Course guides
200632 - EPI - Epidemiology

Unit in charge: School of Mathematics and Statistics
Teaching unit: 715 - EIO - Department of Statistics and Operations Research.
Degree: MASTER’S DEGREE IN STATISTICS AND OPERATIONS RESEARCH (Syllabus 2013). (Optional subject).
Academic year: 2021  ECTS Credits: 5.0  Languages: English

LECTURER

Coordinating lecturer: KLAUS GERHARD LANGOHR
Others: Segon quadrimestre: KLAUS GERHARD LANGOHR - A

PRIOR SKILLS

The student has to be familiar with the concepts of statistical inference: the likelihood function, maximum likelihood estimation, hypothesis testing, and linear regression models. In particular, the student should be familiar with the contents of the first three chapters of the book "Principles of Statistical Inference" Cox (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge of the software package R.

DEGREE COMPETENCES TO WHICH THE SUBJECT CONTRIBUTES

Specific:
3. CE-1. Ability to design and manage the collection of information and coding, handling, storing and processing it.
4. CE-2. Ability to master the proper terminology in a field that is necessary to apply statistical or operations research models and methods to solve real problems.
5. CE-S. Ability to formulate and solve real problems of decision-making in different application areas being able to choose the statistical method and the optimization algorithm more suitable in every occasion.

Transversal:
2. TEAMWORK: Being able to work in an interdisciplinary team, whether as a member or as a leader, with the aim of contributing to projects pragmatically and responsibly and making commitments in view of the resources that are available.
TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Lectures:
Sessions that last 90 minutes and during which the course material is presented with the help of a PC. The material, which is partially based on real data sets from epidemiological studies as well as on scientific papers, is previously available in the Intranet (ATENEA). Also, in different occasions the theory lectures will be used for exercises.

Lab classes:
There will be 3 classes during which the use of functions from contributed packages of the R software will be explained and practiced.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE SUBJECT

The course aims to enable the student to design and analyze epidemiological studies. This includes, that s/he should be able to propose the adequate designs and analyses for an epidemiological study in such a way that these can be understood easily by other investigators.

In particular, after the completion of the course, the student should have acquired a profound knowledge on the following topics and should be able to apply the corresponding methods to real data:
1. Design of epidemiological studies: cohort studies, case-control studies, and population based studies.
2. Epidemiological measures of disease frequency, mortality, and exposure-disease association.
3. Sources of bias in epidemiological studies: information, selection, and confounding bias.
5. Logistic, logbinomial and Poisson regression.

Specifically, the student should be able:

- To propose designs and analyses for epidemiological studies that provide the best information possible and that can be assimilated easily by the researchers that will have to interpret them.
- To judge the advantages and disadvantages of different types of epidemiological studies.
- To estimate, apply, and interpret measures of the disease frequency, mortality, and exposure-disease association.
- To have basic knowledge on causal inference in observational studies.
- To know different sources of bias in epidemiological studies and possible measures to avoid the bias.
- To fit logistic, log-binomial, and Poisson regression models to real data and interpret the results.

STUDY LOAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours small group</td>
<td>15,0</td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours large group</td>
<td>30,0</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self study</td>
<td>80,0</td>
<td>64.00</td>
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</tbody>
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Total learning time: 125 h

CONTENTS

Introduction to Epidemiology

Description:
a) Epidemiological studies vs. clinical trials.
b) Design of epidemiological studies: cohort studies, case-control studies, and population-based studies.

Full-or-part-time: 3h
Theory classes: 2h 30m
Laboratory classes: 0h 30m
Epidemiological measures: concepts and estimation

Description:
a) Measures of disease frequency: prevalence, cumulative incidence, and incidence rate.
b) Mortality rates and their comparison: direct and indirect standardization, comparative mortality figure, and standardized mortality ratio.
c) Measures of exposition-disease association: relative risk, risk difference, odds ratio difference, and attributable risk.

Full-or-part-time: 13h 30m
Theory classes: 9h
Laboratory classes: 4h 30m

Aspects of epidemiological studies

Description:
a) Causal inference in epidemiological studies.
b) Study of the cause-effect relation. Common causes and effects.
c) Sources of bias in epidemiological studies: information bias, selection bias, and confounding.
d) Strategies for error control and variance minimization: stratification and matching.

Full-or-part-time: 13h 30m
Theory classes: 9h 30m
Laboratory classes: 4h

Analysis of epidemiological studies

Description:
a) Estimation of the relative risk, the odds ratio, and attributable fraction in cohort studies, case-control studies, and population based studies.
b) Computation of comparative mortality figure and standardized mortality ratio.
c) The Mantel-Haenszel estimator in the presence of a confounding variable.
d) Analysis of matched data in case-control studies.
g) Poisson regression: model expression, parameter estimation, and model interpretation.

Full-or-part-time: 15h
Theory classes: 9h
Laboratory classes: 6h

GRADING SYSTEM

Assessment is based on the following:
a) Final exam (50%),
b) Problem sheets (30%),
c) Summary and presentation of a scientific paper (20%).
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic:

Complementary: