

# MPP-E1180 Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course

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# Christopher Gandrud

## **Contact:**

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## **Official Office Hours:**

- ▶ Room: 1.64
- ▶ Friday: 13:00-14:00 & 17:00-18:00

# Objectives for the topic

- ▶ Introduce course motivation, goals, plan, and expectations/assessment
- ▶ Introduce collaborative & reproducible data analysis
- ▶ Setup computational research environment

# Objectives for the course

## **Collaboratively** and **reproducibly**:

1. Gather and clean social data
2. Analyse it to draw informed descriptions/inferences
3. Present results in a variety of mediums

# Objectives for the course

Learn how to actually **do** data analysis using **best practices**

We are going to use **ugly real-world data**, not pristine training data sets.

Use **advanced computational tools** to do **data munging**.

# Motivation: Academic

- ▶ Skills needed to do **original quantitative research** for your **thesis**.
  - ▶ The final project will be a **trial version** of your thesis.
- ▶ State-of-the-art tools needed for **future high-level academic research**.
  - ▶ Take advantage of new data sources.
  - ▶ Avoid effort duplication.
  - ▶ Make your research reproducible.
  - ▶ Present your results to multiple forums.

## Motivation: Government

Government agencies are increasingly adopting the technologies and methods of open data science.

# Motivation: Government

- ▶ Public data is increasingly **accessible**.
  - ▶ e.g. World Bank Development Indicators, GovData Germany, data.gov.uk, New York City, data.gov
- ▶ Governments rely on data analysis for evidence based decision-making.
  - ▶ Tools of open data analysis enable better use of data **within** and **between** government actors.
  - ▶ Governments can take advantage of analyses done by **third parties**.



## Motivation: Government

- ▶ They are also **sharing** and **collaboratively** developing code; **reducing development costs** and **improving applications**.
- ▶ Example: version control to **increase engagement with the legislative process**.
  - ▶ Forkable San Francisco laws.

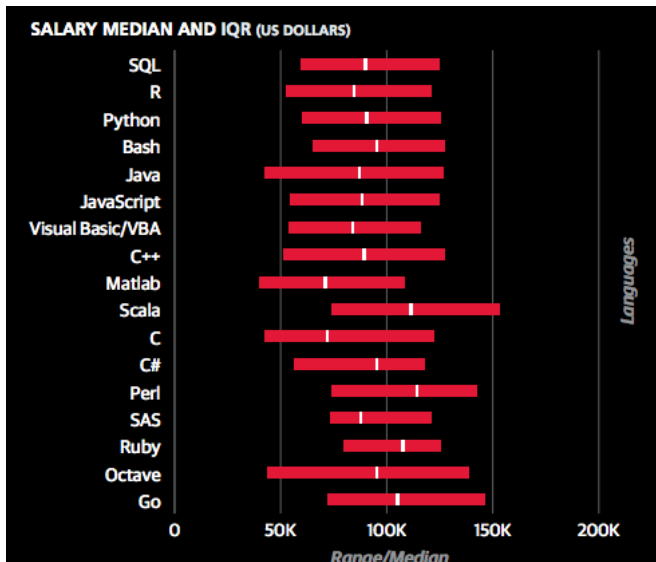
## Motivation: NGO

NGO's are becoming increasingly data-oriented and need people with **skills** to **handle and analyse** this data.

Ex. Former MPP-E1180 student Arndt Leininger recently co-founded CorrelAid to assist NGOs with data analysis.

## Motivation: Business

Data analysis and R programming skills in particular are **highly valued** in businesses such as finance and management.



# Why Collaborative?

- ▶ Research is collaborative (even if you don't know it).
- ▶ Need tools and shared best practices to enable effective collaboration between **explicit research partners**.
- ▶ Need tools and shared best practices to enable collaboration between researchers who are **not explicitly** working together often in **unexpected ways**.
  - ▶ **Avoids effort duplication**
  - ▶ Enables **cumulative knowledge development**
- ▶ Tools for collaboration tend to enhance **reproducibility**.

# What is reproducibility?

**Really reproducible** research (Peng 2011, 1226):

*the data and code used to make a finding are **available** and they are **sufficient** for an independent researcher to **recreate the finding**.*

- ▶ In practice reproducibility is enhanced by **literate programming** where the data, analysis, and presentation of the results are 'weaved' or 'knitted' together.
  - ▶ Make available the research, **not just the advertising** for the findings (e.g. papers, book).

## Reproducibility vs. Replication?

**Reproducibility:** an independent study makes the same findings using the **same data** and **code** as the original researchers.

**Replicability:** an independent study makes the same conclusions as the original using **other** data, code, and even methods, i.e. independent verification.

## Reproducibility vs. Replication?

**“A study can be reproducible and still be wrong”** Peng 2014.

E.g. a finding that is statistically significant in one study may remain statistically significant when reproduced using the original data/code, but **replication studies are unable to find a similar result.**

The original finding could just have been noise.

