

Center for Research on Families Methodology Consulting Services:

Policies and Procedures

Purpose

The Center for Research on Families (CRF) is a multidisciplinary center whose mission is to support social and behavioral science research on issues relevant to families and to disseminate findings to scholars, families, practitioners, and policy-makers. As part of the mission, CRF's Methodological Consulting Services (MCS) will provide consultation in study design and statistical analysis to faculty in the social and behavioral sciences. CRF has particular expertise in methods for analyzing non-experimental data that arises in studies of families and dyads, with an emphasis on multilevel modeling, structural equation modeling, and analysis of nested and longitudinal data.

Types of Consultation Available

MCS provides consulting in all stages of research.

- Issues in study design, measurement and sampling
- Power analysis
- Data analysis, including training in the use of software packages
- Writing and editing methodology sections of manuscripts and grant proposals

Expertise

Consulting services are provided by a team of faculty, CRF staff, and advanced graduate students. Dr. Aline Sayer, director of CRF's methodology program, oversees the consulting services and provides direct consultation, as well as on-going supervision of the other members of the team.

Facilities

- The Methodology Consulting Services are located in the CRF offices in 622 Tobin Hall. It houses fully equipped computer workstations enabling individual consultation, software demonstration, and small group training.
- A meeting room holding 15 seats is available for larger group training and consultation
- Software includes SAS, SPSS, and STATA statistical packages; specialized programs for multilevel modeling (HLM) and structural equation modeling (LISREL, M+), specialized programs for power analysis (Optimal Design; Power & Precision); and database transfer programs (DBMS/Copy).

Availability

- Up to 5 hours/year of consulting services is available to UMass-Amherst faculty and their designated students in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the College of Natural Sciences without cost.
- An additional 5 hours/year is available to CRF affiliates (current and former CRF faculty scholars and steering committee members) for a total of 10 hours.
- Consulting services are also available to faculty and students outside of SBS and CNS for a fee.