

University of Florida
College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus
PHC 6700: Social & Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)
Online: Summer 2019

Instructor Name:

Brittney N. Dixon, MPH, CPH, TTS
Social & Behavioral Sciences
College of Public Health and Health Professions
Email Address: brittneyndixon@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Virtual Office Hours occur Thursdays from 9AM to 10AM in Canvas Chat

Lecturer:

George Hack, PhD, MEd
Clinical Associate Professor
College of Public Health and Health Professions
Email Address: hackg@phhp.ufl.edu

Preferred Course Communications (e.g. email, office phone): Direct email. Outlook email is a safer means of communication than the email function within Canvas.

Email Policy: Response within 24 hours to emails received on weekdays (M-F) and 48 hours to emails received over the weekend.

PREREQUISITES

None

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME**Course Overview**

This course is designed to provide an overview of social and behavioral 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 and evaluate research projects; (3) an opportunity to practice data collection methods often used in social and behavioral research; and (4) an understanding of ethical issues related to the conduct of research. We will use a variety of instructional methods to address these aims, including readings, group discussions, video presentations, projects, case studies, and hands-on research experiences.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

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

1. Advocate for the significance of social and behavioral research in the health sciences
2. Distinguish key ethical issues associated with specific types of social research
3. Compose research questions and hypotheses on a topic of inquiry
4. Compare and contrast the key features of qualitative, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental research designs
5. Integrate basic quantitative and qualitative strategies into the design of research methods
6. Develop a research proposal that integrates a research problem, an academic context, a research design, sampling methods, data collection methods, and a planned analysis of data
7. Communicate research, addressing methods, 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

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT**Topical Outline/Course Schedule**

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Topic(s)</i>	<i>Readings</i>
1	5/13/19- 5/19/19	Syllabus, Role of Social Research, Ethics, and Scientific Methods	Ch. 1: The nature and process of social research (pp. 1 – 14) Ch. 6: Ethics and politics in social research (pp.120 – 146)
2	5/20/19- 5/26/19	Forming Questions & Foundational Approaches	Ch. 2: Social research strategies (pp.16 – 37) Ch. 4: Planning a research project and formulating research questions (73 – 88)
3	5/27/19- 6/2/19	Research Strategies	Ch. 3: Research designs (pp.39 – 71) Types of Inquiry: Causal vs Correlational
4	6/3/19- 6/9/19	Reviewing the Literature	Ch. 5: Getting started: reviewing the literature (pp.90 – 119) Operationalizing Constructs
5	6/10/19- 6/16/19	Quantitative Methods	Ch. 7: The nature of quantitative research (pp.148 – 169) Manipulation, Experiments, Quasi-Experiments
6	6/17/19- 6/23/19	Qualitative Methods	Ch. 17: The nature of qualitative research (pp.374 – 405) Qualitative Data Forms and Procedures
Break (6/24/19 ---- 6/30/19)			
7	7/1/19- 7/7/19	Sampling Concepts	Ch. 8: Sampling in quantitative research (pp.170 – 195) Ch. 18: Sampling in qualitative research (pp.407 – 420)
8	7/8/19- 7/14/19	Interviewing	Ch. 9: Structured interviewing (pp.197 – 219) Ch. 20: Interviewing in qualitative research (pp.465 – 498)
9	7/15/19- 7/21/19	Asking Questions	Ch. 10: Self-completion questionnaires (pp.220 – 242) Ch. 11: Asking questions (pp.243 – 264)
10	7/22/19- 7/28/19	Focus Groups	Ch. 21: Focus groups (pp.500 – 523) Ch. 12: Structured observation (pp.266 – 281)
11	7/29/19- 8/4/19	Quantitative Data Analysis	Ch. 15: Quantitative data analysis (pp.329 – 350) Choosing Statistical Methods

Week	Date(s)	Topic(s)	Readings
12	8/5/19- 8/11/19	Qualitative Analysis	Ch. 24: Qualitative data analysis (pp.569 – 599) Coding Transcripts

Course Materials and Technology

Text (The textbook is required.)

