

**University of Florida**  
**College of Public Health and Health Professions**  
**PHC 6700 – Social & Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)**  
**Summer 2016**

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**Office Hours:** To be determined based on class poll

**Office:** HPNP Room 4112

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**Course Overview:** This course is designed to provide an overview of research design, methods, and ethics for graduate students in public health, with an emphasis in the social and behavioral sciences. The overarching *aims* for the course are to provide students with: (1) an overview of the types of research methods available; (2) the opportunity to design, conduct, and evaluate research projects; and (3) an understanding of key ethical, cultural, and political issues related to the conduct of research. We will use a variety of instructional methods to address these aims, including readings, discussions, projects, online activities, and hands-on research experiences.

**Course Objectives:** It is expected that by the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Outline the role and significance of social and behavioral research in the health sciences
2. Distinguish key ethical issues associated with different types of social research
3. Compose research questions and hypotheses on a topic of interest
4. Compare and contrast the key features of qualitative, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental research designs
5. Integrate basic quantitative and qualitative strategies with research methods
6. Develop a research proposal that describes a research problem, academic context, research design, sampling methods, data collection methods, and planned analysis of data
7. Communicate research, addressing ethical issues, validity, reliability, significance, and data interpretation
8. Critique the research design, process, and outcomes of their own work and the work of others

**Text:** Bryman A. Social Research Methods, 4<sup>th</sup> eds. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199202958 / 978-0199202050

**Course Materials:** This course will use the Canvas CMS. For issues with technical difficulties please contact the instructor or Academic Technology at the following:

Email: [learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:learning-support@ufl.edu)

Phone: (352)392-HELP – select option 2

Web: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

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## **Course Requirements**

### **Quizzes (Weekly, Online)**

There will be weekly quizzes to assess your comprehension of concepts and knowledge of requisite information needed to be successful in this course. The quizzes are in the Canvas course site, are timed, and are directly related to each week's required readings. You will have 2 attempts to complete each quiz and the highest score will be recorded. These quizzes will help you evaluate your understanding of course content by providing you feedback on your performance.

### **Weekly Activities (Preparation, Discussions, and Occasional Hands-On Activities)**

All students will be expected to view course content, contribute during class activities, participate in team-based problem solving, and share in class discussions. Since research is most often done collaboratively, your prepared interactions with peers will contribute to learning.

### **Research Proposal (Due 08/02/16)**

You will complete a research proposal over the course of the semester, submitting sections in stages. I will provide you feedback on these sections to improve your final submission. A detailed rubric will be provided on the Canvas course site with explicit expectations. The final research proposal will be written in APA style (6<sup>th</sup> edition) and include a title page, abstract (150 - 200 words), introduction, literature review, methods, as well as a reference page. The paper should be double spaced, have 1-inch margins, and use Times Roman 12 font. The proposal should be between 8 and 15 pages, excluding the references. All proposals will be submitted to Turnitin when submitting on Canvas. Further details of this assignment will be available on the Canvas course site.

### **Research Evaluation Paper (Due: 07/22/16)**

You will evaluate a published research article provided by the instructor. You will compose a 3 to 5 page paper, double spaced, that includes the following:

Introduction: A section describing the research problem and evaluating the construct definitions used in the study.

Research Question and Methods Alignment: A section describing the research question and an evaluation of its alignment with the chosen research design.

Sampling: A section describing the sampling methods used and an evaluation of how they align with the research design.

Discussion: A section discussing the strengths and limitations of the study, including an evaluation of the author's interpretation of the data.

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## Grading

### Point Distribution:

**Quizzes** – 20 points

**Weekly Activities** – 15 points

**Research Proposal** – 40 points

**Research Evaluation Paper** – 25 points

**Late Work:** Will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made ahead of the due date with the instructor.

**Grading Scale:** The final grade will be computed on the basis of the following assessments:

Points earned	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	Below 60
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	NG	S-U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

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**Academic Integrity:** Each student is bound by the academic honesty guidelines of the University that state: "The students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students who enroll at the university commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the honor code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the honor code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon community acceptance and enforcement of the honor code." And, each student, upon submission of an assignment, implies the pledge:

**"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."**

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Website for additional details:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

<http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

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## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you must register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu> within the first week of class. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to you, which you then give to the instructor when requesting accommodation. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

### Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with the instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- The Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>. On line and in person assistance is available.
- You Matter We Care website: <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/>. If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:
- Alachua County Crisis Center:  
(352) 264-6789

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

BUT – Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

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## Course Schedule

	<b>Topics</b>
<b>WEEK 1</b>	Syllabus, Role of Social Research, Ethics, and Scientific Methods Ch. 1: The nature and process of social research (pp.1 – 16) Ch. 6: Ethics and politics in social research (pp.129 – 154)
<b>WEEK 2</b>	Forming Questions & Foundational Approaches Ch. 2: Social research strategies (pp.18 – 42) Ch. 4: Planning a research project and formulating research questions (79 – 95)
<b>WEEK 3</b>	Research Strategies Ch. 3: Research designs (pp.44 – 77) Types of Inquiry: Causal vs Correlational
<b>WEEK 4</b>	Reviewing the Literature Ch. 5: Getting started: reviewing the literature (pp.97 – 128) Operationalizing Constructs
<b>WEEK 5</b>	Quantitative Methods Ch. 7: The nature of quantitative research (pp.159 – 182) Manipulation, Experiments, Quasi-Experiments
<b>WEEK 6</b>	Qualitative Methods Ch. 17: The nature of qualitative research (pp.379 – 413) Qualitative Data Forms and Procedures
	<b>Break (June 20 ---- June 26)</b>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	Sampling Concepts Ch. 8: Sampling in quantitative research (pp.183 – 206) Ch. 18: Sampling in qualitative research (pp.415 – 429)
<b>WEEK 8</b>	Interviewing Ch. 9: Structured interviewing (pp.208 – 230) Ch. 20: Interviewing in qualitative research (pp.468 – 498)
<b>WEEK 9</b>	Asking Questions Ch. 10: Self-completion questionnaires (pp.231 – 243) Ch. 11: Asking questions (pp.245 – 267)
<b>WEEK 10</b>	Focus Groups Ch. 21: Focus groups (pp.500 – 520) Ch. 12: Structured observation (pp.269 – 286)
<b>WEEK 11</b>	Quantitative Data Analysis Ch. 15: Quantitative data analysis (pp.329 – 341) Choosing Statistical Methods
<b>WEEK 12</b>	Qualitative Analysis Ch. 24: Qualitative data analysis (pp.564 – 588) Coding Transcripts