

Project papers in Statistics – Notes for students

There are various project papers available in Statistics under the 161 code. Some are undergraduate, some are postgraduate. The relevant codes are 161.380, 161.381 and 161.382 which are undergraduate level and 161.780, 161.781 and 161.782 at postgraduate level. Those papers ending in 80 and 81 are 15 credit papers; those ending in 82 are 30 credits. Not all papers are available in a given year, or to a given student. There are also 161.893 Research report (60 credits) and 161.895 Thesis (120 credits).

When your enrolment in one of these papers is approved, you have a responsibility to send your current email address to the relevant Project Co-ordinator. For 2011, the Project Co-ordinators are:

Albany	700 & 800 level	Dr Barry McDonald	b.mcdonald@massey.ac.nz
	300 level	Dr Beatrix Jones	m.b.jones@massey.ac.nz
Palmerston North and extramural:		Prof Stephen Haslett	s.j.haslett@massey.ac.nz

A number of you will have statistical topics that you would like to work on and will need to have approved by one of the Project Co-ordinators. Others of you will need to look at the available topics on:

<http://ifs.massey.ac.nz/undergrad/statsprojects.php>

for topics supervised in Palmerston North , and

<http://cms.massey.ac.nz/massey/index.cfm?8F4508BE-96BF-57FE-A114-C964C4272F2E>

for topics supervised in Albany.

Note that not all projects on these websites are at 300, 700 or 800 level. Please also check for any other available projects with the Project Co-ordinators.

Note also that the Project Co-ordinator for extramural project papers is Professor Haslett, but that - even extramurally - it may be possible to do a project supervised from Albany.

It is your responsibility to discuss and clarify your project with the relevant Project Co-ordinator as early in the semester as possible. Making contact before the semester starts is strongly recommended.

Please note the following guidelines:

1. The focus of your project must be researching or extending a statistical method, or the application of a statistical method or methods. You are expected to write a 1-2 page outline of your intended project before approval for enrolment will be granted. This can be done in consultation with the relevant Project Co-ordinator.
2. Projects linked to your place of work are permitted, but the focus must remain as detailed under 1 above, and where applicable agreement from the Course Co-ordinator to do a work-related project will require permission of your employer. Commercial projects, for which there will or may be income to you or your employer or some other agency from an external source associated with your project, will require clarification before approval.

3. Once your project has been approved, you will be assigned a supervisor from the Statistics staff, with whom you are expected to stay in regular contact, either in person if you are on campus or by email and telephone if you are not. For any issues that cannot be dealt with through this route, the Project Co-ordinator should be contacted.
4. You are expected to keep up to date, and be able to assess your progress relative to the required completion date through the regular contact with your supervisor. This means, for example, that to continue to be enrolled in the project paper, **you will generally be required to produce an outline and preliminary literature summary with one month of formal enrolment.** During the remainder of the period of your enrolment in the project paper, you will also be required to provide evidence of progress if/when requested by your supervisor.
5. Please note that the expected workload is around 12 hours per week per 15 credits for single semester papers, and around 6 hours per week per 15 credits for double semester papers.
6. Good students plan their work over the whole period of their enrolment and meet deadlines. It is strongly recommended that your project, including the writing up, be essentially complete before examinations begin if not required to be completed before this date. (See point 7 below.) If you think you will have difficulty completing your project in a single semester, and you are enrolling in the first semester, there are some options for double semester projects. (For details see the Massey University Calendar) However you will need to make the decision on a one semester or two semester paper at the time you enrol. If in doubt, double semester enrolment is recommended. Note that 161.893 and 161.895 are double semester only.
7. (a) At 300 and 700 level, except for Honours students, **projects are due on the final day of examinations**, in the semester in which you are due to complete your project.
 (b) **Honours students** have double semester project papers with an earlier deadline, and **are required to submit on the Monday following the final day of lectures in the semester when project completion is due.**
 (c) Carry Forward of Course Work (CFCW) is not possible, which means that instead you would need to re-enrol for the paper.
 (d) Please note that if you do not complete your project within the specified timeline, and seek to re-enrol in a Statistics project paper in a following semester, you will not generally be permitted to continue the same project and will need to find new project and supervisor.
8. Your project will be assessed on its statistical content, with a strong focus on methodology and the comprehension you demonstrate of that methodology. Extensive examples without such understanding, or general material on background to the project, summary statistics, and policy decisions may be included as supplementary material. However such supplementary material cannot be the main focus of the project, nor on its own can it be a sufficient basis for securing a good grade.
9. Your project will be reviewed and marked both by your supervisor, who will comment on your work noting how much of it is your “own”, and by another academic staff member in Statistics.

SJH
12 November 2010