# Syllabus

HPM 956: Fundamentals of Research Methods and Analysis  
Fall 2018  
3 Credits | Online and Residential

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Course Overview

Course Description
HPM 956 continues the sequence of research courses to prepare DrPH students for skills needed to undertake a dissertation. Students are expected to begin this course with a defined dissertation research topic, a draft research question, a hypothesis (for quantitative research designs), a supporting literature review, and ideas about appropriate methods. This course will explore the next steps of the research process, to further develop methods for conducting the research. This will include refining the research question, what specific methods are appropriate, how to implement the chosen method, how to manage and organize data and how to present the data results. Primary data collection methods to be covered will include questionnaires/surveys, focus groups and key informant interviews. We will explore low-tech ways to analyze qualitative data. We will arrange a class in a high-tech method such as MAXQDA software during one of the on-campus visits.

At the end of the course, students will have completed a draft version of their dissertation proposal and will have an IRB application ready for submission.

Prerequisites
Course restricted to DrPH Executive Doctoral Students in Health Leadership

Instructor
Sandra B. Greene, DrPH
Professor
Department of Health Policy and Management
1101-E McGavran-Greenberg
Phone: 919-966-8930/919 966-0993
Email: SandraB_Greene@email.unc.edu

Teaching Assistant
Name
[Office location]
Phone: 919-[###-####]
Email: [xxx]@email.unc.edu

Course Website
https://sakai.unc.edu/welcome/. Use your ONYEN and password.

Class Days, Times, Location
This course is a combination of residential and online sessions on various Wednesday evenings throughout the fall semester. The course schedule begins on page 13.

Office Hours
There are no set office hours for this course. Students may request an appointment by email. Virtual office hours may be conducted via phone, Skype, or Adobe Connect.
Course Texts

   *(You should already have this book from your summer course – HPM 945)*


Other readings are noted in the Course Schedule.

Course Format

The course format includes lectures, guest lectures, class discussion and presentations. Students are expected to complete the readings and review the slides before class and come to each class prepared to discuss the materials assigned.
Course Policies and Resources

Recognizing, Valuing and Encouraging Inclusion and Diversity in the Classroom

We share the School’s commitment to diversity. We are committed to ensuring that the School is a diverse, inclusive, civil and welcoming community. Diversity and inclusion are central to our mission — to improve public health, promote individual well-being and eliminate health inequities across North Carolina and around the world. Diversity and inclusion are assets that contribute to our strength, excellence and individual and institutional success. We welcome, value and learn from individual differences and perspectives. These include but are not limited to: cultural and racial/ethnic background; country of origin; gender; age; socioeconomic status; physical and learning abilities; physical appearance; religion; political perspective; sexual identity and veteran status. Diversity, inclusiveness and civility are core values we hold, as well as characteristics of the School that we intend to strengthen.

We are committed to expanding diversity and inclusiveness across the School—among faculty, staff, students, on advisory groups, and in our curricula, leadership, policies and practices. We measure diversity and inclusion not only in numbers, but also by the extent to which students, alumni, faculty and staff members perceive the School’s environment as welcoming, valuing all individuals and supporting their development.”

In this class, we practice these commitments in the following ways:

- Develop classroom participation approaches that acknowledge the diversity of ways of contributing in the classroom and foster participation and engagement of all students.
- Structure assessment approaches that acknowledge different methods for acquiring knowledge and demonstrating proficiency.
- Encourage and solicit feedback from students to continually improve inclusive practices.

As a student in the class, you are also expected to understand and uphold the following UNC policies:

- Diversity and Inclusion at the Gillings School of Global Public Health: [http://sph.unc.edu/resource-pages/diversity/](http://sph.unc.edu/resource-pages/diversity/)
Accessibility

UNC-CH supports all reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or a pregnancy complication resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the UNC Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (ARS), https://ars.unc.edu/; phone 919-962-8300; email ars@unc.edu. Students must document/register their need for accommodations with ARS before accommodations can be implemented.

