

Division of Health Promotion
 Graduate School of Public Health
 College of Health and Human Services
 San Diego State University

SEMINAR IN HEALTH PROMOTION RESEARCH: THESIS PLANNING & PRODUCTION
PH 668 SPRING 2007 DR. MARY MULVHILL

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COURSE INFORMATION: CLASS MEETS MONDAY 1-3:40 P.M. IN HH RM 122

PREREQUISITES : PH 607 (may be taking it concurrently)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Philosophical, ethical and methodological issues in current health promotion research and services. This course will review basic principles of research design/methods/ethics that pertain to thesis research. The course will cover basics of research design, scientific writing and oral presentation skills. Students will **identify and choose an appropriate thesis topic, committee, and develop methodologically sound, feasible, thesis project. They will be required to** prepare a draft of their thesis literature review, methods and IRB proposal. **Each student will develop a personal timeline for graduation that is feasible and realistic**

Students will get experience in application of critical research design skills in different areas of health promotion by participating in class discussions related to theses of class members. They will participate with constructive feedback for peers as the class problem solves barriers to progress. Students will also participate in a mock oral defense to understand the oral exam process .They will learn components needed for scientific presentation and for responding to questions at defense.

Attendance at all classes is mandatory, unless you are specifically excused by me. Class attendance and participation is part of the course grade. If you cannot attend a class, please email me in advance to let me know when and why. Please also make sure to get the class notes and assignments from another class member who was in attendance. Check with me if you have questions so you do not miss any important information. Allowable absences, for which each person is allotted one per semester are medical illnesses and limited other emergencies, approved in advance of class.

As a graduate seminar, the course will flex according to the needs of the students, which vary. Therefore this syllabus may be subject to change.

Course Objective	Instructional Activity	Evaluation	Grade Points
Identify which databases to use and how to access them in order to conduct a thorough search of the public health literature pertinent to thesis topic	Attendance at class library instructional training	Class attendance	2 pts
Develop a concise literature	Class lecture, class	Literature review graded on	40 pts

review using scientific writing skills, summary tables and conceptual model as appropriate	discussion, sample outlines of literature reviews in class Read epi guidelines and relevant readings re lit review preparation on GSPH website Create an outline of your literature review. Use that outline in the writing process	content, writing quality and clarity of organization Summary table or conceptual model diagram – extra credit	
Understand basic ethical principles of research, become certified by IRB. Apply these principles by creating an IRB proposal.	Class lecture, class discussion, individual progress reports	Successful submission of IRB proposal	12 pts
Understand components of thesis methods and research conduct necessary to gather data	Class lecture, class discussion, individual progress reports	Draft Methods – graded on completeness, writing quality and clarity of organization Variable table – extra credit	20 pts
Understand oral exam process, format and conduct	Participate in mock defense	Prepare sample questions as mock faculty or do a mock presentation	Extra credit for presenter
Overall, understand thesis process, deadlines, requirements and develop successful strategies to fulfill them	Class lecture, class discussion, individual progress reports	Class Attendance and participation	28 pts (including 2 pts for library class attendance)

Course grades will be assigned as follows based on total points accumulated for the semester:

A	96-100
A-	90-95
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
F	<70

Class Calendar :

January 22 Introductions, Course Overview

- Topic choice (kinds of studies),
- Timeline (stages of the thesis, filing deadlines)
- Care and feeding of your advisor/committee
- Scientific Writing basics
- Managing anxiety, setting up support, structure

Homework : Buy notebook, thesis handbook, APA style book if needed. Do online IRB tutorial to certification for IRB if you haven't already. Obtain needed IRB forms from website, look over and bring to class

Note: All homework is due the following class

January 29 Getting Started – Setting up the Literature Review Outline

How to structure your introduction and arrange your subtopics

Physical activity/nutrition example

IRB Application Procedures - Application for IRB approval – purpose,
Proposal (informed consent, risk/benefit ratio)
Consent form, assent forms

Homework: Start work on IRB; at least start abstract (send in for review). Continue your lit review. Refine your lit review outline. Meet with research librarian if needed to refine lit search. Set up filing system for articles, work space and reference manager system

February 5 Setting up your Literature Search

- class meets in the Library – Room 78 with Ms. Sue Hollander, science librarian. Sue will acquaint you with different databases pertinent to public health and give you search instructions for public health library resources.

Homework: Refine lit review outline based on new searches. Start article search. Meet individually with Sue if needed.

February 12 In Class Practice - Setting Up Literature Review Outlines. Use of summary tables and conceptual model diagrams. Refresher and further practice.
Tobacco example

Homework : Look over model thesis, start theoretical model diagram or summary tables for lit review.

February 19 In Class Practice - Setting Up Literature Review Outlines. Use of summary tables and conceptual model diagrams. Refresher and further practice. Methodological (Validity) thesis

Homework : Begin work on your Methods section. You can alternate with lit review. Set aside time and power out all the sections you already know. Continue to refine your lit review outline. Meet with research librarian if needed to refine lit search.

February 24 The Nitty Gritty – Methods Section -Sample Description, Recruitment and Informed consent. Procedures, measures and data analysis

March 5 Results – Well, What Did You Find Out ? Sample description, retention, independent variables, dependent variables and hypothesis testing, handling null outcomes

March 12 In Class Practice - Setting Up Literature Review Outlines. Use of summary tables and conceptual model diagrams. Refresher and further practice.

March 19 In Class Practice - Setting Up Literature Review Outlines. Use of summary tables and conceptual model diagrams. Refresher and further practice. International health thesis example.

Homework: Refocus on Lit Review. Set aside chunks of time for writing. Refine outline of lit review and bring to class. Make a draft outline of your lit review table.

March 26 Spring Break

April 2 Yikes ! Preparing for the Oral Defense – Oral Exam Process. Preparing the Presentation and responding to questions.

Homework: Review Mckenzie's thesis, prepare questions from each section (lit review, rationale, methods, results) as if you were a faculty member

Group 1: Lit Reviews and Methods due

April 9 Lit review refresher/practice; Project Updates
Mock defense #1 Mckenzie Oliver

Homework : Work on lit review. Power it out. Set aside extra time if needed.

Group 2 : Lit Reviews due

April 16 Writing the Discussion Section major findings, secondary findings, methodological issues, limitations,

April 23 Wrapping it Up – Framing the Discussion.– future directions, implications, conclusions.

Homework: Outline Discussion section, bring to class for discussion. Review Chickarlo's thesis, prepare questions from each section (lit review, rationale, methods, results) as if you were a faculty member

April 30 Mock Defense #2 Chickarlo Leak
Progress Check.

Group 2: Methods due

Homework: Review methods/abstract/lit review of Mckenzie's thesis, prepare questions from each section (lit review, rationale, methods, results) as if you were a faculty member

May 7 Feedback on lit reviews. Final progress check. Developing your plan for summer work on thesis. Summer and fall defense timelines.