

Abilene Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approve I = Information Item R = Respond In Writing

Course Number: SDS 396 - Statistics and Data Science Seminar

or Degree Plan(s):

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost
	Campus-Level Academic Review¹						
	Change to a Course Include signatures from all chairs/program directors for cross-listed courses. ¹						
1.	Title (description unchanged)	A	A	A	I	I	I
2.	Description (not affecting content)	A	A	A	I	I	I
3.	Course term(s)	A	I	A	I	I	I
4.	Content (change of course outcomes)	A	A	A	I	I	A
5.	Number of credit hours	A	A	A	A	A	A
6.	Course number within the hundred	A	A	I	I	I	I
7.	Course number beyond the hundred	A	A	A	A	A	A
8.	Prerequisites	A	A	A	I	I	I
9.	Course restriction (e.g., majors only, junior standing)	A	A	A	A	A	A
10.	Level change (U to G or G to U)	A	A	A	A	A	A
11.	Cross list course	A	A	A	A	A	A
12.	Department of record	A	A	A	A	A	A
13.	Open or close a course	A	A	A	A	A	A
	Change to a Degree Plan						
14.	Educational Program — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A
15.	Educational Program — Adopt/revise admission requirements	A	A	A	A	A	A
16.	GPA — Revise program-required GPA	A	A	A	A	A	A
17.	Minor — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost	Campus Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Full Review									
	Change to Catalog Information (for Campus)									
18.	General requirements for Bachelor's and Associate Degrees	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
19.	Policies governing academic probation and suspension	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
20.	Requirements for graduating with honors	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
	Change to a Degree Plan									
21.	Educational Program — Add or Discontinue ³	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
22.	Educational Program — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I
23.	Minor — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
24.	Minor — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	-	A	I
25.	Degree — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
26.	Degree — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I

		Dept./School	College	Dean	AUAC	Provost	UGEC	University Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Change to General Education Requirements for Undergraduates (System)									
27.	Change course outcomes of an included course	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
28.	Add or drop a required course from the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	A	A	I
29.	Add or drop a course from a menu within the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	-	A	I
30.	Comprehensive revision of General Education Requirements	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I

Notes

² Any change to a cross-listed course requires the signature of both department chairs or program directors overseeing the course to ensure that the courses stay in sync. This includes courses taught at other campuses (e.g. BIBL 101 and BIBO 101).

³ For undergraduate majors, a minimum of 30 hours is required. These programs must have a minimum of 6 elective hours, unless the requirements of external accrediting bodies make it impossible. Master's programs must include a minimum of 30 hours, and doctoral programs must include a minimum of 30 hours beyond the master's.

⁴ When a department/school or dean proposes closing a program, approval routing follows the typical process beginning with the department/school. An administrative proposal by the provost or senior vice president for academic affairs would follow the "provost-proposed" routing on the chart.

Updated 8/1/2023

Department/School(s)	
<i>John Ehrke</i>	02/06/2026
Chair Signature	Date
Chair/Program Director Signature	Date
College Academic Council(s)	
<i>Kathleen Ren</i>	03/19/2026
Chair Signature	Date
Chair Signature	Date
Dean(s)	
<i>Charles Minter</i>	3/30/2026
Signature	Date
Signature	Date
Teacher Education Council	
Signature	Date
Campus Academic Council: Abilene Undergraduate or Abilene Graduate	
Signature	Date
Provost	

Signature

Date

University General Education Council

Signature

Date

University Faculty

Abilene Faculty Senate Chair signature

Date

Dallas Faculty Council Chair signature

Date

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Signature

Date

President

Signature

Date

Abilene New Course Application

You may delete the preceding instructional pages before submitting an application.

Course ID (<i>Subject Code and Number</i>)	SDS 396
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1. Systems and Catalog Information Complete each item.

