




Contact Me	Meet with Me	Class Info
		
Name: Dr. Maggie Pronouns: She/Her/Hers Email: rahmoeller@roanoke.edu	Office: Trexler 270B Student Hours (Drop In!): Tues 3:00-4:00PM Wed 3:30-4:30PM Fri 9:30-10:30AM	Location: Maxey 106 Days: Tues/Thurs Time: 10:10 – 11:40AM

Student Hours Comments:

- The given times above will be consistently available unless emergencies arise.
- These are opportunities for you to ask me questions about material and/or class, including celebrations and concerns.
- Please come prepared to ask your questions.
- It's always ok to pop by, see my door is open, and say, "HI!" – I love getting to know you and chatting with you! But, these have to be short, fun visits 😊 Sadly, none of us have time to sit back and chill anymore. But – please pop by any time for a short 5-10 minute hello. And – never be afraid to come by if you need help 😊

Course Description: We live in a world where numerical information floods our news reports, our newspapers, and the Internet. Access to this information is becoming easier and quicker for most of us; with a quick visit to the Google or CNN website, virtually any search or article presents information quantitatively in many forms, ranging from graphs, to data tables, summaries, and statistical results. Is this ease of access to numerical information and statistics tainting our truth? Does the misuse of quantitative reasoning provide any answer desired to almost any question? Throughout this semester, we will explore these questions in class and learn how to properly argue using numerical information. The final project and defense will allow you, in groups, to explore a contemporary issue affecting a local organization, and decide how one should properly argue that issue, and propose a solution that organization could consider using.

Motivation: Quoting a journal article from 1995, one can read “every year since 1950, the number of American children gunned down has doubled.” This is quite possibly one of the worst (most inaccurate) statistics ever quoted! Why is that? Consider if in 1950, only 1 child was gunned down. In 1951 it would be 2, then 4 children in 1952, and the process continues. In 1960, the amount would be $2^{10} = 1,024$ children. In 1970 it would be $2^{20} = 1,048,576$. In 1983, if the quote is correct, one would determine that $2^{33} = 8,589,934,592$ children were gunned down! This is a number larger than the entire population of the world: adults, children, and all! Learning to properly argue and learning to search for the validity of quantitative information is an issue that is becoming more and more important as we have access to more and more information.

Intended Learning Outcomes: Through common HNRS 300 intended learning outcomes, by the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- apply their research findings to a formal project addressing the course topic question and will successfully present this proposal in an oral defense
- write well-organized and clearly reasoned papers both individually and with a group
Papers will have clear theses, effective organization, and a minimum of sentence-level errors.
- contribute to meaningful, effective discussion and collaborative work that includes expressing, listening to, and debating ideas
- apply critical thinking and quantitative reasoning skills in a meaningful way
- make explicit, meaningful connections between past course work (both in the core and in their majors) and contemporary issues
- demonstrate understanding of a contemporary issue or problem, an awareness of the types of inquiry needed to understand it, and the resources required for addressing it
- connect course content to their lives and to communities beyond the classroom

In addition, this section of HNRS 300 has the following additional intended learning outcomes, so that by the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- analyze statistics and quantitative information for validity and unbiasedness and formulate an argument for or against an issue using statistics and quantitative information properly