UNC Honor Code

As a student at UNC-Chapel Hill, you are bound by the university’s Honor Code, through which UNC maintains standards of academic excellence and community values. It is your responsibility to learn about and abide by the code. All written assignments or presentations (including team projects) should be completed in a manner that demonstrates academic integrity and excellence. Work should be completed in your own words, but your ideas should be supported with well-cited evidence and theory. To ensure effective functioning of the Honor System at UNC, students are expected to:

a. Conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in all academic processes.

b. Learn the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in written work; and to identify allowable resource materials or aids to be used during completion of any graded work.

c. **Sign a pledge on all graded academic work certifying that no unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of the work.**

d. Report any instance in which reasonable grounds exist to believe that a fellow student has violated the Honor Code.

Instructors are required to report suspected violations of the Honor Code, including inappropriate collaborative work or problematic use of secondary materials, to the Honor Court. Honor Court sanctions can include receiving a zero for the assignment, failing the course and/or suspension from the university. If you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities, please consult the Office of Student Conduct at https://studentconduct.unc.edu/, or consult these other resources:

- Honor system module.
- UNC library’s plagiarism tutorial.
- UNC Writing Center handout on plagiarism.
Instructor Expectations

Participation
You are expected to be online and participate in all classes. If, in an unusual circumstance, you cannot be online, you must notify the faculty member and teaching assistant, if applicable, in advance of the class. You are still responsible for completing and turning in all class assignments in a timely fashion. Additionally, you are responsible for listening to the recording of the session that was missed.

Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in discussions and to provide constructive feedback to your fellow classmates. Failure to participate in class discussions can affect your final grade (e.g. from an H to a P). Also, freezing one’s camera for extended periods of time can negatively impact your class participation grade, as the instructor does not know whether you are present.

Email
The instructor will typically respond to email within 24 hours or less if sent Monday through Friday. The instructor may respond to weekend emails, but it is not required of them. If you receive an out-of-office reply when emailing, it may take longer to receive a reply. The instructor will provide advance notice, if possible, when they will be out of the office.

Feedback
All graded assignments will receive feedback that coincides with the assessment rubric. Feedback is meant to be constructive and help the student continue to build upon their skills. Feedback is a tool that you as a learner can use to understand the areas that you are succeeding in and what you can do to improve in other areas.

Grading
Every effort will be made to provide grades and feedback within two weeks after the due date. Assignments that build on future assignments will be graded within one week of the final due date.

Syllabus Changes
The instructor reserves to right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Telephone Messages
Generally, email is the best way to reach the instructor. The instructor will respond to telephone messages within 24 hours Monday through Thursday. Calls left on a Friday will be returned that day if possible; if not, they will be returned on Monday.

Student Expectations

Appropriate Use of Course Resources:
The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, syllabus, exams, quizzes, and assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among
other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

Assignments
Submit all assignments as directed by the instructor. Assignments will be submitted either to the Sakai site Drop Box or emailed as an attachment to the instructor.

Attendance/Participation
Your attendance and active participation are an integral part of your learning experience in this course. If you are unavoidably absent, please notify the course instructor (and Teaching Assistant if one is assigned) as soon as possible. You must inform the instructor on the first week of class if you cannot attend an in-person session due to extenuating circumstances, such as medical procedures or professional travel.

Communication
You are expected to follow common courtesy in all communications, to include email, online sessions, and face-to-face dialogue. All sent electronic communications should follow proper English grammar rules to include complete sentences. This is a professional course, and you are expected to communicate as a professional.

Contributions
You are expected to offer individual contributions in class and on individual assignments, and collaborate with fellow students on assignments for which students may work together, such as group assignments.

Email
All email correspondence between student/instructor and peer/peer will be conducted in a professional manner following email etiquette.
- View the following link for more information on email etiquette: http://metropolitanorganizing.com/etiquette-professional-organizing-services/essential-email-etiquette-tips/

Late Work
Assignments are due on their due date. For extenuating circumstances, you may be able to get instructor permission to turn in your assignment late. However, permission will only be considered if you notify the instructor prior to the due date. Corrected submissions will not be accepted unless stated otherwise. Attendance on the day of the presentation is otherwise required to receive points for those activities.

Readings
Readings for a particular class should be completed before the class session and before completing associated activities.