A	Course Developer	John Ehrke
B	Course Instructor	John Ehrke
C	Course Title	Statistics and Data Science Seminar
D	Course Abbreviation for Banner if title is more than 30 characters	SDS Seminar
E	College	OSE - Onstead Science and Engineering ▾
F	Department or School	MATH - Mathematics ▾
G	Number of Credit Hours	2 ▾
G1	Number of Lecture Contact Hours	2 ▾
G2	Number of Lab Contact Hours	0 ▾
H	Is the course for a fixed or variable number of credit hours?	Fixed ▾ If variable, explain rationale:
I	Is the course repeatable for additional credit?	No ▾
J	Maximum total number of credit hours a student can earn for this course	2
K		Seminar (SEM) ▾ See Schedule Type definitions in the Reference section.
L	Number of Faculty Workload Hours	2 ▾
M	Grading Mode	Standard ▾
N	Maximum Enrollment	20

O	Catalog Description (50 words or less)	Examines quantitative literacy from a data and evidence driven perspective. Through class discussion and case studies, students learn the basics of ethical responsibility in the data sciences, the distinct challenges associated with modern applications of data science and appropriate methodologies for developing their own research projects.
P	List any prerequisites (course/s, test scores, class standing, major, etc.)	MATH 227, COMM 120
Q	List any corequisites (these <i>must</i> be taken at the same time; note that a single requirement cannot be both a prerequisite <i>and</i> a corequisite)	
R	If the course is cross-listed, specify the subject code and course number of the other course	
S	Does this course require any additional student course fees?	☐ No If yes, attach a completed course fee form .
T1	Will the course be offered in fall terms?	☐ No
T2	Will the course be offered in spring terms?	☒ Yes, every year
T3	Will the course be offered in summer terms?	☐ No
U	First semester this course will be offered under a new Course ID. <i>May not be earlier than the coming fall semester.</i>	Spring 2027
V	Is this course required for a program(s)?	☒ Yes If yes, attach a completed curriculum proposal to change the program(s).
W	Should the addition of this course be retroactively applied to the degree plan it supports? <i>This is rare, and rationale should explain compelling extenuating circumstances.</i>	☐ No If yes, provide rationale:

X	Has this course been offered as a Special Topics course? <i>New courses are not required to be taught as Special Topics courses prior to approval.</i>	No ▾ If yes, provide course ID, term, and enrollment:
Y	List any courses in which the content overlaps the proposed course. (Course ID and Name). <i>Attach a statement from the instructor/dept chair of the existing course justifying the new offering.</i>	MATH 397, explanation below

2. Curriculum

- A. Explain any effects of this course on any degree plans. If the addition of the course alters program requirements, submit a separate [Approval Chart for Curriculum Change](#) to update the program.

This only affects the new program in SDS and is a part of the program proposal. We are considering allowing Actuarial Science students to enroll in this course instead of 397 if they choose to. For now we will consider that as a waiver/substitution to their degree requirement of 397, but may change it in the future.

- B. Justify the addition of this course to the current curriculum, explaining the gap it meets.

This is a companion course to MATH 397: Mathematics Seminar, which we currently teach. 396 and 397 will meet concurrently with the same course instructor. The two courses have slightly different assessments and outcomes though as they serve slightly different audiences.

3. Course Design

- A. Audience and Course Goal
1. Describe the intended audience, including prerequisite skills.

This course is intended solely for junior SDS majors. It is a prerequisite for enrollment into the program's capstone experience. Students are expected to have completed several courses in the major, in particular MATH 227 (required) and 377 (recommended, not required). They should have experience with statistical analysis and programming.

2. State the overarching course goal(s) in performance terms.
 - Learn how to read, evaluate and discuss statistics and data science literature in the form of published journal articles.
 - Improve speaking and critical analysis skills as it relates to presenting rigorous mathematical ideas.
 - Refine mathematical typesetting skills to align closer with expected norms in the discipline.

- Expose students to a wide array of topics suitable for research in undergraduate mathematics.
- Make connections between faith, a Christian worldview, and the vocational requirements of professions in the statistics and data science fields.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Measurements

	Student Learning Outcome	Measurement
1	Students strengthen their skills in reading and reviewing SDS literature.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments.
2	Students synthesize research content from multiple perspectives.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments, and their Capstone presentation.
3	Students compare and contrast human-centered, analytic and systems-oriented domains of research in SDS.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments, and their Capstone presentation.
4	Students identify ethical considerations in a variety of discipline specific case studies and articulate how their ethic is consistent with a Christian worldview.	Students will develop this competency through reading discussions, and short reflective writing assignments.
5	Students propose a capstone project topic, methodology, timeline, and review committee.	Students will develop this competency through completing their Capstone presentation.