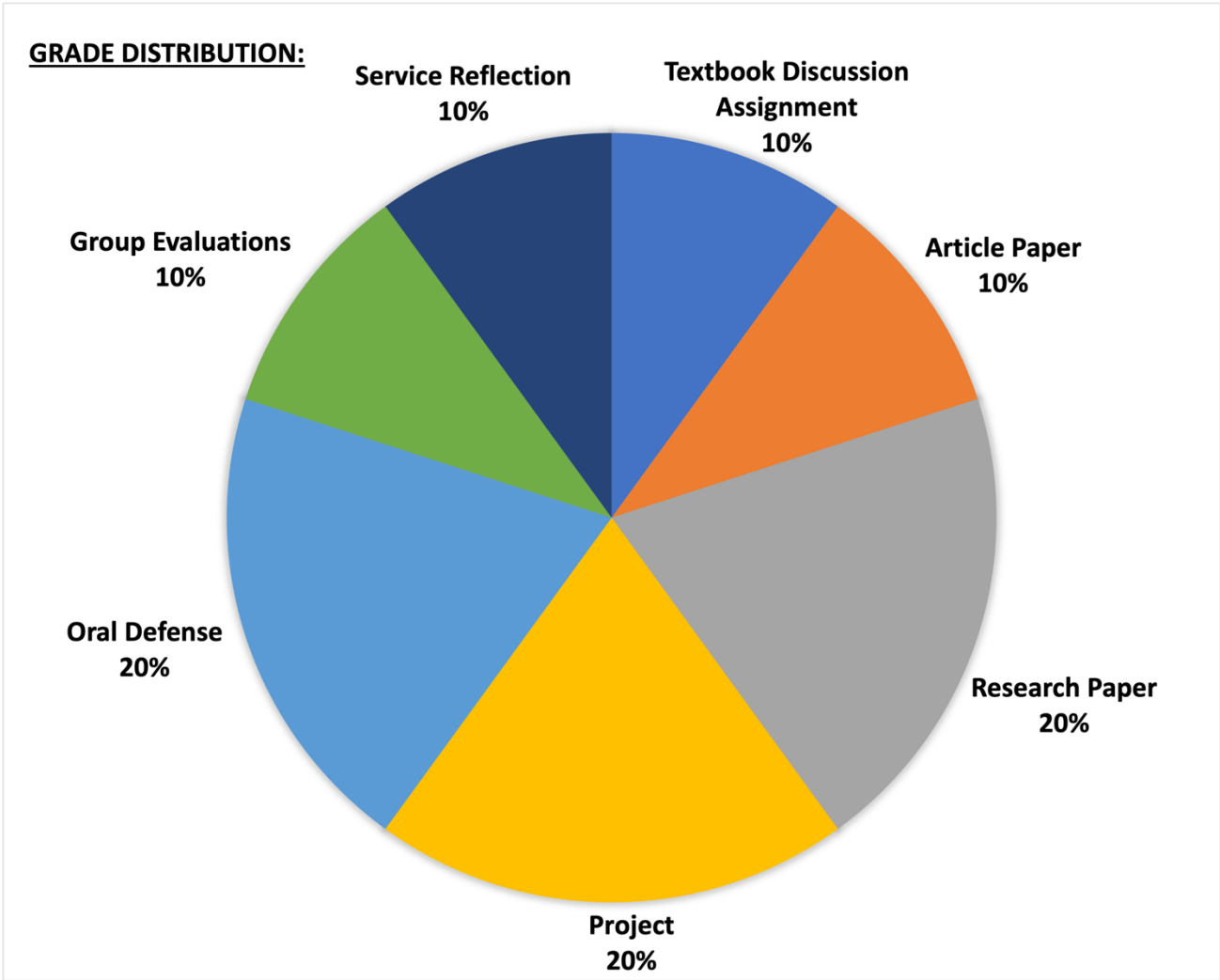
- synthesize their training in the methodologies of the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities with quantitative information to create their argument

Your success in this class is important to me! We all learn differently and bring a variety of strengths and needs to the class. If there are aspects of the course that prevent you from learning or that make you feel excluded, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Required Materials:

- *Damned Lies and Statistics: Untangling Numbers from the Media, Politicians, and Activists*, by Joel Best, University of California Press, *Updated Edition*
- *Easy Writer (6th edition)* by Andrea Lunsford
- *Strengths Finder 2.0*, by Tom Rath, Gallup Press (provided by Roanoke College)
- Additional readings will be taken from other sources and be provided by me.

Commitment Hours: This course expects you to spend at least 12 hours of work a week inside and outside of class.



A:	93-100	B:	83-87	C:	73-77	D:	63-67
A-:	90-93	B-:	80-83	C-:	70-73	D-:	60-63
B+:	87-90	C+:	77-80	D+:	67-70	F:	Below 60

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Class Structure:

Weeks 1 – 6: The first 5 weeks of the semester will feel like a “normal” class – we will meet as a class each day, preparing ourselves for the final project, which will take a majority of the semester. Week 6 won’t feel as much like a typical class, but includes some bulleted information below.

We will:

- Learn about our service organization, the Clean Valley Council, and decide how we are best able to help them this semester with research and a project.
- Revisit your RC journey – your Honors experience with the curriculum, your Road Map, and your Distinction Project.
- Consider the *Strengths Finder* Assessment and reflect upon how your experiences relate to this assessment.
- Work through our course textbook, *Damned Lies and Statistics* and perhaps supplemental reading, with y’all determining the direction of the class discussion.
- Use what we have learned from the textbook to compose an argumentative essay on a “hot topic” of your choice – focusing on:
 - An article or other source in which the author has abused or improperly used statistics concerning their view on that “hot topic”
 - Evidence that the author was incorrect in how they used that/those statistic(s)
 - Proper usage of statistics within your own work – especially with regards to the above bullet
- Meet with Dave Wiseman in the library to gather sources for building your annotated bibliography for your research paper.
- Meet with Marc Lucht with the CVC to hash out details on your projects!! These will mostly likely occur over dinner – RC and Honors will pay for these dinners.