Technical support
The UNC Information Technology Services (ITS) department provides technical support 24-hours per day, seven days per week. If you need computer help, please contact the ITS Help Desk by phone at +1-919-962-HELP (919-962-4357), or by email at help@unc.edu, or by visiting their website at http://help.unc.edu, or by UNC Live Chat at http://its.unc.edu/itrc/chat.
Competencies, Learning Objectives, and Assessment

Competencies
In this course, you will develop the following competencies.
DrPH1. Data analysis methods: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.
DrPH2. Designing research studies: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.
DrPH14. Designing interventions: Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, you will achieve the following learning objectives.
L1. Learn how to write a good research question, hypothesis and aims.
L2. To consider alternative research methodologies and analytical techniques for a chosen research question, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of each.
L3. To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews.
L4. To know how to conduct low tech qualitative evaluation method.
L5. To be knowledgeable of high tech qualitative evaluation software such as MAXQDA.
L6. To organize and describe data, and display it effectively.
L7. To prepare an IRB application.
L8. To understand components of a good dissertation proposal and draft a version ready to defend.

Map
Competencies addressed in this course, learning objectives mapped to these competencies, and assignments that assess these competencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Assessment Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DrPH 1. Data analysis methods: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.</td>
<td>L1. Learn how to write a good research question, hypothesis and aims.</td>
<td>Draft Research Question (Assignment #1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L2. To consider alternative research methodologies and analytical techniques for a chosen research question, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of each.</td>
<td>Revised Research Question, Hypothesis, and Aims (Assignment #2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L3. To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews.</td>
<td>Draft Questions for Data Collection (Assignment #3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mock Graphics (Assignment #6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative Data Analysis (Assignment #8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
<td>Assessment Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L4. To know how to conduct low tech qualitative evaluation method.</td>
<td>Draft Research Question (Assignment #1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L5. To be knowledgeable of high tech qualitative evaluation software such as MAXQDA.</td>
<td>Revised Research Question, Hypothesis, and Aims (Assignment #2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L6. To organize and describe data, and display it effectively.</td>
<td>Draft Questions for Data Collection (Assignment #3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DrPH 2.</td>
<td><strong>Designing research studies:</strong> Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.</td>
<td>Draft UNC IRB application (Assignment #4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L1. Learn how to write a good research question, hypothesis and aims.</td>
<td>Contact Dissertation Committee Chair (Assignment #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L2. To consider alternative research methodologies and analytical techniques for a chosen research question, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of each.</td>
<td>Mock Graphics (Assignment #6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L3. To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews.</td>
<td>Draft Dissertation Proposal (Assignment #7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L4. To know how to conduct low tech qualitative evaluation method.</td>
<td>Qualitative Data Analysis (Assignment #8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L5. To be knowledgeable of high tech qualitative evaluation software such as MAXQDA.</td>
<td>Final, Revised Dissertation Proposal (Assignment #9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L6. To organize and describe data, and display it effectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L7. To prepare an IRB application.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L8. To understand components of a good dissertation proposal and draft a version ready to defend.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Competencies

DrPH 14. **Designing interventions:** Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.

Learning Objectives

1. Learn how to write a good research question, hypothesis and aims.
2. To consider alternative research methodologies and analytical techniques for a chosen research question, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Assessment Assignments

- Draft Research Question (Assignment #1)
- Revised Research Question, Hypothesis, and Aims (Assignment #2)
- Draft Dissertation Proposal (Assignment #7)
- Final, Revised Dissertation Proposal (Assignment #9)

Course Assignments and Assessments

This course will include the following graded assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points/Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Draft Research Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Revised Research Question, Hypothesis, and Aims</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Draft Questions for Data Collection</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Draft IRB Submission</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Contact Dissertation Committee Chair</td>
<td>ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mock Graphics</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Draft Dissertation Proposal</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Qualitative Data Analysis</td>
<td>ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Final (Revised) Dissertation Proposal</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading**

**Grading:** For assignments with rubrics, refer to the attached rubrics for grading details. The relative weight of each course component is shown in the table above.

