

MPP-E1180 Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course

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11 September 2014

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Contact:

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Official Office Hours:

- ▶ Room: 1.52
- ▶ Wednesday 15:00-17:00

Objectives for the week

- ▶ Introduce the course goals, plan, and expectations/assessment
- ▶ Introduce Collaborative & Reproducible Data Analysis
- ▶ Set up computational research environment

Objectives for the course

Collaboratively and **reproducibly**

- ▶ Gather/clean social data
- ▶ Analyse it
- ▶ Present results (in a variety of mediums)

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

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 in multiple forums.

Motivation: Government

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

Motivation: Government

- ▶ Public data is being made 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**.
- ▶ Version control to **increase engagement with the legislative process**.
 - ▶ San Francisco laws are now forkable.

Motivation: Business

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

AVERAGE SALARY FOR High Paying Skills and Experience		
SKILL	2013	YR/YR CHANGE
R	\$ 115,531	n/a
NoSQL	\$ 114,796	1.6%
MapReduce	\$ 114,396	n/a
PMBok	\$ 112,382	1.3%
Cassandra	\$ 112,382	n/a
Omnigraffle	\$ 111,039	0.3%
Pig	\$ 109,561	n/a
SOA (Service Oriented Architecture)	\$ 108,997	-0.5%
Hadoop	\$ 108,669	-5.6%
Mongo DB	\$ 107,825	-0.4%

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 need to waste time:
 - ▶ Gathering data that has already been gathered.
 - ▶ Discovering procedures that have already been discovered.
- ▶ This enables **effort duplication**.

Why reproducibility?

- ▶ Reproducibility also makes it possible to **find and correct errors**.
 - ▶ Recent example: translation errors in the World Values Survey.
- ▶ 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.

- ▶ **Better work habits**

- ▶ If you are thinking about reproducibility from the beginning your files will be **better organised** and your work will be **better documented**.
- ▶ This allows you to **build on your own work** more effectively.

Reproducible Workflow

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

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 Class Plan

- ▶ ~ 1 hour lecture
- ▶ ~ 1 hour seminar
 - ▶ **Apply** what we learned in the lecture/readings to achieve specific goals, i.e. **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**.

Assessment

- ▶ 3 Pair Assignments (Weeks 3, 6, 9)
 - ▶ 10% each
- ▶ Collaborative Research Project (Presentation: Week 12, 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 Friday of the week it is due.
- ▶ 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

`https://github.com/christophergandrud/Hertie_Collab_Data_Science`

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

Lecture Slides

`https://github.com/christophergandrud/Hertie_Collab_Data_Science/tree/master/LectureSlides`

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

Core Texts

- ▶ Gandrud, Christopher. 2013. *Reproducible Research with R and RStudio*. Chapman & Hall/CRC Press, Oxford. (RRRR)
- ▶ 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.

Seminar to-do

- ▶ **Objective:** setup software (all software is free)
- ▶ **Highly recommend:** 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>
- ▶ **Give me your GitHub username** so that I can add you to the **HertieDataScience2014** group (<https://github.com/HertieDataScience2014>).
- ▶ Install GitHub application:
 - ▶ Mac: <https://mac.github.com/>
 - ▶ Windows: <https://windows.github.com/>

Statistics software

- ▶ **Install** software:

- ▶ R: <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()
```

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.

Pandoc

Install Pandoc. We won't use this directly, but it is needed for creating presentation documents in multiple formats.

- ▶ <http://johnmacfarlane.net/pandoc/installing.html>

Post-Installation

Play around with the software (especially RStudio)