



Dana and David Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Spatial Sciences Institute

SSCI 584 - Spatial Modeling

Units: 4

Term: Spring 2016

Location: Online at <http://www.usc.edu/blackboard>

Instructor: Karen K. Kemp

Office: Holualoa HI

Office Hours: Mon 12-1 pm PT and Wed 3-4 pm PT via Blue Jeans – please contact me via email in advance to ensure I will be online. Also available most days and times by appointment via email.

Contact Info:

Email: kakemp@usc.edu

Blue Jeans: www.bluejeans.com/8081234567

GIS Librarian: Katharin Peter

Office: VKC B40a

Office Hours: By appointment

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IT Help: Richard Tsung

Hours of Service: Mondays to Fridays 9 am to 5 pm PT

Contact Info: gistsupport@usc.edu

Course Description

The use of spatial analytical models has become increasingly common in the study of social and environmental systems. Such models are used to help us learn about the systems we are interested in, to help guide future research by identifying knowledge and data 'gaps', to aid in the design of management and monitoring strategies, and to make predictions about unmeasured patterns and processes. This course will take you beyond the basic understanding of spatial analysis tools you learned in SSCI 583 Spatial Analysis.

This course will provide you with an understanding of a range of spatial modeling concepts, approaches and applications, as well as methods for determining the suitability of a particular modeling approach for a given task. Designed as an online version of an advanced studio course and graduate seminar, you will work individually and in groups to explore, learn, and teach about several different solutions to geospatial modeling challenges.

Expectations in the workplace for today's GIS professionals include the ability to learn continuously, work with many different kinds of data and with other professionals in other disciplines, domains, and agencies. There are many unique and deep skill sets needed in today's world. However, they do not stand alone; the ability to collaborate, to learn from others and to expand opportunities jointly are essential. The collaborative component of this course is essential.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain how complex spatial models can be used to help solve and understand environmental and social problems and management challenges.
- Describe the range of tools and techniques that fall within the collection of spatial analytical models.
- Represent spatially and temporally dynamic social and environmental processes using spatial modeling tools.
- Assess the validity, uncertainty and sensitivity of model results, both in the research literature and in your own work.
- Use and integrate with ArcGIS, alternative modeling solutions including open source GIS options and external software applications
- Solve GIS tasks of moderate complexity independently with the help of various online resources.
- Collaborate with others to develop team expertise in advanced modeling tools.
- Working with domain experts, outline possible modeling solutions for their loosely specified spatial problems.
- Convey complex technical information and modeling results to a non-technical audience through presentations, reports and graphics.

- Describe how different GIS, modeling, mathematical, and statistical software packages can be integrated to produce results that none of these systems in isolation is able to produce.

Course Structure

The main theoretical concepts will be provided through text readings and self-directed research you will do in the published literature and on the web and through hands-on experimentation with various tools and technologies.

The course will generally unfold on a biweekly basis. Each set of pair weeks will be focused on a particular aspect of spatial modeling. In order to make sure you are exposed to as broad a range of material as possible, the class will be divided into small groups, each of which will be charged with learning about a different modeling solution or environment. Group members will support each other as you learn your assigned topic, completing some intermediate assignments. At the end of most two week sections, each group will present what they have learned to the rest of the class in a brief tutorial (written or on-line). In this way you will learn some of the material deeply while also learning a bit about related topics. You will finish the course by completing a spatial modeling project on a topic of your choice either on your own or in a self-identified group.

Workload – This is a four credit, one semester course. Students should expect to spend 10-15 hours per week completing the work in this course.

Technological and Communication Requirements

ArcGIS is provided online via the GIST Server; hence, you do not need to install it on your own computer. Instead, every student must have the following technology requirements:

- A computer with a fast Internet connection.
- A functional webcam and a microphone for use whenever a presentation or meeting is scheduled.
- A current web browser, Firefox recommended, to access the GIST Server

GIST Server and Tech Support – This course will utilize the SSI GIST Server which is a virtual desktop. If you are unable to connect to the server or experience any type of technical issues, send an email using your USC account to GIST Tech Support at gistsupport@dornsife.usc.edu, making sure to copy (cc) me on the email. GIST Tech Support is available Monday through Friday, 9 am-5pm PT.

Communications – This is a distance learning course, so most of our interactions will be asynchronous (not at the same time). All materials to be handed in will be submitted via Blackboard. It is each student's responsibility to stay informed about what is going on in our course. In addition to email about time-sensitive topics, any important announcements will be posted on the Announcement page in Blackboard. Be sure to check these each time you log onto Blackboard.

I will send via email through Blackboard any notices that are time sensitive. Please be sure that you read as soon as possible all email sent from Blackboard or from me. Do not ignore course email until the day before assignments are due. Also double check to be sure that email sent from the USC blackboard account does not go into your junk mail!

While I am usually on-line all day and will probably respond to emails from students very quickly, I will endeavor to respond to all email within 24 hours of receipt, aiming for no more than 36 hours delay. In the rare case when I expect to be off-line for more than 72 hours, I will post an announcement on the Blackboard site.

Discussion boards – On the Blackboard site, I will post a series of discussion threads relevant to various sections of the course. Discussions provide a key means for student-to-student discussion and collaboration that can replicate the face-to-face contact you may have experienced in traditional classrooms. Here students can provide support to each other while working on your assignments, sharing hints and helpful tips, as you would in a classroom laboratory. Please post your questions about assignments there, as you would ask them publically in the classroom. I monitor the discussion threads and offer comments when necessary, but more importantly, consider the discussion board a key way to connect with your classmates and share your discoveries.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

The required textbooks for this course are:

- O’Sullivan, David, and George L.W. Perry. 2013. *Spatial Simulation: Exploring Pattern and Process*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mitchell, Andy. 2012. *The Esri Guide to GIS Analysis, Volume 3: Modeling Suitability, Movement, and Interaction*. Redlands, CA: Esri Press.
- Zuur, A.F., E.N. Ieno, E. Meesters. 2009. *A Beginner's Guide to R*. New York: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-0-387-93837-0. Available online at USC Libraries.

