

DS 3100-01: Fundamentals of Data Science*

J Andrés Gannon

Spring 2025

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Office Hours: Tue 11-12 ([sign-up](#))

Class Hours: TTh 9:30-10:45am

Office: Commons 300

Class Room: Central & Divinity Libraries 408

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of data science. The course will focus on obtaining, manipulating, processing, cleaning, wrangling, visualizing, and analyzing data along with effectively communicating results from data analyses. Skills learned will include data imputation, linear and logistic regression, data regularization, dimensionality reduction, maximum likelihood estimation, and model selection and development. Topics will also include ethics, privacy, and security in data science. All statistical computing for data science in this class will be conducted in the R programming language.

To be successful in this course, you should have completed a course in introductory computer programming (CS 1100, 1101, 1104, or equivalent) and a course in introductory statistics (DS 2100, BME 2400, BSCI 3270, CE 3300, ECON 1500 or 1510, MATH 2810 or 2821, PSY 2100, PSY-PC 2110, SOC 2100, or equivalent).

Course Objectives

Course Goal: Students will learn how to organize, visualize, analyze, and interpret data & statistical information using the R programming language. By the end of the course, students will have:

1. Learned how to manage project files & workflow locally and remotely with github
2. Gained proficiency in data wrangling, visualization, and analysis in R
3. Increased their data literacy, understanding data types and structures, data communication, and statistical data analysis
4. Identified when to use the appropriate algorithmic and graphic tools to analyze data and report trends

*Last updated January 08, 2025.

Course Material

Readings and Software

All articles are posted on Brightspace. There are two books from which many readings are drawn and they are both open-source and available online meaning you do not have to purchase them unless you have a personal preference for a hard copy version. They are referenced in the class schedule by abbreviated title and are linked below:

- Rohan Alexander, *Telling Stories with Data: With Applications in R*, 1st edition, Chapman & Hall/CRC Data Science Series (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2023), <https://tellingstorieswithdata.com/>.
- Ethan Bueno de Mesquita and Anthony Fowler, *Thinking Clearly with Data: A Guide to Quantitative Reasoning and Analysis* (Princeton University Press, 2021).

The course will be taught in R and students are expected to complete all assignments using that coding language.

Labs

All labs are held in *Engineering & Science Building 044* with designated teaching assistants. Students are expected to attend the lab section for which they registered. In rare cases, exceptions can be made for one time switches to a different section for excused absences causing conflicts like university-sanctioned activities. For those exceptions, please contact both your TA and the TA leading the lab you are hoping to attend for a single session to facilitate that coordination.

- Head TA: Luka Butskhrikidze
- Email: luka.butskhrikidze@vanderbilt.edu

DS 3100-03 Tues 5:30-7:30pm

- TA: Natasha Messier
- Email: natasha.messier@vanderbilt.edu

DS 3100-04 Wed 4:40-6:40pm

- TA: Dhesel Khando
- Email: dhesel.khando@vanderbilt.edu

DS 3100-02 Fri 2:30-4:30pm

- TA: Daniel Zhan
- Email: xuhui.zhan@vanderbilt.edu

Class Schedule

Lecture Schedule

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January							February						
													1
	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	
March							April						
						1			1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29				
30	31												

Class
 No Class

I. Foundations¹

Week 01, 01/06 - 01/10: Set-up

- Tues: Introduction to Data Science
 - Gil Press, “A Very Short History Of Data Science,” *Forbes*, May 28, 2013, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gilpress/2013/05/28/a-very-short-history-of-data-science/>.
- Thurs: NO CLASS

Week 02, 01/13 - 01/17: Set-up

- *Tues: Software and Environment Set-up
 - *Stories with Data*, [Ch. 2](#)
- Thurs: NO CLASS

II. Knowing Your Data

Week 03, 01/20 - 01/24: Data Types and Preparation

- Tues: Types of Data and Variables

¹Dates marked with an asterisk are *anticipated* quiz dates. In the event that the quiz dates in the syllabus conflict with quiz dates noted on Brightspace, defer to Brightspace.

