

Dr. Milo Schield is reshaping statistics education by pioneering Statistical Literacy—a fundamentally new approach designed for the millions of college students in non-quantitative majors who must nevertheless make sense of statistical claims throughout their personal, professional, and civic lives.

Unlike traditional statistics courses, which were developed primarily for quantitative disciplines and focus heavily on probability, sampling, and statistical tests, Statistical Literacy teaches students how to critically evaluate the statistics they encounter every day in news reports, social media, public policy debates, health claims, and professional practice. Students learn what it means to take something into account quantitatively and how statistical conclusions can be profoundly influenced by the ways data are defined, counted, measured, grouped, summarized, and presented.

The new course addresses one of higher education's most pressing challenges: preparing students for a world saturated with data, observational studies, and artificial intelligence. Contemporary AI can perform most traditional statistical calculations and hypothesis tests. Dr. Schield's innovation shifts the emphasis from computational procedures and deductive reasoning to the distinctly human skills that AI cannot easily replace: critical thinking and inductive reasoning.

Instead of formulas or algebra, students learn to ask essential questions: How could these statistics have been assembled differently? What kind of study? What important factors should have been taken into account? How strong is the evidence? Because many of today's social, political, medical, and professional arguments rely on observational statistics that are vulnerable to confounding, these skills are indispensable for informed citizenship and responsible decision making.

The impact of this innovation is already evident. Statistical Literacy is required for all incoming students at New College of Florida and for all statistics majors at the University of New Mexico. Student evaluations demonstrate substantial perceived value: approximately half of students completing the full-semester course believe it should be required for all college students, while most of the remainder express neutral rather than negative views.

Dr. Schield's leadership in transforming quantitative education has received national recognition. He was named “the leader of the statistical literacy movement” in Best’s *More Damned Lies and Statistics*. He is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association. Schield was invited to present his work at the 2024 Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Conference on General Education and at the 2026 AAC&U Conference on STEM Education. In 2026, he received the Mu Sigma Rho Statistical Educator Award. His statistical literacy textbook is listed on Wikipedia’s Statistical Literacy page. His 100+ papers have received 1,000+ citations. For more background, see www.MiloSchield.com

As society increasingly depends on data-based arguments and AI-generated analyses, Dr. Schield's Statistical Literacy course offers a compelling model of "Statistics for the 21st Century"—one that could become a standard component of general education and influence the social sciences, professional education, and undergraduate curricula worldwide.