CGS2531 Problem Solving Using Computer Software

Fall 2019

Comment from previous students after taking the class

I enjoyed the relatable examples used to demonstrate how the material could be applied to our daily lives. The problem-solving process is useful when we face open-ended questions that we may be indecisive about.

The course has improved my technological knowledge and my ability to use a computer to solve problems.

I thought it was very interesting to learn computer skills and get to test my knowledge through the variety of projects and assignments assigned in this course.

I thought I knew everything about Microsoft word, but this class showed me a lot more applications than I knew were possible

I think that learning how to use pivot tables was a really important skill

Course Description

(Credits: 3) A problem-solving introduction and thorough exploration of word processing, spreadsheet management, data analysis, graphical display of data, and multimedia presentations. The problem-solving approach also aids students in their specific majors through software applications requiring major-specific professional communication skills in written, graphical, and presentation forms.

Pre-Requisites & Co-Requisites: none

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

I encourage you to visit the [Disability Resource Center (DRC)](#) (352-392-8565) to determine how you could improve your learning as well. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met.

SLOs and Course Goals

In this course you will be introduced and will build on the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of the Business School:

Content

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of elements of economics, financial accounting, marketing, operations management, organizational behavior, business law, information technology, business statistics, and social responsibility.

- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of business-related software applications

Critical thinking

- Specify and implement a framework for identifying a business problem and develop alternative solutions and a set of evaluation criteria.

- Assess the outcomes of a course of action and make appropriate adjustments

Communication

- Write business documents clearly, concisely and analytically.
- Speak in groups and in public clearly, concisely and analytically, with appropriate use of visual aids

Mathematics

In this course, you will receive credit for mathematics because it provides instruction in computational strategies in fundamental mathematics such as: solving equations, logic, statistics, algebra, inductive and deductive reasoning. The course includes formulating mathematical models and arguments, using mathematical models to solve problems and applying mathematical concepts effectively to real-world situations

According to the SLOs for the school of business, **the course goals for CGS2531** are:

- Students will use Excel, Word, and PowerPoint to aid in their problem-solving process.
- Students will write a plan on how they would address an open-ended problem

using the language of the problem-solving framework.

- Students will analyze real-world data, such as applying business statistics techniques and mathematical models and create data visualizations for problem-solving
- Students will demonstrate professional, inclusive communication

Remember:

You will use these course goals in the final assignment.

A detailed description of the alignment between course goals, learning objectives, assessments, assignments, and content can be found in the course map available in Canvas.

Instructor:

I am Dr. John Mendoza-Garcia. I am so excited and honored to be your guide in this class. I received my Ph.D. from Purdue University in Engineering Education. I am married and have a beautiful daughter who is my inspiration. My hobbies are all activities I can do with my daughter and family. Some of those are traveling, hiking, and biking.

Email: jmendozagarcia@ufl.edu
Office location: NSC-226
Telephone: +1(352)-294-0485
Office hours (starting on week 02):
Thursdays 10:30 am – 12m.

Where: ZOOM only from 10:30 to 11, and from 11 to 12, I will meet you through Zoom or in person at NSC 202-C: the conference room

What to expect from me as your instructor:

I will do everything I can to help you succeed in this class. I will do my best in responding to your questions on discussion boards and e-mails before the due dates in a 24 hours range. Although I might not respond on weekends, vacation breaks, or outside of business hours. If you do not receive an answer from me within that range of time, please, write to me again, somehow I might have missed your email. Make sure you send it from your UF email user and follow the email etiquette taught in the first module of this course.

I will provide peer mentors who can help you to go about the assignments and will work with them to make sure you are graded fairly. If several of you have a similar question, I will create videos to help all the students who have similar questions.

Once you submit your assignment, my peer mentors and I will do our best to grade your assignment and publish the grades within 8 business days (1,5 weeks). If after that range of time you have not to get your assignment graded, please contact me.