**Grading Scale:**
Final course grades will be determined using the following [UNC Graduate School grading scale](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>90—100</td>
<td>High Pass: Clear excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>75—89</td>
<td>Pass: Entirely satisfactory graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>60—74</td>
<td>Low Pass: Inadequate graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment Descriptions**
Descriptions of the assignments follow.
1. **Assignment #1: Draft Research Question (10%)**
   Email a *draft* research question to instructor by **August 27** for discussion in class on **August 29**.

2. **Assignment #2: Revised Research Question, Hypothesis and Aims (10%)**
   Submit revised research question, hypothesis (if appropriate) and aims to instructor by **September 3** for discussion in class **September 5**. And, if you are planning to use key informant interviews to gather information for your dissertation, come to class prepared to discuss your plans and ask questions.

3. **Assignment #3: Draft Questions for Data Collection (10%)**
   If you are planning to use a questionnaire of any type for data collection, draft questions to share in class **September 26**. (Email to instructor by **September 24**.)

4. **Assignment #4: Draft IRB Submission (20%)**
   Complete the UNC IRB Application, and one for your home institution, if required. Email completed application(s) to instructor by **October 10**.

5. **Assignment #5: Contact Dissertation Committee Chair (0%/Ungraded)**
   Send an email to your dissertation committee chair by **October 17** and let them know you will send a draft proposal by **November 1, 2018**, and would appreciate feedback by **November 15, 2018**. Ask if they foresee any problem with this timeframe.

6. **Assignment #6: Mock Graphics (5%)**
   Prepare two mock graphics to share in class: one table/chart and one graph. These should be ones that are appropriate for presenting data from your dissertation. It is acceptable to use made-up data at this point—the purpose of the assignment is to think about useful formats of tables and graphs that most effectively present your findings. Email these as PowerPoint slides to the instructor by **October 29**. These will be incorporated into a PowerPoint presentation for class discussion on **October 31**.

7. **Assignment #7: Draft Dissertation Proposal to Chair (25%)**
   Send a draft dissertation proposal to your dissertation committee chair by **November 1, 2018**, with a copy to the instructor. Ask for written feedback by **November 15, 2018**, which may be in the form of “Track Changes”.

### Assignment #7 Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Fully Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit draft dissertation proposal to chair by Nov. 1, 2018</td>
<td>(5 points)</td>
<td>(1 -- 4 points)</td>
<td>(0 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted on time, with a copy to instructor</td>
<td>Submitted, but late</td>
<td>Not submitted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal contains the following: 1. Topic introduction/significance 2. Literature review 3. Presentation of research question/aims 4. Methods section, including analysis plan 5. Plan for change</td>
<td>(15 points)</td>
<td>(10 points)</td>
<td>(0 -- 5 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each section fully developed.</td>
<td>Sections only partially developed.</td>
<td>Sections poorly developed or missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback obtained from chair by Nov. 15, 2018</td>
<td>(5 points)</td>
<td>(1 -- 4 points)</td>
<td>(0 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback obtained from chair by deadline</td>
<td>Feedback obtained from chair after deadline.</td>
<td>No feedback obtained from chair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Assignment #8: Qualitative Data Analysis (0%/Ungraded)
Using a low-tech method of your choosing, (long table approach, index cards, color markers, etc.), code the transcript from the mock focus group. Identify general themes. Summarize what was learned from the focus group. Be prepared to discuss your methods and findings in class on November 14th.

9. Assignment #9: Final Paper/Revised Dissertation Proposal Incorporating Chair Feedback (20%)
Revise your dissertation proposal based on feedback from your committee chair. Email final proposal to instructor by December 10, 2018.