- *Thurs: Cleaning and Wrangling
 - Karl W. Broman and Kara H. Woo, “Data Organization in Spreadsheets,” *The American Statistician* 72, no. 1 (2018): 2–10, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.2017.1375989>.
 - *Stories with Data*, Ch. 9

Week 04, 01/27 - 01/31: Data Preparation and Statistical Basics

- Tues: Aggregating and Transforming
- *Thurs: Descriptive Statistics and Measures of Variation
 - Robert E. Kass et al., “Ten Simple Rules for Effective Statistical Practice,” *PLoS Computational Biology* 12, no. 6 (June 9, 2016): e1004961, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1004961>.
 - *Thinking Clearly*, Ch. 2

Week 05, 02/03 - 02/07: Statistical Basics

- Tues: Probability Distributions and Sampling
 - *Thinking Clearly*, Ch. 6
- Thurs: NO CLASS
- **Fri: PSet 1 Data Wrangling and Description (due 11:59pm)**

Week 06, 02/10 - 02/14: Visualization and Exploration

- *Tues: Visualization Principles
 - Steven L. Franconeri et al., “The Science of Visual Data Communication: What Works,” *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, December 15, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1177/15291006211051956>.
- Thurs: Visualization Practices

III. Regression Analysis

Week 07, 02/17 - 02/21: Visualization and Exploration

- *Tues: Exploratory Data Analysis
 - *Stories with Data*, Ch. 11
- Thurs: Linear Regression I
 - *Stories with Data*, Ch. 12
 - *Thinking Clearly*, Ch. 5

Week 08, 02/24 - 02/28: Basic Regression

- **Mon: PSet 2 Data Visualization (due 11:59pm)**
- Tues: Linear Regression II
- *Thurs: Logistic Regression
 - *Stories with Data*, Ch. 13

Week 09, 03/03 - 03/07: Advanced Regression

- Tues: NO CLASS

- **Wed: PSet 3 Linear Regression (due 11:59pm)**
- Thurs: Multinomial Regression

Week 10, 03/10 - 03/14: Spring Break (no class)

Week 11, 03/17 - 03/21: Generalizability

- *Tues: Cross-validation, Bootstrapping and Resampling
- Thurs: Classification Models

IV. Advanced Methods

Week 12, 03/24 - 03/28: New Data Types

- **Mon: PSet 4 Advanced Regression (due 11:59pm)**
- Tues: K-Means and Hierarchical Clustering
- *Thurs: Network Analysis I
 - Mark Newman, “Mathematics of Networks,” in *Networks*, ed. Mark Newman, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), Ch. 6

Week 13, 03/31 - 04/04: New Data Types (continued)

- Tues: Network Analysis II
- Thurs: Final Project Groupwork

Week 14, 04/07 - 04/11: New Data Types (continued)

- Tues: Text Analysis I
 - *Stories with Data*, [Ch. 16](#)
- *Thurs: Final Project Groupwork

Week 15, 04/14 - 04/18: New Data Types (continued)

- Tues: Text Analysis II
- *Thurs: Post-mortem
 - *Thinking Clearly*, Ch. 15 and 17
- **Fri: PSet 5 New Data Types (due 11:59pm)**

Tues, April 29: **Final Project (due 5:00pm)**

Course Policies

Please use the information below as a reference for how this class will be conducted. I would ask that you review this information before contacting me with any questions.

Grade Scale

Final transcript grades will be converted from the numeric grades provided on each assignment as follows:

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade
A	92.5%-100.00%
A-	89.5%-92.49%
B+	86.5%-89.49%
B	82.5%-86.49%
B-	79.5%-82.49%
C+	76.5%-79.49%
C	72.5%-76.49%
C-	69.5%-72.49%
F	0%-69.49%

There are no typos in this table because Vanderbilt does not assign A+ grades on transcripts. If you ask for an A+ I reserve the right to lower your quiz 1 grade because such a request indicates a failure to have read the syllabus.