# Why reproducibility?

- ▶ **Replication** is the “**ultimate standard**” for judging scientific claims (Peng 2011).
- ▶ **Reproducibility**
  - ▶ **Enhances replication** (other researchers can understand how an analysis was actually done)
  - ▶ Is a **minimum standard** for judging scientific claims when replication is not possible.



# Why reproducibility?

Reproducibility helps **avoid effort duplication**:

- ▶ Others **don't waste time**:
  - ▶ Gathering data that has already been gathered.
  - ▶ Discovering procedures that have already been discovered.

# Why reproducibility?

- ▶ Reproducibility also makes it possible to **find and correct errors**.
- ▶ Recent examples:
  - ▶ Translation errors in the World Values Survey.
  - ▶ Data errors in research on intestinal worm treatment and school attendance.
  - ▶ L'Affaire LaCour: data *fabrication* discovered.
- ▶ Data errors can cause spurious findings that ultimately **waste researchers time**, because they try to explain 'wrong' findings.

# Why reproducibility?

- ▶ **Higher research impact**

- ▶ Reproducible research is likely to be more **useful for other researchers**. They can use your data and learn from your code and methods.
- ▶ More use more impact (e.g. citations)


- ▶ **Better work habits**



- ▶ Thinking about reproducibility from the beginning makes your files **better organised** and your work is **better documented**.
- ▶ This allows you to **build on your own work** more effectively.

# Reproducible Workflow


# Example (Truncated) Workflow


This lecture is created using RMarkdown. It allows me to create both PDF and HTML slides.

 branch: **master** ▾
 [SyllabusAndLectures](#) / [LectureSlides](#) / **Lecture1** / +
 

update lecture 1 pdf

 christophgandrud authored a day ago
 

latest commit **2a25fb3c16** 

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 <b>img</b>	first draft completed	6 days ago
 <a href="#">Lecture1.Rmd</a>	update links to new org	a day ago
 <a href="#">Lecture1.html</a>	update links to new org	a day ago
 <a href="#">Lecture1.pdf</a>	update lecture 1 pdf	a day ago

Figure 2: Lecture file structure

# Practical Tips for Reproducible Research

- ▶ Document Everything!
- ▶ Everything is a (text) file.
- ▶ All files should be human readable.
- ▶ Explicitly tie your files together.
- ▶ Have a plan to organise, store, and make your files available.

# Course Prerequisites

- ▶ **Introductory-level statistics**

- ▶ Basic descriptive statistics (e.g. data types, ways of describing distributions)
- ▶ Basic inferential statistics: (significance testing, linear regression)
- ▶ Exposure to statistics software (e.g. SPSS, STATA)

- ▶ Knowledge of particular software or computer programming is **not expected**

- ▶ **Patience**

- ▶ Work hard so you can be lazy.

# Course Outline (1)

## **Part I: Motivation and Getting Started**

- ▶ Introduction to the Course
- ▶ Introduction to the R Programming Language
- ▶ Files, Files Structures, Version Control, and Collaboration

## **Part II Markup Languages and Literate Programming**

- ▶ Introduction to Markup Languages and Literate Programming (1)
- ▶ Introduction to Markup Languages and Literate Programming (2)



## Course Outline (2)

### **Part III: Data Gathering, Transformations, and Analysis**

- ▶ Automatic Data Gathering via Curl, API Packages + Cleaning
- ▶ Automatic Data Gathering via Web Scraping
- ▶ Statistical Modelling with R

### **Part IV: Communicating Results from Statistical Analyses**

- ▶ Automatic Table Generation and Static Visualisation
- ▶ Dynamic Visualisation

### **Part V: Collaborative Research Project**

# Typical Two Hour Topic Plan

- ▶ ~ 1 hour lecture
- ▶ ~ 1 hour seminar
  - ▶ **Apply** what we learned in the lecture/readings to complete tasks with **no set pattern** to copy by rote.
  - ▶ **Pair programming**: work together with others to achieve these goals.
  - ▶ **Documentation**: document your work with Git/GitHub.
    - ▶ Your seminar work should be **reproducible**.
    - ▶ It should be **useful** to your **future self** and **others**.

# Three Hour Classes (1)

This year the course is broken into **8 classes** that are each **three hours long**.

Today we will do:

- ▶ 1 hour lecture on topic 1 (Course Introduction),
- ▶ 1 hour seminar on topic 1,
- ▶ 1 hour lecture on topic 2 (Intro to R).

## Three Hour Classes (2)

Next class we will do:

- ▶ 1 hour seminar on topic 2 (Intro to R),
- ▶ 1 hour lecture on topic 3 (Files, File Structures, Version Control),
- ▶ 1 hour seminar on topic 3.