Communication with me (your instructor)

I will hold office hours either in person or online. Please, meet me to talk about a special situation you are experiencing that is impacting your performance in my class, or in case you have questions about the assignments.

I prefer Zoom than the phone.

You can also communicate with me in an asynchronous way: [1] email: I prefer the Canvas email, but you can also contact me through my UF email. Use your UF email, otherwise, the email system will discard your email because it would think it is Spam. [2] Discussion boards. The conversations here at not private. I prefer the discussion boards for questions that are assignment related. so other students with the same questions can get a quick answer.

Undergraduate peer mentors:

Peer mentors will have two different roles:

- Assist you in the development of the assignments through online office hours and answering questions on the discussion board.
- Grade your work.
  Note
  Peer teachers will be helping any student and will grade different students across all the assignments.

The undergraduate peer mentors will hold online consultation hours weekly through Zoom, and you can attend any of these. Their office hours will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Course Content

This is important!

You will find that the course is divided into modules. Modules have different types of assessments.

- **Quizzes**: assess your memory and understanding
- **Assignments**: assess your ability to apply the concepts and use them to analyze cases.
- **Content related discussion boards**: assess your analysis and critical thinking in regards to using the content of the course in the future. It also develops your inclusive communication.
- **Reflections and self-assessments**: provide opportunities to develop reflective practice.
- **Peer reviews**: Contributes to your critical thinking, inclusive communication, and learning of the content. It also develops the professional skill of providing feedback to peers.

Materials you should review every week:

- Weekly messages from me
- Written instructions for the assignments.
- Videos explaining the assignments.
- Videos helping you to go about the assignments.
- Rubrics

This is important!

Students who do best in the course are those who watch all the videos.

Course Assessment (Evaluation)

Quizzes – 30 points

There are 9 open-book individual quizzes:

- Course quizzes : 5 points (syllabus + netiquette)
- Problem Solving Process: 2.5 points
- Basic Excel: 10 points
- Statistics: 6.5 points
- Regression: 6 points

Notes about quizzes

- Quizzes can be taken at any time before the deadline.
- You can take the quizzes two times.
- For your grade calculation, the system will only consider the highest grade.
- No points can be awarded after the deadline.
  - Quizzes are timed.
  - If you start a quiz, there is no way to stop it. So, before you start a quiz, make sure you are prepared to take it, otherwise, you will lose one of your opportunities.

Extra-time in quizzes for students with special needs: e-mail me your current DRC request as soon as possible, or at least 1 week before the quiz deadline to get your extra time added.

Assignments – 60 points

There will be one assignment due every week. According to previous students, the average number of hours they spent on the assignment is 6 hours. In each assignment,

you will need to submit one or more files to fulfill the requirements.

Extra-time in assignments for Students with special needs: If you have been approved for extra-time on out of the class assignment, please, plan ahead. We do not have a specific class time, assignments are not timed and are published several days before the due dates. You will have plenty of time to work on the assignments if you plan ahead and start early. However, I understand that you work at a different pace, accordingly, I will not apply the late policy to your deliverable, in case you submit your assignment late. Just remind me to waive it because Canvas will apply it automatically. Deliverables will not be accepted later than that.

Extra-time for athletes: I will be happy to grant you early access to any assignment you need. Since assignments are published several days in advance and each take, according to students from the previous semester an average time of 6 hours to be done, I have not considered providing extra-time. I believe that athletes also are aware of their competition calendars. Please, plan ahead and submit your deliverables before you leave for a tournament. Still, if you have a special situation, please contact me.

Participation – 10 points

It is important that students share with others to build knowledge and understanding of the different course topics. In this online course, you will be asked to participate in different discussion boards and respond to other students' participation.

This is important!

Note: This course has two types of discussion boards. [1] Participation assignment related ones, in these discussions students must respond to prompts related to open-ended problems. [2]Assignments related discussion boards in which students ask questions about the assignment. Students' participation in the latter is not valid to get participation points.

