

A First Course in Probability (Fall 2018)

Instructor: **Sarantsev, Andrey**

Subject: **STAT**

Catalog & Section: **461 1001**

Course ID: **87355**

Objectives: **Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. demonstrate understanding of randomness and be able to use probability models to explain simple random phenomena. In addition, students will be able to compute summaries of probability distributions (univariate and multivariate).

2. compute measures of location, dispersion, and association, as well as probability of interest for many univariate and multivariate distributions.

3. assess and make use of the asymptotic results provided by the Law of Large Numbers and the Central Limit Theorem and their connection to the estimates of quantities from data.

Enrollment: 59

Responses Incl Declines: 30

Declines: 0

Teaching (Lecture) (51 comments)

Q: Please provide your thoughts on the instructor's teaching, including strengths and areas for possible improvement.

- 1 Professor Sarantsev knew the material very well although sometimes it was unclear what he expected on the homework and quizzes. Sometimes I found things on the homework were never discussed in class and it was hard to understand based on the textbook we were using. The quizzes were also difficult but towards the end they were easier when he let us use a note sheet.**
- 2 I didn't know that you were only grading specific questions and not the whole homework assignment at first. But other than that I really enjoyed your teaching. You are my favorite professor at UNR and thank you so much for a great semester.**
- 3 Professor Sarantsev is great at engaging his class and making sure everyone's needs are met. He is very dedicated to making sure everyone is learning the material and being successful in his class. I enjoyed the structure of 2 exams, and smaller weekly quizzes and homework. Less stress come exam season.**
- 4 Very intelligent Professor. Understanding and willing to work with the students needs. I appreciate the ability to use a note sheet on the test.**
- 5 Although professor Sarantsev is clearly very intelligent and educated, he is still quite humble about his teaching-- many professors make it seem as though what they're teaching was never difficult or confusing to them, and might not be willing to adjust, but Sarantsev was clearly open to adjusting for student success and explaining concepts in different ways until we understood. He was very available for extra help in his office hours, very patient and informative. He clearly wants us to succeed and is going above and beyond with extra office hours leading up to the final according to what worked best for us. I also really appreciate his inclusion of real-world applications to finance and actuarial science, as well as wanting to provide experience in practical skills like programming languages actually used in data science (where otherwise we would not learn these things in school). It is so awesome to have a professor so interested in what he is teaching and in the applications it has to the professional world, and wants to help his students be successful in those fields.**
- 6 Dr. Sarantsev did a wonderful job for his first semester here. His teaching is clear and succinct. I have no objections to any of his teaching methods.**
- 7 Professor Sarantsev is clearly very knowledgeable, and most of the time he makes his point clear about the concept, but sometimes I get completely lost. His lecture notes are hard to read too, so it's hard to learn concepts that you didn't understand the first time.**
- 8 Homework did not reflect what we were expected to learn for quizzes and exams. Some of the homework problems were difficult to work through, since we weren't adequately taught how to perform them. Examples in lecture didn't help either.
And then the quizzes and exams weren't consistent with the homework material.**
- 9 Hard to understand and unorganized notes**
- 10 I really enjoyed this class and learned a lot about probability. I would have liked more examples that were not in the lecture notes for variety.**
- 11 I think the class was a little disorganized really the entire semester. But I can understand why, having a new teacher and all. I think as an instructor he did a good job, but I did often feel unprepared for quizzes and the grading seemed as if partial credit was nonexistent. Other than that, it was a good class.**

12 good

13 Professor Sarantsev was great all around in my experience! He taught at a perfect pace for my learning and always made sure to stop frequently and check for comprehension. Only improvement I could suggest is possibly including a few more examples in the notes/textbook for some of the later subjects.

14 Overall is good!

15 This material is very difficult and I think you did a nice job given the circumstances. Give more examples that are similar to homework and quizzes.

16 Really nice and humble. Also really supportive and helpful during office hours.

17 No suggestions for improvement

18 Should give more instruction relevant to what is going to be tested on. There is a LARGE disconnect between instruction material and quizzed material as to how to solve it and what is expected

19 His English is pretty good. I could understand him 100% of the time. However, the class was really really slow and boring. I know its a math class but he would pause for such a long time and repeat himself a lot that it just made it really hard to want to go to class.
But he explained concepts well and answered questions really well.
I loved how many graphs he drew! They were very helpful!
Also, he was very approachable and friendly.

20 Dr. Sarantsev is a very good professor. The fact that statistics makes sense tells us how good he is. The course is very difficult, but the professor adjusts his teaching to fit the needs of his students. I am very disappointed that he is not going to teach my next statistic course. I have already mentioned this after the midterm: by slowing down his teaching a bit, emphasize and repeat important concept, the class is so much easier to understand. His teaching after the midterm is so much better than the first half of the semester. I will definitely take his course again.

21 Explains concepts well and clearly. Answers questions coherently.

22 Professor Sarantsev was an excellent professor that made sure that every student understood the material before moving on. Being a brand new professor, I believe he did a great job of adjusting the class to meet the best needs of the students and once again accommodating for everyone.

23 I very much enjoyed Professor Sarantsev's lecture. They were informative, for the most part enjoyable, and to the point. He has the ability to display the content (usually) in a non-confusing manner.

24 The class was good. However, we were never told that only a few problems from the homework were being graded, which unfairly impacted my grade. Also the quizzes were very difficult and unrelated to the homework.

25 Excellent pacing in class, ample time for questions and great responses. Very helpful and open office hours and quick email responses.

26 Dr. Sarantsev understand the material very well and is able to breakdown complex concepts and explain them to the students. If he feels that he didn't convey the material properly, he will find a way to easily explain the concept that is particularly difficult.

Q: Please provide your thoughts on the course as a whole, including strengths and areas for possible improvement.

1 I think giving a quiz the day we turn in the homework might have been better that way the material is still fresh rather than waiting two days after.

2 This course was great. It was interesting to see higher levels of math coincide with statistics.

3 The course overall is your basic stats class. Nothing new or special.

4 I think it would have been beneficial to know what exactly the teacher was looking for on the homework and quizzes. Perhaps to go over as a class. Because I struggled, I wish there were answers to other practice problems in the "lecture notes" because you wouldn't know if you were doing it correct then your grade goes down. Also, because this Professor is so intelligent, he knows everything in his head when he is teaching which is the same exact as his lecture notes so if you did not understand the notes there wasn't anything else he gave you to try and understand.

5 I thought the quizzes were maybe too difficult, allowing a note sheet was helpful though--allowed time to practice examples instead of memorizing formulas. The frequent review classes, before the midterm, final, and sometimes before quizzes were really helpful. I was able to recover from a rough start and improve my grade, I'm thankful for the extra time Sarantsev took to help me understand the material better. Having the lecture notes/textbook to follow along with (instead of having to write everything, which makes me miss parts of the lecture and have to read my bad handwriting later) was much appreciated! I also like the regularity--a homework and quiz each week, knowing in advance, really nice to be able to plan out appropriate time to do homework and study.
I really enjoyed this class structure and the lectures!

6 I think my lab homework and quizzes really helped my understanding of the material throughout the course of the

- 6 I think weekly homework and quizzes really helped my understanding of the material throughout the course of the semester. I have no objections to the course structure.
- 7 I thought this class was going to have more statistics involved. Later on in the class the idea of "probability" gets lost to just finding an answer and I don't know what that answer means
- 8 I hope instructor keep in mind this is an introductory course in which non-stat major are required to take.
- 9 Not necessary for general math majors
- 10 Overall this is a good introduction to probability.
- 11 The course is difficult, that's for sure.
- 12 good
- 13 I felt the course was perfect in strengthening my understanding of probability and statistics in general.
- 14 Homework is quite hard and there is a lot homework
- 15 This class is relatively difficult and I think proofs should also be a pre-req. The class would have made more sense if I had more math knowledge and it would've been nice to know set-theory coming into the class.
- 16 Hard but he was really helpful and explained things really good
- 17 The homework at first was very difficult compared to the examples in class.
After the in class evaluation, he made the homework easier instead of making the examples in class harder which was a good idea.
- 18 A very difficult class. Thanks to the professor's high quality teaching, statistics is interesting and comprehensible. The course is going to be great if the professor keeps up this style of teaching. I wish the professor assigns homework on a more timely manner, because a student like me needs a consistent homework schedule. Occasionally, due to late homework assignment posting, I had to restructure my entire schedule and wasted a huge amount of time. A timely homework assignment posting is something the professor can improve on.
- 19 Many opportunities for examples. Lecture notes were helpful in explaining content and for reference.
- 20 The class was well structured and adjusted accordingly in ways that there wasn't too much material jammed into a short period of time. The class notes along with the lectures made learning the material very seamless and easy.
- 21 I believe that this course was taught correctly, due to the professor's lectures. He didn't assign too many homeworks/quizzes. I also enjoyed that his grading scale is there to help and not hurt us.
- 22 The course is interesting and is a good introduction to stats.
- 23 Good course, excellent introduction to probability and statistics
- 24 Very good course, difficult material, but structured in a way for students to learn these challenging concepts.
- 25 Having more examples like the homework questions, like word problems would help. Also stating if the entire homework is graded or if there are randomly selected questions that are graded.