

University of Florida
College of Health and Health Professions
PHC 6700: Social & Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)
Summer 2021

Delivery Format: Online
Course Website: UFL E-Learning

Instructor: Sarah L. Collins, MPH
Email Address: sarahcollins@ufl.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Preferred Course Communications (e.g. email, office phone): Email. Please use the email listed above and NOT the Canvas email tool.

Email Policy: Response within 24 hours to emails received on weekdays (M-F). Emails received during the weekend or after 5pm Friday will be answered on the following Monday.

Purpose and Outcome

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide an overview of research design, methods, and ethics for students in public health, with an emphasis on approaches used in the social and behavioral sciences. This course will use a variety of instructional methods to achieve these aims, including readings, discussions, projects, and hands-on research experiences.

Relation to Program Outcomes

The overarching aims for this 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) understanding of key ethical and cultural considerations related to the conduct of research.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

It is expected that, by the end of this course, PHC6700 students will be able to:

1. Advocate for the significance and need for social and behavioral research in the health sciences;
2. Critically evaluate public health social and behavioral science research;
3. Distinguish key ethical issues associated with specific types of research;
4. Compose research questions and hypotheses on a topic of inquiry;
5. Compare and contrast the key features of observational, qualitative, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental research designs;
6. Integrate basic quantitative and qualitative methods into the design of research in order to align with specific research questions;

7. Develop a research proposal that describes a researchable problem, the purpose of the study, the academic context of the study, sampling strategies, methodology, proposed analyses, and implications of potential findings;
8. Compare and contrast different data analytical approaches;
9. Communicate research designs in written and oral formats; and
10. Critique the research design, process, and analysis of their own work and the research of others.

Required Texts:

1. Salazar, L. F., Crosby, R. A., & DiClemente, R. J. (2015). *Research Methods in Health Promotion* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 978-1-118-40906-0 **[RM]**
2. American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 978-1433832178 **[APA]**

Additional Required Readings:

Posted within each module on the course website.

What is expected of you?

You are expected to actively engage in the course throughout the semester. As we do not meet weekly, it is the sole responsibility of the student in online courses to keep up with course requirements. **Late work is not accepted.** Modules are scheduled to open up on Mondays at 12AM.

To unlock course content, you must take a quiz on the syllabus and course procedures which can be found under the "Start Here" link in eLearning. While you receive no formal grade for this quiz, you must pass the quiz with 100% correct answers in order to unlock the course materials. After this, you will be able to access the course modules during their assigned week. Weeks "officially" start/open up at 12 AM on each Monday.

Course Materials and Technology

This course will be delivered via Canvas. As such, 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, whether or not you see them in your email.

Instructional Methods:

This course is offered online, via Canvas. Each week, the course will have one or more learning "modules." Each module is made up of the following:

1. Assigned readings (textbook chapters and/or articles posted to eLearning)
2. Lectures/videos (posted to eLearning)
3. Activities

I ask that you complete each of the components of each module in the order listed above. The textbook readings make up the core foundation of this course, and supplemental articles, lectures, and videos are provided to supplement the course textbooks by offering applied examples, clarification of difficult concepts, and extensions of textbook material. Thus, I assume that you have completed the assigned readings when watching the videos; if you have not done so, the video content may be confusing.

For **technical support for the course Canvas site, activities, and assessments**, please contact the online course coordinator:

Lior Flum, Instructional Designer
 Room Number: HPNP 4135
 Phone: (352) 273-6760
 Email: lflum@php.ufl.edu
 Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST

For other technical difficulties, please contact Academic Technology:

Email: learning-support@ufl.edu
 Phone: (352) 392-HELP – select option 2
 Web: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Description of Course Content

Course schedule:

A “week” in this course is defined as 12:00 AM EDT on a Monday through 11:59 PM EDT on the following Sunday. Assignments included as a part of a module are typically due by the end of the course “week” (i.e., 11:59 PM EDT on the following Sunday) unless otherwise noted.

Topical Outline/Course Schedule

Module	Date(s)	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignment(s) Due
1	May 10-16	Course Introduction, Principles of Scientific Inquiry, Engaging with Research Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 1 & 2 • APA Chap 1 (pg 3-10) • Raff (2016) 	Introduce Yourself; Research Topic
2	May 17-23	Research Question & Hypothesis Development, Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 1, 2 & 3 • APA Chap 1 (pg 3-10) • Resnick & Belluz (2018) 	Annotated Bibliography; Ethics Activity
3	May 24-30	Observational Research Designs & Experimental Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 4-5 & 9-10 	Experimental & Observational Design Activity

4	May 31 (Holiday)-June 6	Qualitative Methods & Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 8 • APA Chap 1 (pg 11-26); Chap 3, 4, 6 (through pg 177), & 8 	Qualitative Methods Activity; Research Questions
5	June 7-13	Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 6 • Heen et al. 2014 • Ledford 2020 	Sampling Activity; Research Proposal Part 1 due (Introduction/Lit Review & Current Study)
6	June 14-20	EXAM 1		
7	June 21-27	SUMMER BREAK		
8	June 28- July 4	Measurement, Survey Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 7 & 13 • TBD Articles 	Measurement Activity; Complete Peer Reviews (DUE Wednesday, July 7)
9	July 5 (Holiday)- 11	Scientific Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thapa et al., 2020; • Brockmann 2020* 	Research Evaluation Presentation
10	July 12-18	Quantitative Data Analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 14 • APA Chap 6 (pg 178 - end) & 7 	Quantitative Data Analysis Activity; Research Proposal Part 2 due (Methods)
11	July 19-25	Qualitative Data Analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM Chap 16 • TBD Articles 	Qualitative Data Analysis Activity
12	July 26-Aug 1	STUDY FOR EXAM 2 AND WORK ON FINAL RESEARCH PROSAL		
13	Aug 2-6	EXAM 2		Final Research Proposal Due (NOTE: DIFFERENT DUE DAY)

Caveat: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. Any changes will be announced in class and via Canvas, and students are personally responsible for obtaining updated information regarding these changes.

Academic Requirements and Grading

Assignments:

Syllabus Quiz (ungraded)

In order to open course content, you must successfully pass a syllabus quiz in Canvas. NOTE: While this quiz is ungraded, you must receive a 100% to unlock course materials. You will NOT be able to access course materials without passing this quiz.

Weekly Activities – 23% of Final Grade

There may be one or more activities associated with each module. Completion of these activities will contribute to 16% of the final grade. **Activities are due throughout the semester; due dates for each individual assignment are available via Canvas.**

Exams – 25% of Final Grade (Two exams each representing 12.5% of Final Grade)

There will be two exams in this course. Exam will consist of multiple-choice questions covering content addressed in the readings (textbook readings and additional assigned readings posted on Canvas), videos, and activities. Exam 1 will cover content discussed in Weeks 1-5 and Exam 2 will cover content discussed in Weeks 8-11 (while Exam 2 is not comprehensive, if a topic was discussed in an early week of the class and again after Week 7 it may be included in Exam 2). Both exams will be completed via the **Honorlock** proctoring service. Please see Canvas for instructions on how to install the Honorlock browser extension. You must complete a practice quiz with Honorlock **prior to Exam 1** to make sure that your computer is set up correctly. The exams will be **closed book**, and you are not allowed to access outside materials when taking the exam; however, you will be permitted one (1) single 8x11 page of handwritten notes (you may only write on one side of the sheet of paper; the other side should be blank and can be used as scratch paper during the exam). Prior to the start of each exam, you will be asked to pan your webcam around your room/desk and to show this piece of paper (front and back) to the proctor. **Exam 1 will be completed during Week 6; it will open at 12 AM EDT on Monday, June 14 and will close at 11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, June 20. Exam 2 will be completed during Week 13; it will open at 12 AM EDT on Friday, July 30 and close at 11:59 PM EDT on Friday, August 6.**

Research Evaluation Presentation – 12% of Final Grade

You will evaluate a published research article by developing 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/Methods Alignment: A section describing the study's research question(s) and your evaluation of whether the study research methods/design aligned with these questions

Sampling: A section describing the sampling methods used, and how they align with the research design/question.

Results: A section describing the study results, and whether the results were described/interpreted adequately.

Discussion: A section discussing the strengths and limitations of the study, including an evaluation of the implications suggested by the authors.

You will also engage with your peers by commenting on two of their presentations. This assignment has TWO due dates: **The Research Evaluation Presentation will be POSTED by 11:59 PM EDT on Thursday, July 8 and you will comment on two peer posts by 11:59PM on Sunday, July 11.**

Research Proposal – 40% of Final Grade

You will compose a research proposal that outlines a need for, purpose, 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:

1. Part 1 of your research proposal will be due by **11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, June 13**. This portion of your proposal will be shared with a classmate, who will provide you with feedback **(8% of Final Grade)**.
2. You will complete two peer reviews of your classmates' proposals. These peer reviews are due by **11:59 PM EDT on Wednesday, July 7**. **(4% of Final Grade)**
3. Part 2 of your research proposal will be due by **11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, July 18**. **(8% of Final Grade)**
4. Your final research proposal will be due by **11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, August 1**. **(20% of Final Grade)**

NOTE: There are other weekly activities associated with your research proposal that will assist you in developing your work.

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 should follow APA style and include a title page, an Introduction section, a Methods section, a Discussion section, and a References section. Proposals should be between 10 and 15 pages, excluding the references section.

Grading:

Requirement	Due date	Points or % of final grade
Weekly Activities	Ongoing	23%
Exam 1	11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, June 20	12.5%
Research Evaluation Presentation	<p align="center">**NOTE: TWO DUE DATES**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORIGINAL post due by 11:59 PM EDT on Thursday, July 8. • TWO reply posts due by 11:59PM on Sunday, July 11. 	12%
Final Research Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 1 due by 11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, June 13. • Peer reviews due by 11:59 PM EDT on Wednesday, July 7. • PART 2 due by 11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, July 18. • Final paper due by 11:59 PM EDT on Sunday, August 1. 	40%
Exam 2	11:59 PM EDT on Friday, August 6 (NOTE: FRIDAY DUE DATE, NOT SUNDAY!)	12.5%

Grading Scale: The final grade will be computed based on the following:

Percentage	93-100	90-92.99	87-89.99	83-86.99	80-82.99	77-79.99	73-76.99	70-72.99	67-69.99	63-66.99	60-62.00	Below 60
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

NOTE: Percentages are **not** rounded up at the end of the semester, and grades are not curved.

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. The GPA for graduate students must be 3.0. in all 5000 level courses and above to graduate. A grade of C counts toward a

graduate degree only if a sufficient number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with a B+ or higher.

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

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

Policy Related to Plagiarism

Plagiarism, as defined in the UF Student Honor Code (<https://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf>), will not be tolerated. Plagiarism detection software (e.g., TurnItIn) and other resources may be used to detect plagiarism. Assignments where the instructor deems that plagiarism has occurred may receive a zero grade, and may be reported to the Dean of Students office as a Student Honor Code violation. The APA publication manual (assigned textbook) provides guidelines on avoiding plagiarism; for more details you can also reference the Purdue Online Writing Lab website (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html).

Policy Related to Make up Exams or Other Work

If you have a scheduling conflict that prevents you from fulfilling a certain course requirement, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. **Late assignments will not be accepted** without an approved arrangement with the course instructor. Failure to complete work prior to the deadlines outlined in this syllabus may result in a zero grade for that assignment.

Please note: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the UF Computing help desk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) correspondence. You MUST e-mail the instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Excused absences policies are consistent with university policies in the Graduate Catalog (<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#attendance>).

Policy Related to Extra Credit

Occasionally, there may be opportunities to complete additional assignments or answer additional questions for bonus points. These extra credit items will be optional.

For student evaluations of teaching, all members of the class will be awarded one (1) bonus point if at least 80% of the enrolled class completes evaluations, and two (2) bonus points if 100% of the enrolled class completes evaluations.

Student Expectations, Roles, and Opportunities for Input

Expectations Regarding Course Behavior

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

1. Look at the Canvas site for notes and announcements prior to each class
2. Read assigned readings prior to each class, and come to class prepared for discussion
3. Bring your laptop/textbook to course meetings.

The use of computers and other electronic devices in class is limited to class related activities. Students who are being disruptive (e.g., using electronic devices when not appropriate for class activities, talking over the instructor/other students, or otherwise disrupting the learning environment for other students) will be asked to leave class. Students who are asked to leave for disruptive behavior will lose all assignment points for that day.

Communication Guidelines

Please post questions related to the course material on the course discussion board (see board entitled "Seek Clarification on Syllabus, Curriculum, or Instruction") so that all students may benefit from the answers provided.

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

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 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.

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. 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. 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>

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 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

Additional Readings/Resources (Preliminary List, Subject to Change):

Week 1:

Raff, J. (2016, May 9). How to read and understand a scientific paper: A guide for non-scientists. *London School of Economics and Political Science*.
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2016/05/09/how-to-read-and-understand-a-scientific-paper-a-guide-for-non-scientists/>

Week 2:

Resnick, B., & Belluz, J. (2018, October 24). A top Cornell food researcher has had 15 studies retracted. That's a lot. *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/9/19/17879102/brian-wansink-cornell-food-brand-lab-retractions-jama>

Week 5:

Heen, M.S.J., Joel D. Lieberman, and Terence D. Miethe (2014). *A Comparison of Different Online Sampling Approaches for Generating National Samples* (Report CCJP 2014–01). Las Vegas: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Center for Crime and Justice Policy

Ledford, H. (2020). Social scientists battle bots to glean insights from online chatter. *Nature*.
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-00141-1>