C. Text and Resources

Give the full publication information of the textbook/s and other required resources and outside readings. For **combined undergraduate/graduate** courses, make two lists:

A. full publication information; label **Undergraduate**.

Bradley, James, and Russell Howell. *Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith*. HarperOne, 2011.

B. full publication information; label **Graduate**.

4. Supporting Documentation

Required of all applications	
1	Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes
2	Syllabus — Attach the syllabus for the course based upon the anticipated first-semester offering.

4	Library — Submit new course application and syllabus to the Library dean's office. Attach the Library's memo.
Attach if applicable	
5	Content Overlap — Include one document for each course you listed in Section 1Y. Attach statement from instructor/dept chair of existing course justifying the new offering.
6	Departmental Resources — List the resources that support the course and are available only through the department, if applicable. Attach the list of the holdings and the location(s).
7	Resources — List resources (other than library or departmental resources) that are needed to support this course (computers, lab equipment, other technology, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items and indicate possible sources or estimated cost of each. List the sources of any needed funds.
8	Expenses — List additional expenses needed to implement this course (full-time or part-time faculty, graduate or lab assistants, student employees, travel, special student costs, room renovation, storage facility, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items, the estimated cost of each and the source of the funds.
9	Justification — Attach any documents to which you refer in Section 2B.



Onstead College of Science and Engineering
Department of Mathematics

SDS 396
Statistics and Data Science Seminar
Section 01
Spring 2026

Syllabus

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. John Ehrke, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Chair
Email: john.ehrke@acu.edu
Phone: 325-513-4242 (cell), 325-674-2162 (office)
Office: Onstead Science Center 173

Instructor Availability

It is my responsibility as the instructor to provide timely responses to all email or personal communications in a respectful and professional manner. In kind, the same applies to student communications with the instructor.

In-Person Office Hours: Tuesday 9-11 am, 2-4 pm, Wednesday 3-4 pm, Thursday 9-11 am

Zoom Office Hours: By appointment only.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://acuonline.zoom.us/j/8095293581>

Meeting ID: 809 529 3581

Mission Statements

This course supports ACU's mission statement of preparing students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world by providing students a foundational understanding of the

mathematical principles such as problem solving and decision making, as well as exposing students to the role of mathematics in a Christian worldview.

The mission of the Onstead College of Science and Engineering is to explore and understand God's creation in the natural world and apply the acquired knowledge and principles to address its issues and challenges.

The mission of the Department of Mathematics is to educate students to be quantitative and analytical thinkers in preparation for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

Course Information

Credit Meeting and Hours Information

This is a 2-credit hour course that meets on Monday, Wednesday each week.

Room: OSC 235

Time: 2:00 – 2:50 MW

Course Description and Purpose

SDS 396 – Statistics and Data Science Seminar (2-0-2), spring. Examines quantitative literacy from a data and evidence driven perspective. Through class discussion and case studies, students learn the basics of ethical responsibility in the data sciences, the distinct challenges associated with modern applications of data science and appropriate methodologies for developing their own research projects.

Prerequisites: MATH 227, completion of university communication requirement.

Course Goals

- Learn how to read, evaluate and discuss statistics and data science literature in the form of published journal articles.
- Improve speaking and critical analysis skills as it relates to presenting rigorous mathematical ideas.
- Refine mathematical typesetting skills to align closer with expected norms in the discipline.
- Expose students to a wide array of topics suitable for research in undergraduate mathematics.
- Make connections between faith, a Christian worldview, and the vocational requirements of professions in the statistics and data science fields.

Course Materials

Course Text: The required text for this course is *Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith* by Russell Howell and James Bradley. This text addresses students' needs to bring science into perspective with their faith. This text explores secular scholarship and spiritual pedagogy by demonstrating how the discipline of mathematics penetrates the core issues of human existence and illustrates how math

contributes to the construction of a consistent Christian worldview. The course text may be ordered online or purchased in the campus bookstore.

Technology: In addition to the required text, students should bring a calculator with them each day to class. The TI-84 calculator is the department-supported model, but other handheld calculators are acceptable alternatives. On occasion, certain class meetings will ask students to bring a laptop or tablet to class to explore other calculator options like Desmos and Maple. It is advised that students bring a laptop or phone each day with them to class to participate in polling questions. iPads or other tablets are also helpful in taking notes and working homework in this class, but are not required.