Students upset about their grade falls just below a grade cutoff, (like an 89.41%, just short of an A-), often request an arbitrary “bump” in their final grade justified by their hard work ethic, frequent class attendance, true passion for the course material, desire to go to law school, or otherwise. Given the unreasonably generous retake policy on quizzes, there will be no rounding “bumps” at the end of the semester. If your course grade is an 89.48%, that is a B+. My belief is that if you wanted the A-, you should have retaken all possible quizzes to “bump” your grade up over the threshold. That is less work and more intellectually rewarding than emailing me with a justification for a grade change.

Graded Assignments

- **Problem Sets (5 x 10%)** - A total of 5, equally weighted, assignments will be distributed throughout the semester. These assignments are designed to improve your skills analyzing real and potentially messy data. Assignments will involve independently locating a dataset not used in class that meets any criteria imposed by the task at hand, developing a research question, and answering that research question using tools learned in class.

Topic	Due Date
1 Data Wrangling	Fri 2/7 11:59pm
2 Data Visualization	Mon 2/24 11:59pm
3 Linear Regression	Wed 3/5 11:59pm
4 Advanced Regression	Mon 3/24 11:59pm
5 New Data Types	Fri 4/18 11:59pm

- **Quizzes (10 x 2%)** - 10 short hand-written, in-class quizzes will be assigned throughout the semester. All quizzes will be announced ahead of time on brightspace and the quiz questions and/or topics will be provided there in advance. Quizzes will never be more than 5 questions long, should take no more than 5 minutes, and will be administered at the beginning of the next lecture where that material was covered. The only possible quiz grades

are 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'R' (retake). Students have the opportunity to retake any quiz regardless of grade by the dates noted on the syllabus during office hours, lab, or other arrangements made with the instructor. All 'R' quiz grades still remaining after the last day of class will be converted to an 'F'.

Topic	Lecture
1 Syllabus	Tues 1/13
2 Data types	Thurs 1/23
3 Data prep	Thurs 1/30
4 Stat basics	Tues 2/11
5 Visualization	Thurs 2/18
6 Basic regression	Thurs 2/27
7 Adv regression	Tues 3/18
8 Classification	Thurs 3/27
9 Networks	Thurs 4/3
10 Text analysis	Thurs 4/17

- **Labs (10 x 1%)** - There will be a total of 10 labs with graded assignments. If you do not attend a lab section, you may complete the assignment no more than 24 hours after the scheduled end of that lab session and submit it to the TA for your grade. Any lab assignments that are not submitted or are submitted more than 24 hours after that lab ends will receive a 0. Any lab listed as "Flex OH" on the course calendar is not required, and that session will focus on problem set group work, quiz make-ups, catch up, open Q&A, and individualized assistance from the TAs.

Week	Tu 5:30-7:30	W 4:40-6:40	F 2:30-4:30
W1: 1/6-	NO LAB	NO LAB	NO LAB
W2: 1/13-	1 Data types	1 Data types	1 Data types
W3: 1/20-	2 Expressions	2 Expressions	2 Expressions
W4: 1/27-	3 Functions	3 Functions	3 Functions
W5: 2/3-	NO LAB	NO LAB	NO LAB
W6: 2/10-	W1-5 make-ups	W1-5 make-ups	W1-5 make-ups
W7: 2/17-	4 ggplot2	4 ggplot2	4 ggplot2
W8: 2/24-	5 Linear reg	5 Linear reg	5 Linear reg
W9: 3/3-	6 Logistic reg	6 Logistic reg	6 Logistic reg
W10: 3/10-	NO LAB	NO LAB	NO LAB
W11: 3/17-	7 Multinomial	7 Multinomial	7 Multinomial
W12: 3/24-	8 Classification	8 Classification	8 Classification
W13: 3/31-	9 Networks	9 Networks	9 Networks
W14: 4/7-	W7-13 make-ups	W7-13 make-ups	W7-13 make-ups
W15: 4/14-	10 Text	10 Text	10 Text

- **Final Project (20%)** - The final project will be an open-ended data analysis project designed to mirror data analysis in practical application. The project will involve locating a dataset

not used in class, developing a research question, and using the appropriate tools from class to address this research question. Groups of around 3 will be assigned in section to improve your skills working on an interdisciplinary team to answer research questions via data analysis. While this project will be the culmination of combined efforts (i.e., a single paper with contributions from all team-members), each team-member will also clarify their specific role on the team and personal contributions. If you feel your team-members are not adequately engaging with the final project, contact the primary instructor via email and we will discuss remedial action for your specific situation.

