

STT 3860 - Introduction to Statistical Modeling - Spring 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Alan T. Arnholt

Office: Walker Hall 237

Student Help Hours: 9:20—10:40 am MWF and by appointment.

- Make an appointment to see me by clicking [here](#).

Course Description

Introduction to Statistical Modeling: Introduction to Statistical Modeling is a continuation of Introduction to Data Management and Visualization with an emphasis on statistical modeling and reproducible reporting using professional tools. Hypothesis testing is introduced via resampling, and bootstrapping is used to introduce estimation. Cross-validation is used to evaluate and select models that take into account the bias-variance trade-off. Supervised learning techniques discussed will include but are not limited to linear regression, regression trees, classification trees, and random forests.

Course Objectives

- Students will learn to use a reproducible work flow for all assignments.
- Students will improve their technology expertise.
- Students will learn to create statistical models using supervised learning techniques.
- Students will learn to assess models via cross-validation.
- Students will learn the fundamental ideas of tidy modeling including recipes and workflows.

Course Texts

- *Tidy Modeling with R: A Framework for Modeling in the Tidyverse* by Max Kuhn and Julia Silge
- *Feature Engineering and Selection: A Practical Approach for Predictive Models* by Max Kuhn and Kjell Johnson
- *An Introduction to Statistical Learning with Applications in R* by Gareth James, Daniela Witten, Trevor Hastie and Robert Tibshirani
- *The Elements of Statistical Learning* by Trevor Hastie, Robert Tibshirani, and Jerome Friedman
- *R for Data Science (2e)* by Hadley Wickam, Mine Centinkaya-Rundel, and Garrett Grolemund
- *R Graphics Cookbook* by Winston Chang - Available via [SafariBooksOnline](#) through the Appalachian State University [library](#).

Tentative Schedule and Course Pacing Guide

Tentative course assignments and due dates are maintained [here](#).

Course Grading & Assessment

- 20% of the course grade will come from sixteen [DataCamp](#) chapters.
- 40% of the course grade will come from four Quarto reproductions of Data Camp courses.
- 40% of the course grade will come from two **group** presentations.

University Policies

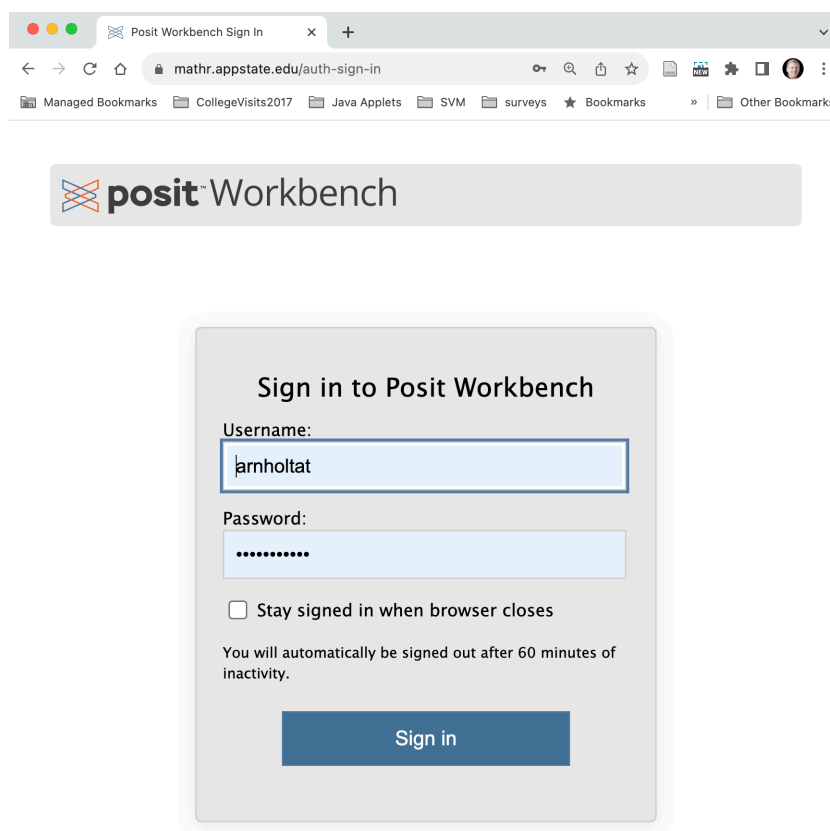
This course conforms with all Appalachian State University policies with respect to face coverings, academic integrity, disability services, class attendance, and student engagement. The details of the policies may be found at <https://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/resources/syllabi-policy-and-statement-information>. Please pay particular attention to the [student engagement statement](#).