Learning Management System: This course will make use of the Canvas learning management system (LMS). Canvas can be accessed through the myACU portal and will host assignments, discussions, and a variety of lecture resources including links to slides and videos. Canvas also features a course calendar with due dates for various assignments as well as class prep lists. We will reference Canvas early and often throughout the semester.

Course Competencies

The course objectives below describe the outcomes of the course in terms of specific and measurable actions, capabilities, or skills students will be able to perform as a result of experiences in the course.

Course Competencies	Developing these Competencies
Students strengthen their skills in reading and reviewing SDS literature.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments.
Students synthesize research content from multiple perspectives.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments, and their Capstone presentation.
Students compare and contrast human-centered, analytic and systems-oriented domains of research in SDS.	Students will develop this competency through reading and roleplaying assignments, and their Capstone presentation.
Students identify ethical considerations in a variety of discipline specific case studies and articulate how their ethic is consistent with a Christian worldview.	Students will develop this competency through reading discussions, and short reflective writing assignments.
Students propose a capstone project topic, methodology, timeline, and review committee.	Students will develop this competency through completing their Capstone presentation.

Course Schedule

The following is a list of the course meeting dates and topics that will be discussed during each class meeting.

Week	Topic	Assignments
Week 1	- Introduction to research - Reading and roleplaying mock assignment - Overview of capstone requirements	
Week 2	- Presentation skills - LaTeX, Canva, Python - How to Mathematics - Paul Halmos - Writing skills - LaTeX, SIAM citation style - MTEF Chapters 1-3 - Is Data a New Religion?	MTEF Discussion Post #1
Week 3	- MATH RR1 - - SDS RR1 -	Weekly Paper Summary #1
Week 4	- MATH RR2 - - SDS RR2 -	Weekly Paper Summary #2
Week 5	- MATH RR 3 - - SDS RR 3 -	Weekly Paper Summary #3
Week 6	- MATH RR 4 - Ethics Case Study - SDS RR 4 - Ethics Case Study - MTEF Chapters 4-6	MTEF Discussion Post #2
Week 7	- Ethics in the age of big data - Ethics in the age of AI - Ethics in research - Ethics and Human Dignity	Weekly Paper Summary #4
Week 8	- Surprise Comparative Paper Session I - Literature Reviews / Methodologies - MTEF Chapters 7-9	
Week 9	- Spring Break	
Week 10	- MATH RR 5 - - SDS RR 5 -	Ethics Paper Due Weekly Paper Summary #5
Week 11	- MATH RR 6 - - SDS RR 6 -	Weekly Paper Summary #6
Week 12	- CYO Comparative Paper Session II - Literature Reviews / Methodologies	
Week 13	- Bayesian Inference and Prior Beliefs - MTEF Chapters 10-11 - Capstone Consultation	MTEF Discussion Post #3
Week 14	- Capstone Topic Presentations	
Week 15	- Final Exam	Capstone Topic Presentations

Course Assessments

This course utilizes a standard percentage-based grading system allowing students to earn points from various assessments throughout the semester. Your grade in the course will be based on the following tiers at semester's end.

Percentage	Letter Grade Received
$\geq 90\%$	A
[80%, 90%)	B
[70%, 80%)	C
[60%, 70%)	D
$< 60\%$	F

There are 5 different assessment categories in the course:

Assessment	Number	Percentage
Reading and roleplaying participation	6	10%
Weekly reading and research summary papers	6	30%
Discussions	3	30%
Ethics Paper	1	10%
Capstone Proposal Presentation	1	20%
Totals		100%

Description of Assessments

- **Reading and Roleplaying Assignments** – Each class session in the first half of the course involves reading, presenting, critiquing, and discussing one assigned paper. Before each session, all students are required to read the paper. Two teams of students are responsible for presenting the paper. Each student in a team is assigned a role to play to critique a paper. Each role is of equal importance. Details and suggested preparations for each role are detailed below. Students are encouraged to read through each role and request clarification if needed. To foster individuality and diverse student backgrounds, students are offered to give their preferences to play each role. However, the ultimate decision of assigning roles belongs to the instructor. It is plausible that students are not assigned their desired roles. If this is the case,

students are encouraged to take this opportunity to step outside of their comfort zone and discover their potential. It is noted that not all roles would be assigned for all papers. Roles are assigned to a paper based on its suitability to the context and content of the paper. Grades are given for participation in the in-class portion and for the connected weekly summary paper.

