

**Community Health 181/030**  
**Internship Seminar/Introduction to Social Inquiry**  
**Spring 2011**

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Lectures: Thursday, 9-11:30 Anderson 309

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### **Course Description**

Together the internship seminars offer a unique opportunity to develop skills in the area of social science research methods including: research design, data collection, data analysis strategies, and research ethics. As a community health professional having an understanding of the elements of social science research is essential. Such knowledge allows practitioners, providers, policy makers and researchers to avoid overgeneralization and inaccurate observation, assuring the efficacy of programming and policy. This course is designed to provide community health students with an overview of the tools necessary to engage in social science research. Topics covered include the research process, formulating research questions and hypotheses, developing a project plan, measurement concepts and methods, variables, validity, sampling and participant recruitment, data collection, quantitative and qualitative study design, survey, evaluation, community needs assessments, community based research, and ethics. Strategies for engaging diverse populations in research will also be explored.

This is an introductory course and presumes no prior experience in or knowledge of research, evaluation or statistics. Although basic statistical concepts will be introduced, this is not a course in statistics or data analysis. The course combines lecture, seminar-style discussions, and in class activities to apply the concepts discussed in class. The course lays the foundation for further study in research methods, and places special emphasis on the basic competencies (knowledge, skills, and values) necessary for students to carry out a small-scale, independent research project from conceptualization to dissemination.

### Learning Goals and Course Objectives

Through this course students will:

- Understand the research process from conceptualization to dissemination/ reporting results
- Understand basic research design strategies used in public health research
- Be able to formulate a good (significant, relevant, important, and answerable) research question
- Be able to formulate a testable (measurable) hypothesis
- Be able to develop and apply an appropriate research plan and study design to answer a research question and/or test a hypothesis
- Articulate the significance and potential impact of a proposed research study
- Articulate the objective and rationale for a proposed research study
- Be able to critique a research study
- Be able to identify the risks and benefits associated with human subjects research

## Course Guidelines

### **Required Texts**

Chambliss, D. F. & Schutt, R., K. (2010). *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Thousand Oaks: CA, Pine Forge Press. ISBN: 978-1-4129-6939-0

### **Selected readings available on Blackboard**

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time. Unexcused absences and tardiness will affect your grade.

**Class Participation:** You are expected to come to class prepared and ready to actively participate in class discussions and activities- this means having something to contribute, and speaking so people will listen and listening so people will speak. It means having done the reading and some thinking about the material before class, and having some thoughts to share about the topic/readings.

**Texting is not allowed during class- shut your phone off unless you have a family or personal matter that requires it to be on.**

**Laptops may not be used in class without permission**

### **Grading**

Midterm	25%
Assignments (CITI training, Survey report, Focus group script)	20%
Presentation (topic area, research question, significance, methods, justification)	15%
Final Exam	25%
Attendance and Class participation	15%

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to complete, write, and present your own original work. If you use the words and/or ideas of any other person/s, published work, or entity, virtual or not, whether you paraphrase or use a word-for-word quote, you are expected to credit the source. You may not use or “borrow” words or ideas without accurately crediting the source. Use your own ideas and give credit when and where credit is due. Words and ideas are intellectual property. Plagiarism- deliberate or unintended- is a serious academic offense and is grounds for failure in this course. When in doubt- CITE AND REFERENCE.

## Course Outline and Schedule

- Jan 20:**        **Course Introduction and Overview**  
**The relationship between science, society and social research**  
**Ethics and human subjects research**
- Types of Research
  - Ethical Principles in Research
  - Weighing Risks and Benefits
  - Informed Consent

**Reading:** Schutt--Chapters 1 &3

**In class:** Identifying generalizations and beliefs

- Jan 27:**        **The research process**
- The research process
  - Formulating research questions and hypotheses
  - The relationship between research questions and hypotheses
  - Research strategies
  - Validity
  - Research paradigms
  - The role of theory

**Reading:** Schutt--Chapter 2

**In class:** Formulating research questions and hypotheses

- Feb 3:**        **Conceptualizing a Research Study**  
**Measurement and Sampling**
- Translating concepts and theory into measurable variables
  - Latent constructs and observed variables
  - Levels of measurement; continuous and categorical variables
  - Reliability and validity
  - Sampling design and procedures
  - Participant recruitment
  - Generalize-ability
  - Sampling methods

**Reading:** Schutt--Chapters 4 &5

1. Faugier J, Sargeant M. Sampling hard to reach populations. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 1997;26(4):790-797.