Community Partner: One important aspect of this class is that your group will be selecting an issue that affects a specific organization in the Roanoke Valley – the Clean Valley Council (CVC). While meeting with or talking to the community partners, at all times, group members must be professional, both in appearance and manner; you are representing Roanoke College in this endeavor, and we aim to present ourselves as professionals ready to move out into the world of careers.

Weeks 7 – 13: Generally speaking, we will not meet much as a class during these weeks; most days are set aside for group work and/or group conferences with me (your instructor). Please pay attention to the course schedule at the end of this syllabus! And definitely keep an eye on Inquire – and due dates!!!

We will:

- Be working on our Group Research Papers, consisting of:
 - Outline of Paper (due Feb 20)
 - 1st Draft of Paper (due March 14)
 - Final Draft of Paper (due April 2)
- Be working on our Group Projects, consisting of:
 - Project Proposal, which includes an Outline and/or Schedule (due Feb 27)
 - Tangible Project Outcome draft (due April 9)
 - Final Tangible Project Outcome (due April 29, Final Exam period)
- Also complete:
 - Project Group Evaluations (5 total)
 - Oral Defenses (Practice Presentations 4/16 & 4/18, Final Presentations 4/29)
 - Service Reflection (due April 29)
- Occasionally have group conferences – to discuss progress of your papers/projects.
- Continue to reach out to our resources (Dave Wiseman, Marc Lucht, Writing Center, etc.)
- Hanging with your Projects group members A LOT!!

Finals Week:

- Monday, April 29 – 8:30 – 11:30AM
 - No Final Exam!
 - Group Presentations instead!
- Presentations are 25-30 minutes, with an additional 10 minutes for questions.
- What else is due at this time?
 - Final Tangible Outcome should be presented to Marc Lucht (digitally or printed) by this time!
 - Service Reflection due.

Diversity and Inclusivity

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

Attendance Policy: Our course's success depends on you attending class! If you miss class, you will miss community building, engaging conversations, and information that I deem worthy of your time! Plus, we will miss you! However, life happens! You may get sick, have a game scheduled, or have something else happen. It will not be the end of the world if you miss a class *very occasionally*. At some point, though, missing class can be detrimental to success. So, strive for perfect attendance!

What should you do if you have to miss class? Let me know ASAP! Communication is key! I don't need details (please, spare me the details!) but **do let me know ahead of time**, so we can make plans, if needed. If you cannot let me know ahead of time (emergencies do happen!), just let me know as soon as you can. Email is typically the best form of communication for me.

If you are sick (and contagious), please either stay home OR come to class wearing a mask (unless you have COVID symptoms – then follow both Roanoke College & CDC guidelines).

Late Work: Whether or not to accept late work is always a tough decision. Life happens – and occasionally we need more time to complete tasks! But, sometimes turning in an assignment late causes more complications than benefits. Due to the fact that we will be working with a local organization (the Clean Valley Council), we need to maintain an extra strong sense of professionalism, which includes submitting work on time. As with attendance, *communication* is key! Let me know when something comes up – I will do my best to work with you. Be sure to communicate with your group – y'all are in this project together and need each other to succeed. Communicate!!

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to adhere to the Academic Integrity policies of Roanoke College (https://www.roanoke.edu/inside/a-z_index/academic_integrity). All work submitted for a grade is to be your own work! Doing your own work and properly acknowledging the work of others is of utmost importance in the academic setting. Ask me before using Artificial Intelligence tools!

Collaboration is important though! Especially in a course built around group work – so:

- Yes – it's ok to have a peer proofread (NOT WRITE OR REWRITE) your paper(s).
- Cite ANY sources you use ALWAYS! Acknowledge that Dave Wiseman helped find an essential source! Include a footnote about how an idea came from one of your peers.
- Be an active participant in group projects – co-own the group project 😊

RESOURCES

The Writing Center @ Roanoke College, located on the Lower Level of Fintel Library (Room 15), offers free tutorials focused on writing projects and oral presentations for students working in any field. Writers and presenters at all levels of competence may visit the Writing Center at any point in their process—including brainstorming, drafting, organizing, editing, or polishing presentation skills—to talk with trained peer tutors in informal, one-on-one sessions. The Writing Center is open Sunday through Thursday from 4 to 9 PM. Simply stop in, or schedule an appointment at www.roanoke.edu/writingcenter. Questions? Email writingcenter@roanoke.edu or call 540-375-4949.