Role	Requirements	Skills
Presenter	Create the main presentation, describing the motivation, problem definition, method, and experimental findings of this paper. Describe what the author does to make their paper more interesting, more persuasive, or generally a good read. Give a thorough review of the intended audience for the paper.	Ability to create effective and properly sectioned PowerPoint presentations. Preferably someone who is more comfortable with public speaking and engaging with the audience.
Reviewer	Complete a full—critical but not necessarily negative—review of the paper. This may involve some board work to show how some calculations are correct or assertions from the authors are valid. You will likely be responsible for fielding questions of a more technical nature. Follow the guidelines for MATH SciNet in writing reviews. Please also be aware of mathematics subject classifications.	Attention to detail. Ability to read and organize the pros and cons of every section within the paper to identify areas of improvement and future scope. Ability to examine the literary and academic merits of an article and the persuasive style of the author.

Archaeologist	Determine where this paper sits in the context of previous and subsequent work. Find and report on one prior paper that substantially influenced the current paper and one newer paper that cites this current paper.	Ability to read, comprehend and summarize multiple research papers quickly. Synthesize arguments across multiple papers to present a cohesive view of the literature.
Researcher	Explain how a researcher may view this topic. What areas of research are involved and where might a researcher go next with the information? Are there unaddressed conclusions one may draw from the reading, or areas that merit further study?	Ability to teach the audience elements of the paper in detail and fill in the gaps an article may leave. Start by discussing key results and explain the reasoning or significance behind them.

- Ethics Paper - There will be a weekly reading and roleplaying session devoted to articles that involve case studies of ethical issues related to work in statistics or data science. We will work to identify general areas of ethical consideration in the discipline of mathematics as a whole. From these general areas, students will pick one area to reflect on in a paper and review case studies in that area.
- Discussions – There are four days of the semester reserved for the discussion of assigned readings. Students will be asked to read the course text and some other assigned reading, participate in a class discussion and then complete a discussion assignment in Canvas as a follow up. The three discussions this semester are listed below.
 - o Discussion 1 – Mathematics and Faith: Data as a “New Religion”
 - o Discussion 2 – Mathematics and Faith: Ethics and Human Dignity
 - o Discussion 3 – Mathematics and Faith: Bayesian Inference and Prior Beliefs
- Mock Consultation Presentation – A major goal of the seminar course is to help students prepare for their senior Capstone experience. For mathematics majors, the Capstone thesis is a major work product involving literature review and extensive research. As students in Statistics and Data Science your capstone experience will require you to work with a sponsor

on a real world problem. In your Capstone proof of concept presentation you will be required to practice for your meeting with your real sponsor in the Fall with a mock consultation. You must translate a vague business need into a concrete data science problem statement and begin to outline your methodology to attack the problem. Your Capstone instructor will make the necessary arrangements to provide you with a consultation experience the following Fall.

Course Policies

Assignment Policies

During the semester, many assignments will have due dates posted on Canvas and announced in class. The purpose of a due date is to give you a timeline within which to work and allow for formative assessment of your work. An assignment, once due, will not be accepted under any circumstance if any of the following have occurred:

- The assignment is not submitted before an answer key is posted.
- The assignment is not submitted before being closed. This applies to Canvas discussions and any assignments completed in Learning Catalytics or in an online homework portal. These have rigid closure times and once closed will not be reopened.
- The assignment is not submitted before all submitted assignments are graded.

In addition, assignments will incur a 10% penalty for each of the following infractions that occur. This includes all assignments in the course - including major assignments - so be careful to follow all given instructions precisely.

- Assignments not turned in on time will receive a 10% penalty for each day it is late.
- Assignments turned in where instructions are not followed will receive a 10% penalty for each infraction.

Penalties are additive, rather than multiplicative, so if an assignment is turned in 2 days late and an instruction was not correctly followed, then there are three infractions for a total penalty of 30%, meaning the highest grade the assignment could receive is a 70%. (Effectively, I will multiply whatever grade you earn by 0.7 to determine the adjusted grade in this case.)