Computers and Software

This course will use the RStudio/POSIT workbench server (<https://mathr.appstate.edu/>) that has the programs listed below and more installed.

- [R](#)
- [Git](#)
- [RStudio IDE](#)
- [LaTeX](#)

You must have an active internet connection and be registered in the course to access the server. To access the server, point any web browser to <https://mathr.appstate.edu/>. Use your Appstate Username and Password to access the server. A screen shot of the POSIT workbench login screen is shown below.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying mathr.appstate.edu/auth-sign-in. The page title is "Posit Workbench Sign In". Below the browser window, the "posit Workbench" logo is visible. The main content area shows a login form titled "Sign in to Posit Workbench". The form includes a "Username:" label and a text input field containing "jarnholtat". Below that is a "Password:" label and a password input field with masked characters. There is a checkbox labeled "Stay signed in when browser closes" which is currently unchecked. Below the checkbox, a message states: "You will automatically be signed out after 60 minutes of inactivity." At the bottom of the form is a blue "Sign in" button.

If you have problems with your Appstate Username or Password visit [IT Support Services](#) or call 262-6266.

Required Technology

- [RStudio Server](#)
- [DataCamp](#)
- [GitHub](#)
- [Github Classroom Repository](#)

Technology used in this class is free

Note: All technology used in the class is either open source (free) or will be accessible to students enrolled in the course for no cost.

Course Pacing Guide/Assignments

The [Course Pacing Guide](#) has all course assignments and due dates.

Faculty and Student Responsibilities

- It is my (faculty) responsibility to explain and present the material you need to master for this course. A detailed description of everything you need to do starting with day one to the Final Exam is provided in the course pacing guide which is available on day one of the course.
- It is your (student) responsibility to learn the material and to seek help if you do not understand the material.

Appalachian students are expected to make intensive engagement with courses their first priority. Practically speaking, students should spend approximately 2-3 hours on course-work outside of class for every hour they spend in class. ***For this three-hour course, you you should anticipate 6-9 hours per week of outside work.***

How To Do Well In This Course

The only way to learn statistics is to **DO** statistics, which includes using statistical software. Reading the textbook, learning the language, and practicing exercises using real data are critical to your learning and success. Class activities and assessments have been structured with these principles in mind. You should read assigned textbook content and read/watch supplemental materials prior to coming to class. When you read the assigned material, you should complete the problems (not just read about them) on

your paper and computer. It will be easier to participate if you acquire some familiarity with the vocabulary and methods before we start to discuss and use them. You must “speak the language” (both statistics and R) to demonstrate your knowledge effectively. If you come to class and have difficulty following the discussion, you should make sure you have read all of the assigned material and then go back and re-read the assigned material a second time. Reading a technical book is not the same as a novel. Most people, your instructor included, must read a technical section at least twice before understanding a topic. If you are still having challenges after reading the assigned material twice and working the out the material on paper and the computer, it is your responsibility to seek help. I am here to help and will be glad to assist you in your learning process. Please make an appointment to visit with me on my [calendar](#).

How To Get Unstuck

Well constructed questions will elicit answers more rapidly than poorly constructed questions. This [video](#) provides some background on asking questions. This [stackoverflow thread](#) details how to create a [minimal R reproducible example](#). Please read [How To Ask Questions The Smart Way](#) by Eric Raymond and Rick Moen and heed their advice.