No assignments outside of the ones listed above will be required, nor will any assignments not listed above be graded, even for extra credit.

There are two lab session devoted to make up assignments. During these sessions, students can make up any quiz, problem set, or lab that was due in the weeks listed for that session regardless of whether those assignments were initially completed or the initial grade in those assignments. For quizzes, students must redo the entire quiz during that lab session. For problem sets and labs, students should identify what they got wrong in consultation with the TA and can remedy those problems during lab for a regrade. All make ups must be done in person during the lab session. In the event of a legitimate documented reason for absence from the make up lab, students should consult with the course instructor for alternate arrangements.

You can expect to be graded solely on your academic performance. This includes clarity of thought, knowledge of the material, composition, spelling, and grammar. All grade *questions* should be directed to the teaching assistants, but they cannot and will not change your grade. All grade *challenges* should be directed to Dr. Gannon, not the teaching assistants. If you believe your assignment grade and/or project grade does not correctly reflect your performance, you can submit a grade appeal. For all assignments, grade appeals can occur no earlier than 24 hours after the graded assignment has been returned and no more than 7 days after the graded assignment has been returned. To submit a formal grade appeal, you should email the lead instructor Dr. Gannon. Your email must include: (1) the subject header “Formal Grade Appeal”; (2) confirmation that more than 24 hours but less than 7 days have passed since the graded assignment was received; (3) confirmation that grade questions were answered by the TA; (4) a clear and specific reference to the part of the assignment or project in question; and (5) justification for why more credit is earned, citing specific material or evidence. I reserve the right to raise your grade or lower it based on my assessment, independent of the original assessment by the TA.

Attendance

I do not take or require attendance, nor will attendance have any direct bearing on your grade. I recognize that school is hard, life is unpredictable, and competing life priorities vary. Attendance is, hopefully, conducive to learning. You should attend class because of a genuine curiosity about the course material, not because of a mandate. The course readings are a complement to the lectures and in-class discussions, rather than the other way around. If appealing your grade at any point in the semester, especially at the end, one of the first questions I will ask will concern your attendance.

As all assignments are submitted electronically and provided in advance, it is unlikely extensions will be provided for university sponsored events or foreseeable travel plans. In the event of illness

or personal emergency where an extension may be warranted, students are to reach out to the instructor AND their TA as soon as possible (ideally before the due date) where a decision will be made.

The observance of religious holidays (activities observed by a religious group of which a student is a member) and cultural practices are an important reflection of diversity. As your instructor, I am committed to providing equivalent educational opportunities to students of all belief systems. At the beginning of the semester, you should review the course requirements to identify foreseeable conflicts with assignments, exams, or other required attendance. If at all possible, please contact me within the first two weeks of the first class meeting to allow time for us to discuss and make fair and reasonable adjustments to the schedule and/or tasks.

Technology

This is a data science class. Students should use the hardware and software best suited to course objectives. All students will be required to download R and Rstudio to their personal devices. This is a free and open-source statistical programming software. You are not required to have prior experience programming in R for this course. We will spend time in class ensuring all personal computers are equipped with R and Rstudio.

For this class you will need a personal laptop with internet access. You are encouraged to bring your laptop to class and use it during class. Refrain from using social media, personal messaging, checking email, etc. during class. As I do not take attendance, those wishing to spend class time doing other things are encouraged to stay home. I do ask that any electronic devices be silenced.

E-mail

I honor and respect boundaries around personal time, well-being, care taking, and rest. Should you receive correspondence from me during a time that you're engaging in any of the above, please protect your time and wait to respond until you're next working in front of a computer. On my end, teaching this class is an important part of my job that I will give my full attention during my work hours. At the same time, my work hours are not 24/7. Those are typically 8am-5pm on weekdays. I do not expect you to do work for this course on the weekends, and I ask that the same be expected of me. I am unlikely to respond to emails outside of those hours or on weekends.