Accessible Education Services (AES) is located in the Goode-Pasfield Center for Learning and Teaching in **Fintel Library**. AES provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To register for services, students must self-identify to AES, complete the registration process, and provide current documentation of a disability along with recommendations from the qualified specialist. Please contact Dustin Persinger, Assistant Director of Academic Services for Accessible Education, at 540-375-2247 or by e-mail at aes@roanoke.edu to schedule an appointment. If you have registered with AES in the past and would like to receive academic accommodations for this semester, please contact Dustin Persinger at your earliest convenience to schedule an appointment and/or obtain your accommodation letter for the current semester.

Student Health & Counseling Services supports students through in-person health appointments, in-person counseling, 24/7 telehealth (TimelyCare), Therapy Assistance Online, as well as resources related to general wellness, LGBTQ+, sexual assault, substance abuse, and suicide prevention. Unmet health needs can negatively impact your performance in this course. Student Health & Counseling Services can help. Please see <https://www.roanoke.edu/shcs> for more information and to access services.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: DLS refers to *Damned Lies and Statistics*

Weeks 1-5: Background, Group and Topic Selection

Tues	Jan 16	Intro to HNRS 300 and Clean Valley Council IRB Discussion Assignments: 1) Review CVC Website – brainstorm topics & questions 2) <i>Strength Finders</i> Assessment
Thurs	Jan 19	Honors Curriculum reflection/discussion <i>Strength Finders</i> reflection/discussion Assignment: Keep brainstorming topics & questions for CVC
Tues	Jan 23	Visit from the Clean Valley Council Textbook Assignment discussion Assignments: 1) More brainstorming topics 2) Sign up for Textbook Chapter Assignment
Thurs	Jan 25	Ch 1 – Discussion/activity led by ME! Project - Choose Groups / Topics (initial attempt) Assignment: Start annotated bibliography ASAP – due Feb 8

Weeks 3 – 6: Remember to Meet with CVC and Dave Wiseman

Tues	Jan 30	Ch 2 – Discussion/activity led by Group 1 Project - Choose Groups/Topics (final attempt? We hope) / Find Sources
Thurs	Feb 1	Ch 3 – Discussion/activity led by Group 2 Project - Group Conferences / Meet with Dave Wiseman / Find Sources
Tues	Feb 6	Ch 4 – Discussion/activity led by Group 3 Project – Meet with Dave Wiseman / Find Sources
Thurs	Feb 8	Ch 5 – Discussion/activity led by Group 4 Project – Meet with Dave Wiseman / Find Sources ** Annotated Bibliography Due by Tonight ** Assignment: Start project proposal ASAP – due Feb 27 by class
Tues	Feb 13	Ch 6 + Afterword – Discussion/activity led by Group 5 Assignments: 1) Group Evaluation #1 due Tonight! 2) Start Research Paper Outline ASAP – due Feb 20 by class
Thurs	Feb 15	Article Paper Assigned – In-Class Work Day Assignments: 1) Research Paper Outline due Feb 20 by class 2) Article Paper due Feb 20

Tues	Feb 20	No Class! **Paper Outline Due by 10:10AM!** **Article Paper due Tonight!**
Thurs	Feb 22	Group Conferences with Me Assignment: Start 1st Draft – due March 14

Weeks 7 – End of Semester: Focusing Purely on Project / Research Paper

Tues	Feb 27	No Class! **Project Proposal due by 10:10AM!** Assignment: Group Evaluation #2 due Tonight!
Thurs	Feb 29	Group Conferences with Me **Be sure to enjoy Spring Break!**

Spring Break!

Tues	Mar 12	Checking back in & Group Work Day! Remember – 1st Draft due Thursday night!
Thurs	Mar 14	**1st Draft due Tonight!** **IRB due by tomorrow! **
Tues	Mar 19	No Class! Assignments: 1) Group Evaluation #3 due Tonight! 2) Start Tangible Outcome draft – due April 9 by class
Thurs	Mar 21	Group Conferences with Me Assignment: Final Draft Research Paper due April 2
Tues	Mar 26	Tentative additional group conferences with me
Thurs	Mar 28	No Class! Assignment: Group Evaluation #4 due Tonight!
Tues	Apr 2	No Class! **Final Draft Research Paper due by Tonight!**
Thurs	Apr 4	In-Class Work Day – presentations or tangible outcomes Assignments: 1) Start presentation – due April 16 or 18 2) Reminder – Tangible Outcome draft due April 9 by 10:10AM
Tues	Apr 9	No Class **Tangible Outcome draft due by 10:10AM**
Thurs	Apr 11	No Class Assignment: Group Evaluation #5 due Tonight!
Tues	Apr 16	Practice Presentations Day #1 (1/2 class meeting!!)
Thurs	Apr 18	Practice Presentations Day #2 (1/2 class meeting!!)
Mon	Apr 29	Final Defenses 8:30AM – 11:30AM Final Tangible Outcome Due Final Service Reflection Due