Certification

Excel Certification: If you pass the Microsoft Certification Exam *77-727 Excel 2016: Core Data Analysis, Manipulation, and Presentation* (or the expert level exam, 77-728), you can receive credit towards the four Basic Excel Quizzes. Thus, if you do not complete any of the four Basic Excel Quizzes you will receive 10 points for passing the certification exam but if you take one Basic Excel Quiz and earn 2 points, you will receive 8 additional points for passing the certification exam.

Word Certification: If you pass the Microsoft Certification Exam *77-725 Word*

2016: Core Document Creation, Collaboration and Communication (or, with instructor pre-approval, an exam in a more advanced level), you can receive credit towards the Formatting Documents in Word assignment. Thus, if you do not complete the assignment you will receive 5 points upon passing the certification exam but if you only earn 1 point on the assignment, you will receive 4 additional points for passing the certification exam (5 points in total).

Find Vouchers and extra-content for the certification Exams in Canvas.

Assignments in Canvas

In Canvas, you will find a list of the assignments with their due dates in Eastern Time. The deadlines listed are the latest you can submit the assignment (be aware that Canvas shows two dates: the due date, and the date until the assignment is available for late submission – 1 day later). Install the Canvas student App and activate the notifications.

Students in a different Time zone should adjust their schedules to comply with the eastern time requirement. For example, if you are in Los Angeles, CA, you will have to submit before 9 pm of Pacific time.

You can submit your assignment any time before the due date. As such, no extra time will be granted unless you have a special situation that happened unexpectedly. Otherwise, you should work ahead so you do not fall behind. Your assignment will be graded after the due date has passed.

Policy on course evaluation
This is important!
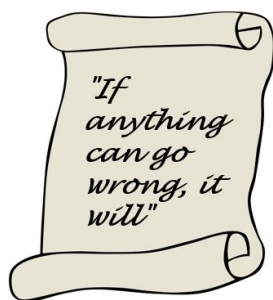**Policy on deliverables with issues**

If one or more of the following is (are) true for the deliverable you submit, you will be able to resubmit, but you will get the late penalty (unless you are eligible to use your Bank Time).

- It has a virus,
- It is corrupt in Canvas
  - This is how a corrupt file can look in Canvas.
  - ~$jmendozagarcia_Word_Ass04_Report_on_Regression.docx
  - If it is corrupt when clicking on the file, the Software shows an error message or shows no error but it does not open.

  A file can get corrupted because of a malfunction of your computer or a network communication problem.

  Usually, when the file is corrupt in Canvas, the document name starts with the symbol tilde ~.

- The file you submitted was the wrong one.

"If anything can go wrong, it will"

This is important!

Please, make sure that we can grade the file you want us to grade.

These are some tips to avoid having a corrupt or the wrong file on Canvas: do not wait until the last minute to try to upload your assignments or take your quizzes (Battle Murphy's Law!), and instead:

1. Make sure you have no virus

2. Upload your document early (you can submit an assignment from day 1 they are published).

3. Log out, and log back in

4. Download your assignment and open it. Can you see it? If you can, there is a high probability that we can too.

On where you need to submit to get credit

We will only grade what is available in Canvas, and that was submitted through the assignment description section.

On errors, mistakes or other issues while submitting

Deliverables will not be accepted by the Canvas e-mail, by the regular e-mail, or by any other online sharing media unless you are authorized by the instructor.

Likewise, if you complete the assignment several minutes or hours before the due date, but you miss submitting it before the due date, you can submit it later, but before the assignment is closed. In this case, you will get the late penalty.

We will only grade your last submission, so make sure that you either submit only once or if you submit more than once, that

your last submission has the right file(s) and it is complete.

Example, if in an assignment you need to submit 2 different documents, you must submit both files in one submission.

However, if after verifying your submission you find out that one file is corrupt or is missing, you should submit again the two files in a second submission.

We will grade your last submission, so any previous submission will not be considered.

In addition, if your first submission was before the due date, but your last submission is after the due date (1 second to 23:59 hours late), your deliverable will be graded with the late policy.