All emails should abide by the following:

- Address me as "Professor Gannon" or "Doctor Gannon", as you should all faculty unless explicitly told otherwise
- Email signatures should include your first and last name as well as student ID number
- Use your university email address and communicate via the instructor's university email address
- Identify the course name and number in the subject line
- Bold any dates or times
- Requests should be their own paragraph, rather than buried in a larger block of text

- Keep it brief and direct, no need for pleasantries. While I appreciate humanizing education, your email does not need to find me well
- Do not be anxious if my response is brief and direct. I simply try to minimize time spent on emails, so assume I am reading and responding to any email from my phone.

Academic Honor Code

Students are assumed to have read and agreed with the Vanderbilt University Academic Honesty policy, found at URL: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/the-honor-system/. In particular, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, altering graded examinations for additional credit, having another person take an examination for you, falsification of results, or facilitating academic dishonesty or as further specified in the university policy found at the website above. These and other forms of cheating are all potentially grounds for penalties including failure of the assignment or the course, as well as program- or university-level disciplinary action. Students needing assistance may consult with the instructor or the teaching assistants. You are encouraged to use authorized university writing resources. Exceptions will be made for a disability or other personal need. Please consult with the instructor if you are unclear about this policy or believe you need the assistance of other persons or online resources.

With the exception of the in-class midterm, all assignments in this class are open. You may use your notes, videos, textbooks, the web, etc. to help you. The main thing to use with care is the help of other humans and be sure to document how you used Generative AI. The essence of good programming is copying, pasting, and adapting existing code. Therefore, you are encouraged to do so. Use code provided from in class examples, from online examples, from GenAI, etc. and tweak/edit it to do what you need it to do. Adapt code from your in-class work to your group project and adapt code from your group project to your individual project.

Generative AI

The course assignment are designed with generative AI in mind. This could include writing a first draft, code, wordsmithing text, idea generation, summarizing or synthesizing research documents, or all of the above. We will not only acknowledge its existence, but learn to use it so that students are aware of its utilities and limitations. Remember, whatever you turn in is your own, so beware of hallucinations and/or plagiarism. Check sources and verify.

Although I encourage the use of ChatGPT or other models capable of writing code for you, it is still valuable to learn to code yourself – these models need someone to program them (for now...). Any time you use ChatGPT or other models to write code for you, check against your own code, or explore the options of writing code (even if that code is never used), I ask that you write down that you've used ChatGPT (or some other model) to help with the problem. Each problem (meaning you may have this acknowledgement multiple times in a single assignment), no matter how small, must include the following acknowledgement: **"I have used [ChatGPT or some other model] to aid the production of the code used in this problem."** Failure to provide this statement is an academic integrity violation. There is no penalty for providing this statement. The goal is not to avoid using resources to answer questions, but to be transparent about when you use AI and what it was able to help you with.

Peers

Collaboration to brainstorm answers to homework questions and to study together for exams is highly encouraged. However, students are all expected to submit their own work for a grade. You are prohibited from copying and pasting code from a friend in the class that was written for the assignment in question. This is “plug and play” code that does not require adapting and bypasses you thinking about what it is doing. For group projects, this includes friends outside your group, for individual projects, this is anyone else in the class. Misrepresenting others’ work as one’s own—including the unpublished work of current or past students—is cause for failure and disciplinary action at the university level. The Vanderbilt Honor Council has a very helpful guide to understanding plagiarism, and the Writing Studio has a great set of resources on working with sources in academic writing.

Health

Health (physical, mental, social) is always important, but especially now. I am going to work on an honor system more than in the past. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please let your GTA know before the due date. We will rely on you to be responsible in not taking advantage of our trust. We won’t ask for justifications or notes, etc. Just let us know when circumstances prevent you from being the student you wish to be. If any of these or other things begin to hinder your ability to do your best, you can reach out to the office of Student Care Coordination for programs, training, accommodations, and assistance (find more information or make an appointment here: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/carecoordination/>). The Student Care Coordination can help guide you to whatever assistance you might need, whether it be short term or long term. If you specifically need help or accommodation in this course due to your difficulties, please come meet with me so we can find a solution that allows you to succeed while being fair to others. We will attempt to assist you or refer you to someone who can.

