

University of Florida
College of Public Health and Health Professions
PHC 6700 – Social & Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)
Classroom HPNP-1101, Periods 2-4 (8:30AM – 11:30PM)
Spring 2018

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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 impacts 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, PHC6700 students will be able to:

1. Characterize the purpose and need for social research in the health sciences
2. Distinguish key ethical issues associated with different methods of social research
3. Compose research questions and hypotheses on a topic of interest
4. Compare and contrast the key features of observational, qualitative, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental research designs
5. Integrate basic quantitative and qualitative methods into the design of research so that they align with a given research question
6. Develop a research proposal that describes a researchable problem, the purpose of the study, the academic context of specified constructs, sampling strategies, methodology, proposed analysis, and implications of potential findings
7. Communicate research designs with others in written and oral formats so that a logical framework is evident behind research decisions
8. Critique the research design, process, and analysis of their own work and the research of others

Text: Bryman A. Social Research Methods, 5th eds. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0199689453

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
Phone: (352)392-HELP – select option 2
Web: <https://ss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Course Requirements

Quizzes (Weekly, Online) – 20% of Final grade

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.

Professionalism (Preparation, In-class Contributions, and Occasional Outside Activity Participation) – 15% of Final Grade

All students will be expected to make informed contributions during in-class activities and team-based problem solving. Since research is most often done in teams, your contributions to your assigned research team will also count toward professionalism. You will receive feedback on your professionalism score in the middle of the course with input for how to improve the score if necessary. This means that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings, contribute to or lead discussions, and display a command of the topics at hand. In doing so, you are expected to display professional courtesy to your peers when providing feedback and constructive criticism. A rubric for scoring professionalism is provided within Canvas.

Research Proposal (Due 4/19/18) – 40% of Final Grade

You will complete a research proposal over the course of the semester and have the opportunity to submit 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 and include a title page, an introduction section, a literature review, a methodology section, as well as a reference section. The paper should be double spaced, have 1-inch margins, and use Arial 11 font. The proposal should be between 10 and 15 pages, excluding the references. Further details of this assignment will be available on the Canvas course site.

Group Research Proposal Presentation (Due: 4/19/18) – 25% of Final Grade

As a team you will prepare and deliver a presentation of proposed research on a topic.

Presentations should include the following:

Introduction: The introduction should include a brief statement (paragraph) of the problem and purpose, and include any definitions of major constructs.

Significance of the Study: This should include a rationale justifying why the study is worthy of the work that will be involved.

Research Question and any needed Hypothesis: This should include specific language that identifies all variables or potential phenomena

Methods: This section should encompass the typical components discussed under the “Methods” section.

Discussion: Discuss the strengths and limitations of your study. What are the bigger implications of your findings? How should it proceed?

You will add or create images and graphics that help communicate the proposed research, and your team will present this research in the final class. Further details will be provided throughout the semester and several weeks before the due date.

Grading

Point Distribution:

Quizzes – 20 points

Professionalism – 15 points

Research Proposal – 40 points

Group Research Proposal Presentation – 25 points

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

Policy Related to Late Work

Late work will not be accepted without an approved arrangement with the course Instructor. Failure to do this may result in a zero grade for that assignment.

Policy Related to Class Attendance

- Class attendance is a part of the Professionalism component of this course. It is expected that you will notify the instructor in advance when you know you will need to miss or be late to class. Illness, family emergencies, and other extenuating circumstances are all potential reasons for missing or being late to class, as long as you follow-up with the instructor in a timely, professional manner.

- All faculty members are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For information regarding the UF Attendance Policy see the Registrar website for additional details: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Expectations Regarding Course Behavior

To maximize the use of class time, you are expected to:

1. Look at Canvas for notes and announcements prior to **each** class
2. Read assigned readings prior to class and come prepared for discussion
3. The use of computers and other electronic devices in class is limited to class related activities

Communication Guidelines

Please email the instructor directly (email address above) rather than using the messaging tool in Canvas. For digital communication expectations see: *Netiquette Guidelines*: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

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.

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.

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Course Schedule

	Topics
WEEK 1	Course Introduction, Form Research Teams, Canvas Site Review
WEEK 2	Ch. 1: The nature and process of social research (pp.1 – 16) Ch. 6: Ethics and politics in social research (pp.129 – 154)
WEEK 3	Ch. 2: Social research strategies (pp.18 – 42) Ch. 4: Planning a research project and formulating research questions (79 – 95)
WEEK 4	Ch. 3: Research designs (pp.44 – 77) Hennessy et al. (2010) Active Living for Rural Children
WEEK 5	Ch. 5: Getting started: reviewing the literature (pp.97 – 128) Scott-Sheldon (2007) Health Behavior and College Students
WEEK 6	Ch. 7: The nature of quantitative research (pp.159 – 182) Firestone. (1987) The Rhetoric of Quantitative and Qualitative research
WEEK 7	Ch. 17: The nature of qualitative research (pp.379 – 413)
WEEK 8	Ch. 8: Sampling in quantitative research (pp.183 – 206) Ch. 18: Sampling in qualitative research (pp.415 – 429) Miles et al. (2010) Silent Endurance and Profound Loneliness: Socioemotional Suffering in African Americans Living With HIV in the Rural South
WEEK 9	Ch. 9: Structured interviewing (pp.208 – 230) Ch. 20: Interviewing in qualitative research (pp.468 – 498) Hume, Salmon, and Ball. (2004) Children's Perceptions of their Home and Neighborhood Environments, and Their Association with Objectively Measures Physical Activity: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study
	Spring Break (March 5 ---- March 9)
WEEK 10	Ch. 10: Self-completion questionnaires (pp.231 – 243) Ch. 11: Asking questions (pp.245 – 267) Falk, Falk, and Ung. (2016) When Practice Precedes Theory – A Mixed Methods Evaluation of Student's Learning Experiences in an Undergraduate Study Program in Nursing
WEEK 11	Ch. 21: Focus groups (pp.500 – 520) Ch. 12: Structured observation (pp.269 – 286)
WEEK 12	Ch. 15: Quantitative data analysis (pp.329 – 341)
WEEK 13	Ch. 24: Qualitative data analysis (pp.564 – 588) Transcript of Focus Group Session
WEEK 14	Group Research Proposal Presentations Course Wrap-Up

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Inclusive Learning Environment

Public health and health professions are based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act." If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs website: www.multicultural.ufl.edu