

Earth Sciences 2222b: Data Analysis in Earth Sciences Course Outline – Winter 2025

1. Course Information

ES2222b – Data Analysis in Earth Sciences

List of Prerequisites: 0.5 course from Calculus 1000A/B or Calculus 1500A/B, Mathematics 1225A/B Applied Mathematics 1412A/B, the former Applied Mathematics 1413 (please refer to the UWO Calendar).

List of Anti-requisites: Computer Science 2034A/B, Computer Science 2035A/B.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean's Designate (Department/Program Counsellors and Science Academic Advisors) to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

2. Instructor Information

Instructors	Email	Office	Phone	Office Hours
Dr. Yanping Li (Course Instructor)	yli4972@uwo.ca	PAB 118	x89350	By appointment
TA:				

3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

This course is designed for undergraduate students to improve their knowledge and understanding of the application of data analysis techniques. The course begins with introductory concepts and moves through to more intermediate problems. Applications to Earth science problems will be emphasized. Contents will include classical statistical concepts, exploratory data analysis techniques, continuous and discrete distributions, hypothesis testing, correlation and regression analysis, analysis of variance, nonparametric statistics, trend testing, and introduction to generalized linear models and extreme value theory. The primary objective of the course is for students to learn a variety of techniques that are applicable across a range of problems, irrespective of a specific discipline, involving small and large datasets. At the end of the course, students should be able to apply these techniques to their own research projects.

This is a lab-oriented course that will provide extensive hands-on computer experience, particularly with the numerical analysis program R.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe fundamental concepts in data analysis and explain the importance of statistical methods in the Earth sciences;
- Apply the statistical programming language R to manage, analyze, and visualize Earth science

data

- Execute a standard geophysical data processing workflow, from data preprocessing through to advanced modeling and interpretation;
- Select and justify appropriate statistical techniques for analyzing different types of geophysical data and research questions;
- Interpret the results of numerical analyses to draw meaningful, evidence-based conclusions and make informed decisions;
- Critically evaluate and synthesize methodological approaches and findings from published scientific research.

Summary of Lecture Topics (*approximate and subject to change!*):

- Introduction and Outline.
- Exploratory data analysis techniques.
- Probability and random variables.
- Continuous and discrete distributions.
- Estimation problems and hypothesis testing.
- Correlation and regression analysis.
- Analysis of variance (one-factor experiments, two or more factors).
- Nonparametric statistics.
- Introduction to generalized linear models.
- Extreme value theory.
- Multivariate analysis.

Course Work

The lecture and laboratory components cover theory and "hands-on" components of the course, respectively. Lab/tutorials will be held in the ES computer labs. Lecture notes and assignments are going to be available through OWL (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>).

The relevant Key Sessional Dates:

Classes begin: January 5, 2026
Reading Week: February 14 – 22, 2026
Classes end: April 3, 2026
Exam period: April 6 – 30, 2026

Contingency plan:

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in person, should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously or asynchronously, the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

4. Course Materials

Required Textbook:

- Walpole RE, Myers RH, Myers SL, Ye K (2008), Probability and Statistics for Engineers and Scientists, *eighth edition*, Pearson Prentice Hall, New Jersey
- Wilks DS (2011), Statistical Methods in the Atmospheric Sciences, *third edition*, Elsevier, Amsterdam

- Qian SS (2010), Environmental and Ecological Statistics with R, CRC Press, New York
- Shafer SJ, Theodore L (2007), Probability and Statistics Applications for Environmental Science, CRC Press, New York

Other Recommended Textbooks:

- DelSole T., Tippet M. *Statistical Methods for Climate Scientists*, Cambridge, 2022.
- Free online book: <http://www.statsoft.com/textbook>

- Wilson, C.R., *Essential Geophysical Data Processing*, Cambridge, 2022.
- Gubbins, D. *Time Series Analysis and Inverse Theory for Geophysicists*, Cambridge, 2004.
- Stein S., Wysession M., *An Introduction to Seismology, Earthquakes, and Earth Structure*, Blackwell, 2003.

R software package is going to be used for Labs. It can be installed on your personal computer using Western site license. It is also installed on all computers in BGS0184 or it can be accessed through MyVlab. The instructions will be provided.

All course material will be posted to OWL: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

5. Methods of Evaluation

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

Assignments	Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Project report	Participation
15%	25%	25%	25%	10%

Assignments will consist of examination-style short-answer questions and require no formal writeup. In many cases, assignments will require the use of R. Unless indicated otherwise, assignments should be submitted by the due date. Late submissions will be accepted with a 5% per day penalty. Under exceptional circumstances, late submissions will be accepted with no penalty, provided that adequate documentation is given. With a few exceptions, only SI units should be used to report any physical quantities.

The midterm exam will be held during the class period on Monday, February 23. The final exam will be **two hours** in length and will take place during the April examination period. For both exams, a **single-sided hand-written crib sheet** and a non-programmable calculator may be used.

The project will involve a written report (~10 pages + figures). The topic will be chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. Research topics must be in any area of data analysis and modelling covered during the course. The project must include references to the scientific literature. Projects are due April 3, and oral presentations will be given during the last week of the term.

Plagiarism: *Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).*

General information about missed coursework

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf,

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage: https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

- Examinations scheduled during official examination periods (Defined by policy)
- Practical laboratory and performance tests (Defined by policy)
- Midterm/Presentation (Designated by the instructor as the one assessment that always requires documentation when requesting Academic Consideration)

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

When a student *mistakenly* submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** for the assessments listed above or those in the **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility** section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

Evaluation Scheme for Missed Assessments

Unless indicated otherwise, assignments should be submitted by the due date. Late submissions will be accepted with a 5% per day penalty. Under exceptional circumstances, late submissions will be accepted with no penalty, provided that adequate documentation is given. With a few exceptions, only SI units should be used to report any physical quantities.

When a student misses the Final Exam and their Academic Consideration has been granted, they will be allowed to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)), especially for those who miss multiple final exams within one examination period.

6. Additional Statements

Religious Accommodation

When conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible but not later than two weeks prior to the writing or the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDID website for the recognized religious holidays:

<https://www.edi.uwo.ca>.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf.

Academic Policies

The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

In accordance with policy,

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf,

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

For both mid-term and final exams, a single-sided hand-written crib sheet and a non-programmable calculator may be used.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Advising webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic-related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

Learning-skills counsellors at Learning Development and Success (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.