Policy on discussion boards

Since discussion boards intend to create a space for interaction between students, you will not be able to participate in the discussions once they are closed. There is no exception for this rule because if you miss participating in one discussion, you still have the chance to participate in the other 6 (The minimum required number of discussion you should participate is 5).

Policy on late assignments

This is important!

We understand, sometimes life gives us unexpected situations and in that case, it is impossible to get on top of our duties. Thinking that sometimes students for diverse reasons could miss one or more due

dates, I have decided to give you the opportunity to get 50% of the points of the assignment if you submit it between 1 second and 23 hours 59minutes and 59 seconds hours late.

Example: Assignment deliverable was late (for example at 12 am and 5 seconds) and it is worth 9 points. The grade in that assignment was 7. With the 50% discount (4.5 points) your grade would be 7 - 4.5 = **2.5.** ☹

23 hours 59 minutes and 59 seconds after the due date, the deliverable will not be accepted, and you will get 0 points in that assignment.

Policy on late Quizzes

If you missed a quiz, there is no way you can take it past the deadline.

Is there any possibility of an Exception to the late policy?

Yes, but exceptions to the late policy are only allowed per university policy or if you are eligible to use the Bank Time.

Bank Time

Considering that "things" happen, I will waive the late policy in two of your deliverables at the end of the semester. I will ask no questions. To be eligible for this benefit, you should submit most of your other assignments, quizzes and discussions at least one day before the due date. If you are eligible and want to use this benefit, just send me a Canvas email with the following subject: I am using my bank time. Body of the message: Dear Dr. Mendoza-Garcia, since I have submitted most of my

assignments, quizzes and participated in discussions at least one day before the due date, I would like to use my bank time to waive the late penalty on the following assignment(s): [replace this text with the name of the one or two assignments]. This email can be sent only between Nov. 26 and Dec 2. Time Bank cannot be used outside of this range of dates.

Grading Scale:

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
92 - 100	A	4.00
90.0 – 91.99	A-	3.67
88 – 89.99	B+	3.33
82 – 87.99	B	3.00
80.0 – 81.99	B-	2.67
76.7 - 79.99	C+	2.33
73.4 – 76.6	C	2.00
70.0 - 73.3	C-	1.67
66.7 - 69.9	D+	1.33
63.4 - 66.6	D	1.00
60.0 - 63.3	D-	0.67
0 - 59.9	E	0.00

This is important!

Grades will not be rounded-up

Here you can find the current UF grading policies for assigning grade points

Grading Dispute Procedure: You must submit any grading disputes to me (John Mendoza-Garcia) within one week of your assignment grade being posted. So, once your grade is posted, please review the rubric, the peer mentor comments, and the solution, if available. Follow up immediately with me if you have a legitimate grading dispute. Please be aware that I will regrade the assignment, which can cause your grade to go up or down. Please submit a justification as to why you think your assignment needs to be regraded and state that you are aware of the possibility to get your grade increase or decrease because of the re-grading.

Please do not use phrasing such as "I worked so hard on this assignment, I deserved more points!", in professional practice what counts are the results of your output, some projects you work on will take more effort, some less effort, but you have a set of requirements to meet.

Meeting Times/ Course Schedule:

This is an asynchronous online course, there are no set meeting times. All lecture videos and course materials are delivered online through Canvas, the UF course management system; LinkedIn Learning, and other online resources. Students can work ahead since lecture videos and assignments are listed well ahead of the due dates of each assignment.

Make sure you watch the weekly message as soon as it is published. Since it will be sent through an announcement, activate the Canvas notifications in your phone app.

Attendance and Expectations:

Since this is an online course, there is no attendance requirement. However, I expect

you to watch the weekly messages, and all the course videos and engage in conversations with the other students of this class in the discussion boards and the peer reviews. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the [attendance policies](#) at UF.

This is important!

