

Data at a Distance: Experience from George Mason University

IASSIST 2013

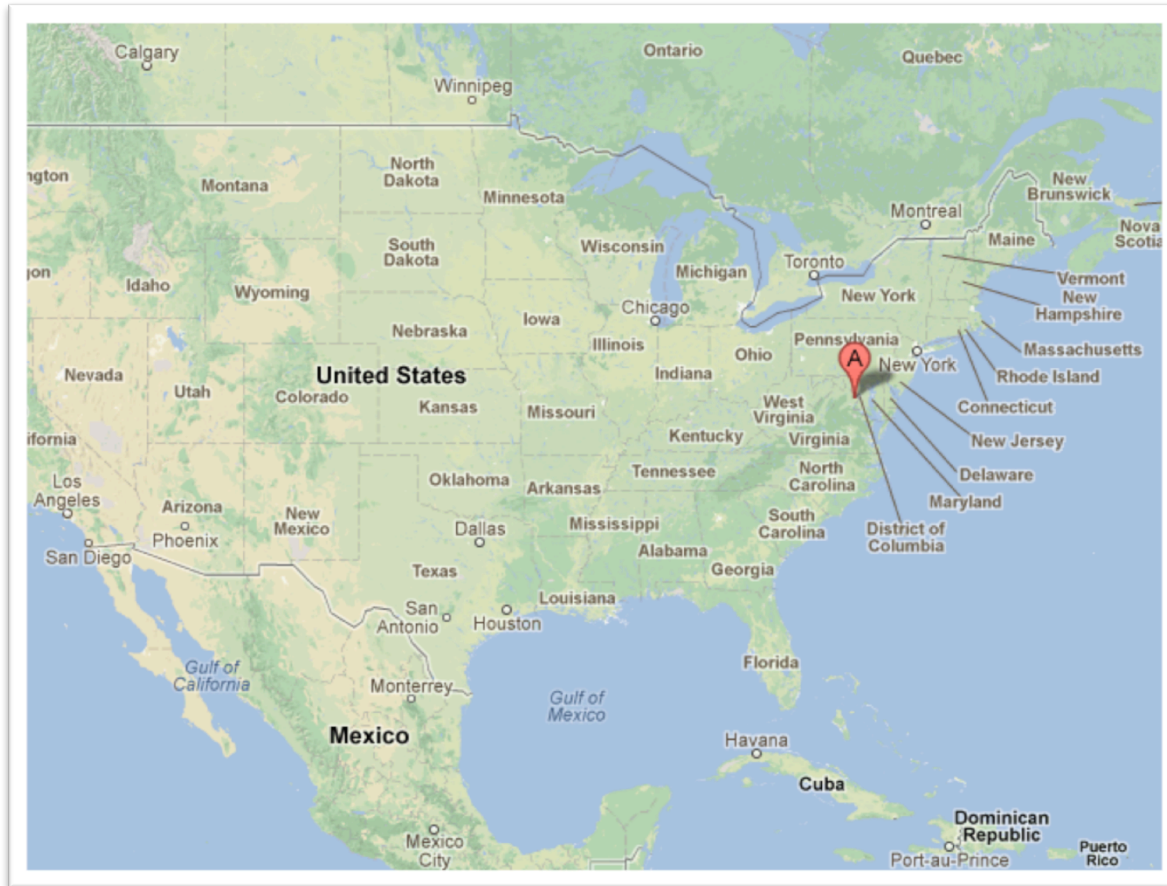
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Fairfax, Virginia USA

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Where Are We?

George Mason University is located in Fairfax, Virginia, just outside of Washington, DC.

George Mason Facts

- Total Enrollment = 32,961
 - 20,067 Undergraduates
 - 10,804 Master's/Doctoral/Law
- Three Campuses
- Distributed Campus Structure

About Distributed Campuses

- Single academic administration for the entire university.
 - Location: Fairfax Campus
- Physical home for a given academic program may be on any one of the three campuses.
- Some duplication for convenience.
- Each campus has some distinctive academic programs not replicated elsewhere.



Campus Locations & Distances from Each Other

15 miles/24 kilometers from Fairfax to Arlington.