Please note that you are responsible for working with your group on collaborative assignments -- like the modeling projects -- even if you are not in class on the day groups are assigned. Failure to work with your group in a good faith manner will render you ineligible for credit with the rest of your group. Any group wishing to dismiss a member of the group for inaction must inform the instructor at least three days before the due date. You may opt to complete the assignment on your own for credit if you are dismissed from a group.

In the case of extenuating circumstances, such as illness, injury or other personal emergency you can request an extension for assignments. Any such requests must be made in advance of the due date or class date; requests made after the due date or the start of class where a quiz is taken will not be honored. This means that if you have a conflict that prevents you from attending class to complete an assignment you must notify the instructor before class begins and arrange a time/date to make up the assignment. This policy applies to all assignments including exams/projects. Please note that some

assignments cannot have extended due dates and will require you to complete the assignment early if there is a conflict.

Finally, you are ultimately responsible for ensuring that your grade in the course is being calculated correctly according to this syllabus and that there are no missing or incomplete grades in the Canvas gradebook. The instructor will make every effort to keep the gradebook up-to-date and accurate but mistakes can sometimes be made. Please be diligent in taking ownership of your grade and performance in this course.

Attendance and Drop Policy

Your regular attendance is both necessary and expected. You are responsible for all material covered while absent and will be expected to take all scheduled assessments even if you are absent for the associated lectures. Only university approved absences can exempt you from being counted absent. Per university policy, university approved absences must be cleared with the instructor one week in advance. Make your coaches and sponsors aware that failure to comply with this policy may affect your ability to make up missed assignments. If you feel like you need to drop this class, please discuss it with your instructor first. It is your responsibility to make an informed decision when it comes to dropping or not dropping a class.

Collaboration policy: For preparing each presentation, you share work with your assigned teammates and no other students. In particular, when your paper is also being presented by a different team(s) in the same or different section of this course, you may not collaborate or share work with students in this other team(s). Similarly, all other deliverables in the course are individual assignments. You are required to synthesize, research literature, and produce the document by yourself without working with your classmates. This course is intended to give you experience in autonomous research, so trying to delegate or shortcut preparation is a wasted learning opportunity. Acting against this rule will be considered an academic integrity violation and lead to reprimands. For your paper summaries and comparative analyses, you must produce your own work. You may discuss the papers with classmates, but the submissions must be your own work. Do not use the internet or other sources to find prior analyses to complete your assignments.

Plagiarism and AI policy: The presentation and related work survey emphasize a literature search and compare/contrast to other material. All material you find and use in any of the course deliverables must be explicitly and correctly referenced/cited. Notes:

- Directly copying text from the paper being summarized, and/or from author websites or other sources, without using “quotation marks” around everything that is a direct quote, followed by a reference to the source being quoted, is plagiarism.
- Text and/or slides copied directly from other sources without attribution in presentations is also considered plagiarism.

While the uses of generative AI in industry and society are rapidly expanding, as a tool in academia the use of AI is fraught with potential pitfalls. As a mathematics student, using generative AI to solve any mathematics problem, and submit the work as your own, is strictly prohibited. The purpose of a

mathematics course is to develop reasoning skills and problem-solving expertise that can only be properly developed by working through steps thoughtfully and rigorously. AI short circuits this process and devalues the learning outcomes of the course. Additionally, generative AI is notoriously prone to making mistakes on mathematical calculations.

Generative AI is also strictly prohibited from use in any writing or reflection assignment. You may use AI to help you edit your writing or give feedback on your writing, but it cannot be used to wholly generate your submission. For any other uses of AI please consult your instructor before use as the use of AI may qualify as an academic integrity violation.

Academic Integrity Policy

The most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in our lives. As a community of Christian students and scholars, we are each responsible to expect behaviors from each other consistent with the nature of God, to respect the community, and to respect ourselves.

Expectations of academic honesty and integrity extend to both university employees and students. Every member of the community is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. Being responsible requires action against violations in spite of peer pressure, loyalty, or compassion. Individuals must take responsibility for their own conduct and discourage misconduct by others.

Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined as academic work completed as assigned for each class by the individual or group responsible for the work. Academic work includes but is not limited to reading assignments, homework assignments, assessments, examinations and tests, attendance at required out-of-class activities, written or oral presentations, and laboratory experiments and research.

Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent and therefore, are a form of lying. Specific examples of violations of academic integrity in this course include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Submitting for credit, in whole or in part, the work of others.
- Receiving, giving, or using unauthorized aid on an examination, test, quiz, or assignment (e.g., texting).
- Viewing the answers of a nearby classmate during an examination, test, quiz, or assignment.
- Having inappropriate notes/practice work available during an examination, test, quiz, or assignment.
- Obtaining examination, test, or quiz questions before the examination, test, or quiz is given.
- Accessing printed copies or electronic copies of formulas and/or notes during an examination, test, quiz, or assignment without instructor approval.
- Failure to give credit to sources used in a work in an attempt to present the work as one's own.

- Submission of paper(s), project(s), or assignment(s), in whole or in part, obtained from any source, such as a friend, research service, or club paper file, as one's own.
- Allowing other members of a group to provide a disproportionate fraction of a required group project or activity.
- Claiming credit for an attendance or service activity without attending or performing the activity.
- Written or oral presentation of falsified materials and facts, including but not limited to the results of interviews, laboratory experiments, and field-based research.

Consequences of Breach

Violations of academic integrity may result in, but are not limited to, the following consequences:

- A first offense will result in a grade of 0 on the assignment in which the violation of academic integrity occurred.
- You will be permitted to remain in the class after the first offense of being found in violation of the academic integrity policy.
- A second violation in a class will result in an automatic grade of F in the course.
- All violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Students in the Student Life Office.

Appeal Process

If you would like to appeal a decision, then please follow this link to file an appeal:

<https://acu.edu/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-process/>.

Disability Accommodations

Abilene Christian University is dedicated to removing barriers and opening access for students with disabilities in compliance with ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Alpha Scholars Program facilitates disability accommodations in cooperation with instructors. In order to receive accommodation, you must be registered with the Alpha Scholars Program, and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please call our office directly at 325-674-2667.

Medical and Mental Care

ACU is committed to making the return to campus as safe as possible by providing students, faculty and staff with resources to promote their health. We will continue working tirelessly to fine-tune our cleanliness and hygiene protocols. The ACU Medical and Counseling Care Center, along with Wildcat Care, are available to assist you with medical and mental health needs. Now more than ever, telehealth is an excellent resource, allowing you to stay healthy, talk with a provider 24/7 and greatly limit your exposure to illness. Many medical concerns, such as a cold, sinus infection, rash, nausea, etc., can be discussed via telehealth. In addition to providing in-person care for your medical needs, the ACU Medical Clinic can provide COVID-19 testing with same-day results.

Anti-Harassment Policy

As a professor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a professor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. When I am not able to keep your information confidential, I will only share it with responsible administrators on campus who can provide you with services and resources. I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator information regarding sexual misconduct or harassment, dating or domestic violence or stalking that you report to me. If you would prefer to share information in a confidential setting, I encourage you to speak with someone in the [ACU Counseling Center](#). All of your options are available for review by clicking on the link to ACU's [policy](#).

Title IX Policy: At ACU, we strive to comply with all applicable legal requirements prohibiting, preventing and responding to sexual misconduct against any member of the ACU community. The full Title IX policy and process can be found at <https://acu.edu/human-resources/title-ix-and-sexual-misconduct-information/>.

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2026
TO: Dr. John Ehrke
FROM: Mark McCallon, Associate Dean for Library Services
RE: New Course Application – SDS 396 – Statistics and Data Science Seminar

After reviewing the course syllabus, the Library is able to support the proposed course. Please contact Mark McCallon (mccallonm@acu.edu), if additional library resources are needed for the course. Thank you for the opportunity to evaluate the course syllabus.



February 11, 2026

Dr. John Ehrke
Associate Professor of Mathematics, Department Chair
Department of Mathematics
Onstead Science Center 173
(325) 674-2162

Re: Statistics and Data Science Seminar (SDS 396)

Dear Dr. Ehrke,

Thank you for the submission of SDS 396: Statistics and Data Science Seminar for review. I have reviewed it based on the ACU Syllabus Guidelines. I found the syllabus to meet all aspects of the checklist.

Please note that this letter is intended as a reference, which will be read by the department chair and council members, who may also have questions or comments of their own. If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know.

Please also let me know if we can help in the design and facilitation of this course.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amos Gutierrez".

Dr. Amos Gutierrez
Director of Instructional Design, Adams Center