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." [The Honor Code](#) specifies the number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

For example, quizzes are open book. So, I expect you to work on the quizzes individually. I also expect that you help each other, but that you do not provide the answers to your questions to other students. From assignments, I expect that you work on them individually and from scratch, or using material created only by yourself. Still, you can ask questions to others, but it is not expected that you share your deliverables with other students. It is not approved to use deliverables from previous semesters.

All assignments are checked using Turnitin for the originality of composition.

Note that failure to comply with this commitment will result in disciplinary action compliant with the UF Student Honor Code Process. See the process at this [link](#)

Diversity and Inclusion Statement:

I seek to create an environment in which each student is treated equally, fairly and do my best to give you encouragement based on your learning needs, and if

necessary, your special needs. This happens regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or place of birth. I also seek to provide support and encouragement to minority students like first-generation college students, Blacks, Latinos, and those from the LGBTQIA communities. To accomplish this, I would need your help:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official University of Florida records, please let me know!

- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please contact me. I want to be a resource for you. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to me making a general announcement to the class, if necessary to address your concerns).

- Although I took training to become Ally, I consider that I am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said or written in this course (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please let me know. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option).

- Some local and international students may struggle with my accent, the music of my speaking, or the grammar of my speaking. Since English is my second language, I understand this process of adapting the ear to understand other nationalities accents. I experienced it myself when I was learning English with

other non-native English speakers, or when I talk to Americans or other internationals who have Spanish as their second language. Accordingly, feel free to ask for repetition or clarification. I will be happy to provide it.

Accommodation for Students with Special Needs:

As explained above, students with special needs requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to me when requesting an accommodation. Students with special needs should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

If you need further accommodations, we can meet during my office hours or at another time that works for you.

Materials & Supply Fees: none

Textbook:

No text book to buy

Software required for this course

Students will need to install the desktop version of the Office software package in their computers. The online version will not work for the advanced features of Word and Excel that will be taught in this course.

While you are a UF student, you can obtain free access to Office 365 from the UF IT website at *gator cloud*.

All the videos and assignments are recorded with the Windows version of Office. I strongly suggest that you use a Windows computer for this class.

However, if you decide that you will use a Mac and the desktop Mac version of Office, be aware that although the functionality is the same, some of the menus and options are in a different place. You may need extra time to figure out where these options are. We will be happy to help you during office hours or through discussion boards, but still, it will take you more time than if you work in the Windows version of the software. I will also create a discussion board in which Mac users of this course can help each other faster than our 24 hour-response-window.

Hardware

- Microphone and camera.
- Since you will be learning how to use advanced features of Excel, you will need a reliable computer.

Internet connection

This is an online course. For succeeding in this course, you will need a reliable high-speed internet connection. Low-speed connections may give you a delay in the videos or other issues with the online content. Internet connections in Hotels or public places are most of the times slow.

Technical issues

In case you experience technical difficulties, please contact the help desk.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/

Policy on Software Use

All faculty, staff, and student of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see this link at the registrar web page on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Commitment to a safe and inclusive learning environment

The Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering values broad diversity within our community and is committed to individual and group empowerment, inclusion, and the elimination of discrimination.

It is expected that every person in this class will treat one another with dignity and respect regardless of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture.

If you feel like your performance in class is being impacted by discrimination or

harassment of any kind please contact your instructor or any of the following:

- Your academic advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator
- Robin Bielling, Director of Human Resources, 352-392-0903, rbielling@eng.ufl.edu
- Curtis Taylor, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, 352-392-2177, taylor@eng.ufl.edu
- Toshikazu Nishida, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, 352-392-0943, nishida@ufl.edu

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

UF Counseling & Wellness Center,

Or call 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, Assault, or Violence

If you or a friend has been subjected to sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or violence contact the **Office of Title IX Compliance**, located at Yon Hall Room 427, 1908 Stadium Road, (352) 273-1094, title-ix@ufl.edu

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department

At 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

Academic Support

E-learning technical support

352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu..

Career Connections Center

Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

Library Support

Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources

Teaching Center

Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio

302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints Campus

On-Line Students Complaints