22 miles/35 kilometers from Fairfax to Prince William

About the Libraries

Five Libraries

- 2 at Fairfax Campus
 - Includes main library (Fenwick Library) where Data Services is housed plus an undergraduate library.
- 2 at Arlington
 - General campus library and Law library
- 1 at Prince William

About Data Services

- 3 Staff Members

Areas of Specialization

- Numeric/Statistical Data
 - GIS
 - Data Analysis
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- Two graduate research assistants
 - GIS & Qualitative Analysis

About Data Services' Users

Most users are located at these campuses:

- Main Campus in Fairfax, VA
 - Social sciences are the biggest user group
 - Sciences are the second largest user group
 - Humanities have small number of users
- Arlington Campus in Arlington, VA
 - School of Public Policy and School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution
 - About 25% of our questions come from these programs

Communication & Technology

1. In-person
 - a. Walk-in
 - b. Workshops
2. Phone
3. E-mail
4. Chat
5. Canned Tutorials
6. Screencasts on demand
7. Webinar
8. Screen Sharing

In-Person: Satellite Location

- Office Hours at the Arlington Campus two days a week.
- Make appointments with users at the Arlington Campus as our schedules allow.

E-mail and Phone: Observations

- Most questions start out via e-mail
- Smaller number use the phone
- E-mail can be a problem because of the back and forth—reference interview is drawn out.
- Phone discussions can more efficiently and quickly determine user needs.

Data Services

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



HOME GET DATA TUTORIALS DATA MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE & COMPUTERS ABOUT US

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Software & Computers » Stata

Stata

Stata is statistical software from StataCorp that is commonly used by economists and political scientists. Stata is considered to be more powerful than SPSS with excellent syntax and programming capabilities, though not necessarily as flexible as SAS and R. People who know Stata often prefer it over SPSS and SAS because of the balance between difficulty and power.

- [Stata Workshops @ Mason](#)

Resources from StataCorp (good)

- [Resources and Support](#)
- [Video Tutorials](#)
- [Visual Overview for Creating Graphs](#)
- [Stata Listserver](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [The Stata Journal](#)
- [The Stata Blog](#)

Extensive Resources

- [UCLA: Academic Technology Services, Statistical Consulting Group](#)

Search Data Services

Search

News

- [Data Services Summer Hours](#)
- [Obama Administration Releases Open Data Rules](#)
- [New Capabilities of the Geospatial Data Preservation Resource Center](#)
- [2013 Statistical Abstract of the U.S. Now Available](#)

Contact Us

Email:
datahelp@gmu.edu

Location:
Fenwick Library, Room C-103
4400 University Drive, MS 2FL
Fairfax, VA 22030
[Fenwick Library Hours & Directions](#)

Staff:
Wendy Mann
Head, Data Services Group

Tutorials

Phone

- Many times our more technologically challenged users contact us this way.
- Difficult to know up front what technological challenges of the users are.
- Visual is best for these transactions.


What About Chat?

- We don't offer chat reference hours for Data Services questions.
- Questions usually too complex.
- Expectation of fast answer which we usually cannot furnish.

Screencasts

- Use **Jing** to capture how to do a specific task and then send the link to the user to view.
- Also can do screen snapshots.
- Screencasts on demand – up to 3 minutes.

Screen Sharing

- Piloting **join.me** for screen sharing with users. Can follow along in real time.
- We use the free version. 
- Generates a link which use can send to user.
- You can share control
- Can share your screen with up to 10 users.



Webinar Software

- University Libraries has a license for [GoToMeeting](#).
- Need to schedule our use. Works better for planned events.
- Have not really used it much because too inconvenient.

Summary of Features

Software	Installation Required by User	Account Required by User	Use
GoToMeeting	Yes	No	Screen Sharing
Google Hangouts	Yes	Yes	Screen Sharing
Jing	No	No	Screen Casts & Snapshots
join.me	No	No	Screen Sharing
Skype	Yes	Yes	Screen Sharing

User = person being helped.

Reality

- Often times, we spend too much time involved in a transaction before we realize that we need to use a “visual” option.
- Difficulty in switching modes - timing.

Thank You!!!

Contact Info

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