

**Course Title:** Health Behavior and Policy Research Design and Methods

**Course Number:** HBSP 0600

**Course Pre- and Co-requisite(s):** PHCO 0504 Introduction to Biostatistics

**Course Location:** Online and synchronous

**Course Date & Time:** Wednesday, 6:00 pm - 8:20 pm

**Course Instructor:** Racquel Kelly Kohler, PhD, Assistant Professor

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**Course Assistant:** Caleb Loschiavo

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**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Required Course Text:** Babbie, E. R. (2017). The basics of social research (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

**Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources:** *Other readings as assigned (will be available on Canvas)*

*STATA - You will need to use STATA software to analyze your final project datasets. STATA MP17 is [available for purchase](#) for \$48 for 6-month or \$94 for a one-year student license. You may also access STATA for free on the [virtual computer lab](#). We will demo analyses in class, and [Stata's YouTube channel](#) will show you how to perform common tasks.*

**Course Description:** This is a basic course in research methods, designed to acquaint students with methods to conduct health behavior and health policy research. The course explores major research methods and techniques. While the emphasis will be on quantitative methods, qualitative methods are also introduced. While this is not a statistics course, a basic understanding of statistics will be useful in this course as statistical concepts, problems and analyses are frequently considered.

**Selected Concentration Competencies Addressed:**

Each Concentration identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Health Systems and Policy include:

1. apply quantitative and qualitative research methods in the analysis of health service and policy issues; and
2. assess and delineate public health policies and practices recognizing legal and ethical implications for individuals and populations.

The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Global Public Health include:

3. Apply fundamental principles of global standards for the protection of human subjects in diverse cultural settings; and
4. Apply the fundamental principles of global public health perspectives on global public health education, research, and practice

The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Social and Behavioral Health Sciences include:

5. use various techniques to conduct needs assessments of diverse populations; and
6. design, implement, conduct, and evaluate health education/promotion programs in diverse settings

The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Urban Public Health include:

7. Use relevant sources (including public health literature and qualitative and quantitative data) to identify the health status and disparities in urban populations and communities;
8. Evaluate the scientific evidence related to urban public health issues; and
9. Apply methods to develop and assess programs and strategies that protect or endanger the health and well-being of urban populations

Please visit the Concentration webpages on the School of Public Health's website at [sph.rutgers.edu](http://sph.rutgers.edu) for additional competencies addressed by this course for other degrees and concentrations.

**Course Objectives:** By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a. Demonstrate their understanding of the basic research designs and processes
- b. Review and synthesize research literature
- c. Formulate research questions/generate hypotheses
- d. Evaluate instruments for quality, including validity and reliability
- e. Articulate the pros and cons of various data collection methodologies
- f. Describe principles of sampling
- g. Describe appropriate uses of qualitative and quantitative approaches
- h. List and describe data bases used in public health
- i. identify and address methodological and estimation challenges in data analysis
- j. conduct descriptive secondary data analysis
- k. Interpret and effectively communicate results from data analysis

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

**Activity Participation:** Participation will be assessed based on class attendance and participation in classroom discussion.

**Reading Quizzes:** There will be eight multiple choice question quizzes administered on canvas. Each quiz will be associated with an assigned textbook chapter and will be due before class.

**Final Exam:** A Final Exam will be given online. It will include multiple choice, true/false and short answer questions.

**Data Analysis Project:** The Data Analysis Project is a course long project. Each student will conduct a data analysis project on a topic of his/her choice using the selected data set for the class and STATA statistical software. The support for this project will in-class sessions of a demo data analysis project. The documentation and instruction for a demo data analysis project and sample presentations of the student data analysis projects from previous semesters will be available online.

<b>Assignment List</b>			<b>School Grading Scale</b>	
Attendance & Participation:	5	%	94 - 100	A
Reading Quizzes	15	%	90 - < 94	A-
Data Analysis Project			87 - < 90	B+
Research Map	5	%	84 - < 87	B
Annotated Bibliography	5	%	80 - < 84	B-
Research Question & Variable List	5	%	77 - < 80	C+
Data Analysis Methods	10	%	74 - < 77	C
Tables	5	%	<70	F
Results	10	%		
Discussion/Limitations/Conclusion	10	%		
Research Poster Presentation	10	%		
Final Paper	5	%		
Final Exam	15	%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>%</b>		

**Competency Course Objectives(s) Lessons**  
1                    a, g                    1, 6, 8

**Assessment(s)**  
Chapter 8 and 10 quizzes; Final exam

2	b, e, f	5, 7, 12	Annotated bibliography assignment; Chapter 7 and 12; Final exam
3	a, b, e, f	4, 5, 6	Annotated bibliography assignment; Research question; Final exam
4	b,c,d,g	11, 12, 13	Annotated bibliography assignment; Research question
5	h, e, d	2, 3, 4, 7	Chapter 4, 5, and 9 quizzes; Final exam; Research question and variables list assignment; Data analysis plan assignment; Data analysis support sessions; Poster presentation; Chapter 14 quiz; Final exam
6	c, i, j, k	11, 12, 13	Annotated bibliography assignment; Research question; variables list assignment; Final exam
7	b, d, e, g, h	1, 3, 7	Research question; variables list assignment
8	d, g, h, i	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	Research question and variables list assignment; Data analysis plan assignment; Data analysis support sessions; Poster presentation; Chapter 14 quiz; Final exam
9	c, i, j, k	10, 11, 12, 13	

**Course Schedule:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Course Topic</b>	<b>Online 30/ Assignments</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1	25 May	Introduction to Research Methods	Explore Data Set	Ch 1 (Human Inquiry and Science), Ch 2-pp 43-57 (Paradigms, Theory and Research)
2	01 June	Research Questions & Study Designs Part 1	Reading Quiz	Ch 4 (Research Design)
3	08 June	Study Designs Part 2 & Literature Review	DUE: Research Map & Draft Research Questions & Variables List Reading Quiz	Ch 15 (Reading Social Research pp 448-461)
4	15 June	Conceptualization, Operationalization, Measurement	DUE: Annotated Bibliography Assignment Reading Quiz	Ch 5 (Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement)
5	22 June	Sampling	DUE: Final Research Question & Variables List	Ch 7 (The Logic of Sampling)
6	29 June	Experiments	Reading Quiz	Ch 8 (Experiments)
7	06 July	Survey Research	Reading Quiz Reading Quiz	Ch 9 (Survey Research)
8	13 July	Quantitative Research	DUE: Data Analysis Methods Reading Quiz	Ch 14 (Quantitative Data Analysis)
9	20 July	Evaluation Research	DUE: Tables	Ch 12 (Evaluation Research)
10	27 July	Data Analysis Support	DUE: Results	
11	03 Aug	Writing Research & Data Analysis Support	DUE: Discussion/Limitations/Conclusion Reading Quiz	Ch 15 (Writing Social Research pp462-471)
12	10 Aug	Qualitative Research	DUE: Research Poster Presentation	Ch 10 (Qualitative Field Research)
13	17 Aug	Course Wrap Up	DUE: Final Exam & Final Paper	

**Learning Management System:** Canvas will be used extensively throughout the semester for course syllabus, assignments, announcements, communication and/or other course-related activities. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Canvas and check it regularly. If you have difficulties accessing Canvas, please inform the instructor and Canvas Support ([help@canvas.rutgers.edu](mailto:help@canvas.rutgers.edu)). Canvas is accessible at [canvas.rutgers.edu](https://canvas.rutgers.edu).

**School of Public Health Honor Code:** The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the School Catalog ([sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html](https://sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html)). Each student bears a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her graduate work. For example, all students are expected to observe the generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another's work, to refrain from falsifying data, and to refrain from receiving and/or giving aid on examinations or other assigned work requiring independent effort. In submitting written material, the writer takes full responsibility for the work as a whole and implies that, except as properly noted by use of quotation marks, footnotes, etc., both the ideas and the works used are his or her own. In addition to maintaining personal academic integrity, each student is expected to contribute to the academic integrity of the School community by not facilitating inappropriate use of her/his own work by others and by reporting acts of academic dishonesty by others to an appropriate school authority. It should be clearly understood that plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to sanctions up to and including separation from the Rutgers School of Public Health.

**Students with Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student must apply for Services by first completing a Registration Form with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (ODS) at [ods.rutgers.edu](https://ods.rutgers.edu). The student will also be required to participate in an ODS intake interview and provide documentation. If reasonable accommodations are granted, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations which should be shared with your instructors as early in your courses as possible.

**Commitment to Safe Learning Environment:** The Rutgers School of Public Health is committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the School as a whole. Free expression in an academic community is essential to the mission of providing the highest caliber of education possible. The School encourages civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and constructive engagement. Provocative ideas respectfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with responsibility. The School encourages all students to disclose any situations where you may feel unsafe, discriminated against, or harassed. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will be not tolerated and violations may lead to disciplinary actions.

**Reporting Discrimination or Harassment:** If you experience any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. You may report such incidents

to the [RBHS Title IX Office](#) or to the School of Public Health's [Office of Student Affairs Office of Student Affairs](#) . Rutgers University has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. If you experience any other form of discrimination or harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious, political, or academic, please report any such incidents to the School's . The School strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to the School. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#) ) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the School and potentially the University. For example, if you tell a faculty or staff member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty or staff member must share that information with the [RBHS Title IX Coordinator](#) . If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University [Policy 10.3.12](#) . For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#) .

**Graduate Student Computer Policy:** Students are required to possess a personal laptop, no older than approximately two years, that must meet minimum requirements which may be found online at: [sph.rutgers.edu/student-life/computer-support.html](http://sph.rutgers.edu/student-life/computer-support.html)

#### **Policy Concerning Use of Recording Devices and Other Electronic Communications**

**Systems:** When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communications or recording devices.

**Policy Concerning Use of Turnitin:** Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

**Withdrawal/Refund Schedule:** Students who stop attending their course(s) without submitting a completed [Add/Drop Course Leave of Absence](#) form will receive a failing grade. Furthermore, students dropping to zero credits for the semester are considered withdrawn and must submit a completed form from the School of Public Health's Office of Student Affairs. The School of Public Health refunds tuition only. Administrative and technology fees are non-refundable. You may find the Withdrawal/Refund Schedule on the School of Public Health website at: [sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html](http://sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html)