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

Announcements: Class announcements will be sent via the announcements tool in Canvas. Depending on your CANVAS notification settings, you may or may not be notified via email; you are responsible for all information in these announcements. Please update your settings so that you are notified of announcements.

Technical Support

For technical support for the materials posted in the course e-Learning site, activities, and assessments, please post in the appropriate discussion or contact:

Name: Brittney Dixon

Email Address: brittneyndixon@ufl.edu

For all other technical support for this class, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:

Phone Number: (352) 392-HELP (4357) Option 2

Email: helpdesk@ufl.edu

Webpage with Chat: [UF Computing Help Desk](#)

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Assignments

Quizzes (Due Weekly, 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 in the Bryman textbook. You will have 2 attempts to complete each quiz by the end of each week 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 (Due Weekly, 15% of final grade)

All students will be expected to view all weekly video presentations, complete weekly readings, complete weekly activities, and participate in team-based problem solving in the discussions with quality contributions. For discussions, initial posts are due by Friday of each week, and replies are due by Monday of the following week. Since research is most often done collaboratively, your prepared interactions with peers will contribute to learning. A detailed rubric for performance expectations and scoring criteria will be provided in Canvas.

Research Proposal (Final Submission Due 08/05/19, 50% of final grade)

You will compose a research proposal that outlines a need for, purpose, academic background, and design of a proposed study. Early in the semester you will develop your own social/behavioral research question that explores a topic that is meaningful to you. You will submit this proposal in stages, and I will provide you with feedback to improve your final graded submission. The **Introduction section is due June 24, 2019** (worth 5 points towards your total grade), the **Methods section is due July 12, 2019** (worth 5 points toward your total grade). A detailed rubric will be provided on the Canvas course site with explicit performance expectations and scoring criteria. The final submission of the research proposal will be written in APA style and include a title page, the Introduction section, and the Research Methodology section, as well as a references section. The proposal should be between 10 and 15 pages, excluding the references section. Further details of this assignment will be available on the Canvas course site.

Research Evaluation Presentation (Due Date: 07/26/19 15% of final grade)

You will evaluate a published research article provided by the instructor by developing either a narrated PowerPoint or video recording that includes the following components:

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 questions and an evaluation of their 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.

Your video or presentation should have a 3 to 5 minute duration and be uploaded to Canvas. A detailed rubric of the performance expectations and scoring criteria will be provided in Canvas.

Grading

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

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Points or % of final grade (% must sum to 100%)</i>
Quizzes	Due weekly	20 points
Weekly Activities	Due weekly	15 points
Research Proposal Final Submission	Due 08/05/19	50 points
Research Evaluation Presentation	Due 07/26/19	15 points
Total		100 points

Point system used

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

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with an A. In addition, the Bachelor of Health Science Program does not use C- grades.

Letter grade to grade point conversions are fixed by UF and cannot be changed.

<i>Letter Grade</i>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	NG	S-U
<i>Grade Points</i>	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

For greater detail on the meaning of letter grades and university policies related to them, see the [Grading and Grade Policies](#) posted by the Registrar's Office.

Policy Related to Make up Exams or Other Work

Late Work will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made ahead of the due date with the instructor or extenuating circumstances are presented to the instructor and approved.

Policy Related to Technical Issues

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **must** be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk created when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **must** e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Policy Related to Required Class Attendance

All faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For greater detail on excused absences, see the [Attendance Policies](#) posted by the Registrar's Office.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

Expectations Regarding Course Behavior

Communication Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“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 Codes](#) information at the Dean of Students Office website or the [Academic Expectations](#) information at the Graduate School website for additional details.

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

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online [Faculty Course Evaluations](#). 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.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you are strongly encouraged to register with the [Dean of Students Office Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) within the first week of class. The DRC will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please make sure you provide this letter to me by the end of the second week of the course. 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 an 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. Online and in person assistance is available.

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 [Student Health Care Center](#) website.

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from the [Alachua County Crisis Center](#) at (352) 264-6789.

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.

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Public health and health professions are based on 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.