**In class:** Breaking-down concepts, theory, questions and hypotheses into measurable variables

**\*\*Assignment Due: CITI training**

**Feb 10: Causation and Experimental Design**

- Units of analysis
- Cross-sectional and longitudinal designs
- Causation vs association
- Non-experimental, experimental, and quasi-experimental research designs
- Assignment of subjects to study groups; randomization and control groups
- Validity
- Generalizeability
- Ethical Issues

**Reading: Schutt--Chapter 6**

1. Jick TD. Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 1979;24(4):602-611.
2. Leventhal T, Brooks-Gunn J. Moving to Opportunity: an Experimental Study of Neighborhood Effects on Mental Health. *Am J Public Health*. September 1, 2003 2003;93(9):1576-1582.

**In class: Designing alternative research plans**

**Feb 17: Survey Research**

- The advantages and disadvantages of survey research
- Designing questionnaires; how to structure a survey
- Writing survey questions; closed and open-ended questions
- Survey administration
- Collecting data and organizing surveys
- What not to do

**Reading: Schutt--Chapter 7**

Morgan DL. Practical strategies for combining qualitative and quantitative methods: applications to health research. *Qual Health Res*1998;8:362-76.

**In class: Administering survey questionnaires and assessing questions**

**Feb 24: NO CLASS-TUFTS MONDAY**

**March 3: Midterm Exam**

**March 10: Elementary Quantitative Data Analysis**

- Distribution
- Measures of Central tendency
- Measures of Variation
- Association

**Reading: Schutt--Chapter 8**

**In class: Guest Lecture**

**March 17: Qualitative Research Methods**

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Observation and recording
- Ethnography
- Mixed Methods Research
- PhotoVoice
- Managing and analyzing qualitative data

**Reading: Schutt—Chapters 9 &10**

1. Dennis G. Williams, J. Allan Best, D. Wayne Taylor, J. Raymond Gilbert, Douglas M. C. Wilson, Elizabeth A. Lindsay, & Joel Singer (1990) "Systematic Approach for Using Qualitative Methods in Primary Prevention Research," *Medical Anthropology Quarterly (N.S.)*, 4(4):391-409.
2. Morgan, David L., Focus Groups, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22(1996), pp. 129-152.
3. Coronado, Gloria D. and Thompson, Beti. and Tejeda, Silvia. et. al. "Attitudes and Beliefs Among Mexican Americans About Type 2 Diabetes." *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 15.4 (2004): 576-588. Project MUSE.
4. Dogra N, Betancourt J, Park E, Martinez L. (2008) The relationship between drivers and policy in the implementation of cultural competency training in health care. *Journal of the National Medical Association*.
5. Wang C, Burris MA. Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. *Health Education and Behavior* 1997;24(3):369-387.

**In class: Writing a focus group protocol**

**\*\*Assignment Due: Survey Report**

**March 24: NO CLASS-SPRING BREAK**

**March 31: Evaluation and Needs Assessments**

- Types of evaluation: process, outcome, impact
- Program evaluation
- Community assessments
- Stakeholder assessments

**Reading: Schutt--Chapter 11**

1. American Evaluation Association. (2004). *Guiding principles for evaluators*. Retrieved from <http://www.eval.org>
2. Williams, J. H., Belle, G. A., Houston, C., Haire-Joshu, D., Auslander, W. F. (2001). Process evaluation methods of a peer-delivered health promotion program for African American women. *Health Promotion Practice*, 2(2), 135-142.
3. Borryo EA. Using a Community Readiness Model to Help Overcome Breast Health Disparities Among U.S. Latinas. *Substance Use & Misuse*. 2007;42(4):603 - 619.

**In class: Logic models**

**\*\*Assignment Due: Focus Group Script**

**April 7: Community Based Participatory Research**

- The Principles of CBPR
- Ethical Issues in CBPR
- CBPR outcomes

**Readings:**

1. Minkler M. Ethical Challenges for the "Outside" Researcher in Community-Based Participatory Research. *Health Educ Behav.* December 1, 2004 2004;31(6):684-697.
2. Minkler M. Community-based research partnerships: Challenges and opportunities *Journal of Urban Health.* June 2005;82(2):ii3-ii12.
3. Brugge D, Melly S, Russell M, et al. A Community-Based Participatory Survey of Public Housing Conditions and Associations Between Renovations and Possible Building Related Symptoms. *Epidemiology.* 2004;15(4):S132.

**In class:** Defining community and identifying potential partners

**April 14: Writing and Dissemination: Who, Why and How**

- Writing research results
- How to report research results for different audiences and stakeholders
- Communicating with the public

**Reading: Schutt--Chapters 12**

1. Belgrave, L L, Zablotsky, D, & Guadagno, M A (2002). How do we talk to each other? Writing qualitative research for quantitative readers. *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol 12 (10): 1427-1439.

**In class:** Preparing Presentations

**April 21: Presentations**

**April 28: Final Exam**