As your professor, I value your health and well being. Audre Lorde once said, “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” Please see your wellness has an act of power and perseverance. The core to your success. Hold each other accountable. Hold me accountable. In order to succeed in my class, in college and beyond, you must work hard and balance the work with rest, exercise and attention to your mental and physical health.

Yes, I plan to challenge you. There will be rigorous reading, weekly writing assignments, and concepts that will challenge your thinking. By the end of this class, I hope you will feel proud of your growth and learning much like the marathoner feels accomplished by their triumphs across the finish line.

However, this work cannot be at the expense of your well being. Working until exhaustion is NOT a badge of honor; it shows that you are out of balance. As such, I plan to model well being as a value in my class. There will be constant reminders about finding productive and healthy ways to find silence, relax, breathe, meditate and seek peace. In that silence, we often find our greatest inspiration and the space to think new, creative thoughts. Finally, I will encourage you to have fun, celebrate, enjoy the small moments of college that are often your greatest memories. I will try to bring that joy to you even when the stress of this semester starts to loom.

Diversity within the Classroom

The TA(s) and I are fully committed to creating a learning environment that supports diversity of thought, perspectives, experiences, and identities. We urge each of you to contribute your unique perspectives to discussions of course questions, themes, and materials so that we can learn from them, and from each other. I want students to learn to see from each other's points of view even if they disagree with what each other say, and to learn to accept each other as fellow scholars. Every person in this class will have an equal chance to speak and share their opinion with the understanding that they must give each other the same respect and understanding. This class will explore issues that may be contentious. I expect that all students treat each other with respect. This means that all arguments in the class should be based on factual assertions as opposed to demeaning insults. Finally, I will not tolerate the denigration of anyone in the class because of their adopted or prescribed social, religious, political, ethnic, racial, gender-based or sexual identities. If you should ever feel excluded, or unable to fully participate in class for any reason, please let me know, or you may also submit anonymous written feedback to the Department of Political Science's Undergraduate Advisor.

Gender-inclusive Language and Preferred Names/Pronouns

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. In our classes, we should all use gender-inclusive words and language whenever possible in the classroom and in writing. Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, either to the class or privately to the professor, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

Mandatory Reporting

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can call the Project Safe 24-hour crisis/support hotline at 615-322-7233 and you can find a list of resources at Project Safe. You may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (615-322-4705) and you can find the appropriate contacts for resources and confidence here: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/>

As a faculty member, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus, no matter their identity or circumstances. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I must note that I am a representative of an institution that we want to make safer for all people, therefore I am a mandatory reporter. University faculty, many staff members, and some student leaders are required to

report incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and child abuse, as well as any suspected discrimination (about age, race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, sex/gender, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, military status, familial status or other protected categories under local, state or federal law) to the University's Title IX Coordinator (615-322-4705), as required by University policy and state and federal law. If you disclose an experience of interpersonal violence and/or child abuse to me or to classmates with mandatory reporting, whether in class discussion, through a course assignment, or in private communication with me, your disclosure will be kept as private as possible but may not be able to be kept confidential.

Please consult with me with any questions before sharing a personal experience of intimate partner violence or that of another Vanderbilt-affiliated person. If you disclose thoughts of harm to self or others, that information will also be disclosed to relevant parties charged with ensuring the health and safety of our campus community.

Children in Class

Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to students who happen to also be parents. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

Babies are welcome in class as often as necessary to support their feeding relationship (breast-feeding or bottle). For older children, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to miss class. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.

In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

Additional Learning Needs

Each of us has a different learning style, and I will do my best to accommodate diverse learning needs in the class. I requires no formal documentation of medical-related accessibility concerns, I only require up front and honest communication. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact the Vanderbilt Student Access office to get more information about specific accommodations; please visit <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student-access/>.

Requests for academic accommodations, including extended time on written exams or alternate forms of assignment submission are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances.