Statistical Consulting Services (SCS)

Mission: To support administrators, faculty, and graduate students of Northern Illinois University (NIU), as well as outside clients, in their research and professional work involving statistics.

Services: SCS is a part of the Division of Statistics at NIU. The director of the SCS, a regular faculty member of the division, supervises all consulting activities. Our services include short-term statistical analyses, long-term collaborative research, and assistance in preparation of research grant proposals.

Education: Hands-on engaged learning in statistical consulting provides graduate students who work in the SCS with practical experience and prepares them for internships and future employment.

Research: The services of the SCS facilitate publication of research, as well as successful completion of masters’ theses and Ph.D. dissertations.

Appointments: To schedule an appointment, please fill and submit the client request form at http://www.niu.edu/stat/consulting/index.shtml. A consultant will contact you to schedule your first consulting session. We currently do not offer walk-in service.

Students need written permission from their thesis advisors before they contact the SCS.

Documents to bring to your first consulting session

If you are seeking our advice on designs and analyses of your study, please bring the following:

- abstract of your proposal and/or a clear statement of purpose of your project,
- list of research questions you want to answer,
- copies of relevant articles and earlier work on similar topics in your discipline.

If you are seeking our advice on data analyses or report writing after gathering your data, in addition to the above items, please bring the following:

- a copy of the experimental protocol,
- a sample datasheet,
- an electronic copy of the complete data set (Microsoft Excel format is acceptable), and
- results of any preliminary analyses performed.

At this point, our resources permit us to perform data analyses using SAS, SPSS, and R programming environments. We can also advise clients should they choose to perform their own statistical analyses using alternative software.

Cost of services

Initial Meeting
For the first meeting between clients and the SCS consultants, we charge a nominal $25 fee for NIU students and $50 for all others.

Extended Services
All clients are charged hourly fees for services provided beyond the first meeting. Please see our current fee schedule at http://www.niu.edu/stat/consulting/cost.shtml.

Sponsored Research
Clients who engage in sponsored research are encouraged to include, if appropriate, statistical consulting in their proposals. This can take the form of a direct-cost line item, a part or full-time graduate assistant from the SCS, partial funding of the faculty consultant’s salary, etc.

Collaboration
If the project calls for standard statistical designs and analyses, then co-authorship with us is usually not appropriate. If the project involves nonstandard statistical techniques, then co-authorship is recommended.
Types of services provided by the SCS

Short-Term Statistical Analyses
For students, researchers, faculty, and administrators at NIU, we provide advice and assistance with short-term statistical analyses. This includes help with designing experiments, clinical trials, observational studies, and surveys, as well as analyzing data and interpreting the results. You are especially encouraged to contact us early in your research, preferably at the design stage. The time typically required to complete a project varies from a few hours to several weeks.

Long-Term Collaborative Research
We seek to promote cross-disciplinary relationships and collaborative research between the faculty within the Division of Statistics and their counterparts working in other disciplines throughout the university. If you are engaged in a project that is suitable for collaborative research, please contact the director of the SCS at statconsult@math.niu.edu.

Assistance in Preparation of Research Grant Proposals
We invite researchers preparing grant proposals to include statistical consulting and data-analyses as items in their research plans and their budgets. The director of the SCS is available for help in preparing budget estimates and for advice in writing statistical sections of research proposals.

Would your work benefit from help in the following areas?

- Experimental Design
- Survey Design
- Sample Plans and Sample-Size Determination
- Computer Printout Interpretation
- Discussion of Appropriate Data Analyses
- Presentation of Results

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