# Class dates

## September

16, 23, 30

## October

7, 21

## November

4, 25

## December

2

# Assessment

- ▶ 3 Pair Assignments (7 October, 28 October, 11 November)
  - ▶ 10% each
- ▶ Collaborative Research Project (Presentation: 2 December, Website/Paper: Exam Week)
  - ▶ 50%
- ▶ Attendance & Active Participation
  - ▶ 20%
- ▶ No traditional midterm or final exam

## Assessment Details (1)

- ▶ All assignments must be developed and submitted electronically on GitHub.
- ▶ Late assignments: -10% every day that the assignment is late.
- ▶ All assignments must be completed in **pairs**.
  - ▶ Each pair member receives the same score
  - ▶ Exception: very large discrepancy in contributor statistics





## Assessment Details (2)

- ▶ All assignments must be **reproducible**.
- ▶ **Due:** Midnight on the due date.
- ▶ More details will be given on the specific pair assignments/research project in future classes.

# Assessment (attendance, participation)

- ▶ Usual Hertie Rules for attendance (examination rules §4)
- ▶ Participation:
  - ▶ **Traditional Participation**, e.g. engaging in class discussions, doing readings
  - ▶ **Non-Traditional Participation**: pair programming in seminars, document your seminar work on GitHub, pull request to the course repository (syllabus/lecture slides) and other groups' projects

# Syllabus & Lecture Slides

https:

[//github.com/HertieDataScience/SyllabusAndLectures](https://github.com/HertieDataScience/SyllabusAndLectures)

**Syllabus:** README.md

- ▶ The syllabus will be **updated**. **Check regularly**.
  - ▶ Changes to course **difficulty** is **monotonically decreasing** from the original (11 September) baseline.

**Lecture Slides:** Links in Online Syllabus or LectureSlides/

- ▶ Usually accessible as both HTML (recommended) or PDF.
- ▶ Slides will be **optimized for the web**.

# Reading

## Core Texts

- ▶ Gandrud, Christopher. 2015. *Reproducible Research with R and RStudio*. 2nd Edition. Chapman & Hall/CRC Press, Oxford. (RRRR)
  - ▶ 1st edition is also fine.
- ▶ Crawley, Michael J. 2005. *Statistics: An Introduction Using R*. John Wiley and Sons Ltd., Chichester.

Both are available in the library.

**Other readings** generally available online (see syllabus) or I will make a copy available.

# Issues

If you have general questions, please post them to the GitHub Issue Pages:

[https://github.com/HertieDataScience/  
SyllabusAndLectures/issues](https://github.com/HertieDataScience/SyllabusAndLectures/issues)

Includes answers to questions asked in previous semesters.

# Seminar to-do

- ▶ Find course materials and open lecture slides.
- ▶ Meet each other, get idea of background.
- ▶ Setup software (all software is free).
  - ▶ **Highly recommended:** use your own laptop

## Modern Web browser

Make sure you have a modern web browser, e.g. Chrome.

# GitHub

Setup Git/GitHub for version control, collaboration, and remotely storing your files.

- ▶ Set up (free) GitHub account: <https://github.com/join>.
- ▶ Install GitHub application: <https://desktop.github.com/>.



# Statistics software

- ▶ **Install** software:

- ▶ R (version 3.3.1): <http://cran.rstudio.com/>
- ▶ RStudio (dev build):  
<http://www.rstudio.org/download/daily/desktop/>

- ▶ Make sure that you can install R packages:

```
# Install the ggplot2 package
```

```
install.packages('ggplot2')
```

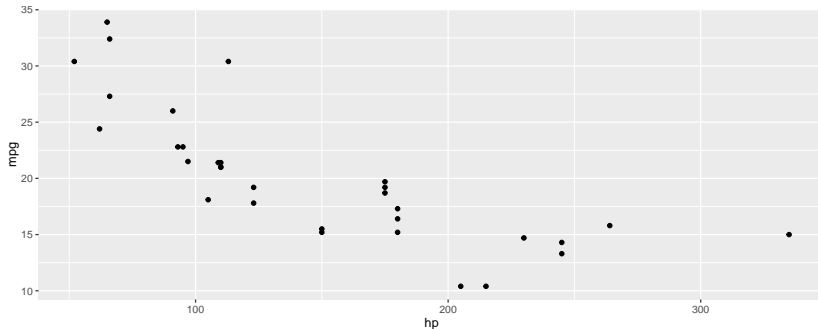
```
# Check to see if it loads properly
```

```
library(ggplot2)
```

```
ggplot(mtcars, aes(hp, mpg)) + geom_point()
```

# Expected Test Result

```
ggplot(mtcars, aes(hp, mpg)) + geom_point()
```



# LaTeX

- ▶ Install a LaTeX distribution. Creates well formatted PDF versions of your presentation documents.
  - ▶ Mac: <https://tug.org/mactex/>
  - ▶ Windows: <http://miktex.org/download>
- ▶ This is a large download, so maybe do it in your spare time.

# Post-Installation

Play around with the software (especially RStudio)