Additional readings that focus on topics relevant to course themes selected by students will be identified as part of the literature search components of each course section.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

There are several different kinds of assignments with at least one due weekly. These are described in the Weekly Folders on Blackboard. Due dates are shown in the summary that follows.

- *Resume Assignment* (1 worth 2 points). We require all current students to post and maintain a public resume, short biography and recent photo on our shared GIST Student Community Blackboard site. With your permission, your resume will be included in the GIST Resume Book. The latter is compiled annually and along with our web presence used to promote our programs and more importantly, your skills, experience, and professional aspirations.

- *Graded Blogs/Wikis* (4 worth 5 points, total of 20 points) – Throughout the term the class will explore a variety of topics through graded blogs and wikis. These tasks are designed to engage you in the material and to expand your research results beyond what you are personally able to *uncover*. Requirements for participation by way of comments and responses will be provided in detail in the assignment instructions.
- *Modeling Assignments* (4 worth 5 points, total of 20 points) – The modeling assignments will give you hands-on experience with several different modeling tools and environments (including ArcGIS, NetLogo, and R).
- *Lesson Presentations* (2 worth 8 points, total of 16 points) – Two of the sections will end with the presentation of a brief learning module through which you will teach your classmates what you have learned (teaching is the best way to learn!). A portion of these points will be assigned through self- and peer-review which will be described in the assignment instructions.
- *Final Project* – (4 components worth a total of 32 points) - To integrate your learning of all the material covered in the course, you will design, undertake and report on an individually chosen spatial modeling project. The Final Project will have four components including a brief topic statement so that we can discuss your idea (2 points), a proposal with theoretical context and model conceptualization (10 points), a public presentation (5 points, made on-line via Blue Jeans) and a fully annotated and illustrated project report on your model implementation (15 points).
- *Responses to postings* (6 worth 1 point, total of 6 points) – In order to ensure that everyone learns from everyone else, each student is required to be active in responding to the wiki and blog postings and lesson presentations from other students. Responses must be substantial, informative or probing. Six of the assignments require such responses.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment	Number	Points Each	Total Points
Resume Assignment	1	2	2
Wikis and Blogs	4	5	20
Modeling Assignments	4	5	20
Lesson Presentations	2	10	20
Responses	6	-	6
Project Components			
Topic Statement	1	2	2
Proposal	1	10	10
Presentation	1	5	5
Final Report	1	15	15
Total	17	-	100 points

Assignment Submission Policy

Unless otherwise noted, all Reading Assignments and Tutorials are *due by 11:59 pm Pacific Time (PT) on Mondays*. Responses are due by 11:59pm PT on the Wednesday following the submission of relevant materials. Project components have different due dates as indicated on the Course Schedule below. Your attention to on-time assignment submission is essential if I am to meet my goal to return comments on your submitted assignments before the next one is due. Sometimes this is impossible, so I will post a notice on anticipated delays if needed.

Strict penalties apply for late assignments as follows:

- All assignments will be penalized 3 points for up to FOUR days late. No points will be given for submissions more than FOUR days late.
- Additionally, no written work will be accepted for grading after 5 pm PT on the last day of classes.

Course Schedule

Week	Start Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments (due date)
1	11-Jan	Modeling Foundations	O&P Ch1, Mitchell Ch1 + others	Resume Assignment (1/19) Intro Blog (1/19)
2	19-Jan		O&P Ch 2,6 + others	Intro Blog response (1/21) Modeling Wiki 1 (1/25)
3	25-Jan	Modeling with ArcGIS	Mitchell Ch 4,5,6	Modeling Wiki 1 response (1/27) ArcGIS Assignment (2/1)
4	1-Feb		*from Library Research	Lesson (ArcGIS) (2/8)
5	8-Feb	Agent-based Models	O&P Ch 3,4,5	Lesson (ArcGIS) response (2/10) NetLogo Assignment (2/16)
6	16-Feb		*from Library Research	Modeling Wiki 2 (2/22)
7	22-Feb	External Models	*from Web Research	Modeling Wiki 2 response (2/24) Modeling Wiki 3 (2/29)
8	29-Feb		*from Library Research	Modeling Wiki 3 Response (3/2)
9	7-Mar			Lesson (External Models) (3/21) Project Topic Statement (3/21)
	14-Mar	Spring Recess		
10	21-Mar	Documenting Models	O&P 7,8,9	Lesson (External) Response (3/23) Project Proposal (4/4)
11	28-Mar	Modeling with R	R tutorial	
12	4-Apr		R Guide	R assignment 1 (4/11)
13	11-Apr			R assignment 2 (4/18)
14	18-Apr	Project		
15	25-Apr			Project presentation (4/27) Project report (4/29)

“O&P” is O’Sullivan and Perry (2013). *Spatial Simulation: Exploring Pattern and Process*.

“Mitchell” is Mitchell (2012), *The Esri Guide to GIS Analysis, Volume 3*.

“R Guide” is Zuur, Ieno, and Meesters (2009), *A Beginner's Guide to R*.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism - presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/scampus/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/complaint-form>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu/> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Resources for Online Students

Our course Blackboard site provides links to several different resources that you may need. In particular, you will be making frequent use of the online USC Library that is available to all registered students through the link <http://www.usc.edu/libraries>. Once on this site, you can find additional resources for distance students under the link "Library Services". Links to key people you may need to contact are also listed on the Blackboard site under Contacts.