* MS-Excel: [“In Class Practice”](https://amgps.jima.me/assignments/#22-in-class-practice)
* [DataCamp](https://datacamp.com/) for [“Customized Learning”](https://amgps.jima.me/assignments/#3-customized-learning)
* Limited [Google Cloud](https://cloud.google.com/?hl=en) credits. Reach out to TA for details.

Given the diverse backgrounds of the students, expectations will differ accordingly:

* For all students, it is expected that they will (a) gain an understanding of a set of core empirical methods and their applications in policy research, and (b) engage in customized self-development over the semester.
* For students with minimal or no statistical training, approximately 9 hours of work is expected each week: (a) 3 hours in class, (b) 1 hour in a lab or self-guided session on Excel/Python/R, (c) 3 hours outside of class for assignments (including final tests and “customized learning”), and (d) 2 hours of preparation for upcoming sessions (including readings and “paper practice”).
* For students with advanced knowledge of statistics, approximately 7 hours of work is expected each week: (a) 3 hours in class, (b) 3 hours outside of class for assignments (mostly on “customized learning” and a qualitative group project), and (c) 1 hour of preparation for upcoming sessions (including readings and “paper practice”).

**Reading materials**

Required textbook: Meier, K. J., Brudney, J. L., & Bohte, J. (2014). *Applied Statistics for Public and Nonprofit Administration* (9th edition). Cengage Learning.

Previous versions are fine as long as the course content is covered. If the contents are substantially different from the 9th edition, you can ask your classmates for help, or use the [University Library’s service](https://www.lib.utexas.edu/find-borrow-request/get-a-scan). We will provide scanned copies for the first few weeks so that you have time to prepare.