Assignment #9 Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Fully Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit revised dissertation proposal to chair by Dec. 10, 2018</td>
<td>(5 points) Submitted on time</td>
<td>(1 -- 4 points) Submitted, but late</td>
<td>(0 points) Not submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal contains the following sections with evidence that student has responded to suggestions made by chair:</td>
<td>(15 points)</td>
<td>(10 points)</td>
<td>(0 – 5 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Topic introduction/significance</td>
<td>Each section fully developed</td>
<td>Sections only partially developed</td>
<td>Sections not developed or missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Literature review</td>
<td>Student fully responsive to chair’s feedback</td>
<td>Student partially responsive to chair’s feedback</td>
<td>Student poorly responsive to chair’s feedback, or not responsive at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Presentation of research question/aims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Methods section, including analysis plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Plan for change</td>
<td>(15 points: 3 points each)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Session/Week/Unit</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1: August 14, 2018</td>
<td>Focus Group Method for Qualitative Research</td>
<td>No graded assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2: August 29, 2018</td>
<td>Research Questions, Hypothesis and Aims</td>
<td>Assignment #1. Draft Research Question (Due August 27, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3: September 5, 2018</td>
<td>Choosing the Right Research Method</td>
<td>Assignment #2. Revised Research Question, Hypothesis and Aims (Due Sept. 3, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4: September 19, 2018</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview Methods</td>
<td>No graded assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5: September 26, 2018</td>
<td>How to Design a Questionnaire</td>
<td>Assignment #3. Draft Questions for Data Collection (Due Sept. 24, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6: October 3, 2018</td>
<td>How to Complete an IRB Application</td>
<td>Determine if your home institution requires an IRB, and if so, review the form before class and see if there are problematic questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last updated: July 27, 2018
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 7: October 10, 2018</th>
<th>How to Manage/Analyze Quantitative Data from Survey Instruments and Data Analysis Plan</th>
<th>Assignment #4. Draft IRB Submission (Due Oct. 10, 2018)</th>
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<td>Session 8: October 17, 2018</td>
<td>Sample Dissertation Methods from Two Former DrPH Students</td>
<td>Assignment #5. Contact Dissertation Committee Chair to let them know timelines for feedback. (Due Oct. 17, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10: Nov. 14, 2018</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods of Analysis</td>
<td>Assignment #8. Qualitative Data Analysis. (Due Nov. 14, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 12: TBD</td>
<td>Next Steps in the Dissertation Proposal Process</td>
<td>No graded assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Schedule**
The instructor reserves to right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

**August 14, 2018 (Session 1): Focus Group Method for Qualitative Research**

**Session 1**

**August 14, 2018: 9:00—11:00 a.m. 3005 MHRC**

**Topic**

Focus Group Method for Qualitative Research

**Description**

This session will occur while you are on campus. We will take this opportunity of an in-person class to experience being a part of a focus group and to see first-hand how one is conducted. Detailed notes of the session should be taken. Later in the semester, we will use the notes to discuss data analysis and presentation techniques for qualitative data. We will also consider when it is appropriate to use this technique, and the nuts-and-bolts of how to plan and conduct a focus group.

**Competency**

DrPH 2. *Designing research studies*: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.
### Learning Objective

**L3.** To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews.

### Topics and skills covered:
1. Determine when it is appropriate to use a focus group method for data collection.
2. Determine the target audience for a focus group, and inviting participants and ensuring attendance.
3. Discover the steps in planning a focus group.
4. Develop an appropriate series of questions for a focus group.
5. Learn about supporting documents, including consent forms and questioning guide.
6. Observe how a facilitator leads a focus group.
7. Experience participating in a focus group.

### Required Readings

   - Chapter 9: Qualitative Procedures (pp. 183—214)
   - Chapter 3: Developing a Questioning Route (pp. 39—76)  
   - Chapter 4: Participants in a Focus Group (pp. 77—102)  
   - Chapter 5: Moderating Skills (pp. 103—136)  
   *(Note: This is a lot of pages of reading but it is not heavy reading. Skim to understand the main points.)*

### Optional Readings

1. **Question Guide:** FGI Research. *Question guide for small employer focus groups (employers with 2-25 employees offering insurance coverage)*  
   *(Posted on Sakai site)*

### Assignments/Deadlines

No graded assignment.

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Last updated: July 27, 2018
August 29, 2018 (Session 2): Research Questions, Hypothesis and Aims

| Session 2 | August 29, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
Online |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Research Questions, Hypotheses and Aims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>A carefully crafted dissertation research question along with a hypothesis, when appropriate, is critical to framing the dissertation. Aims describe what you plan to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>DrPH 2. Designing research studies: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Learning Objective | L1. Learn how to write a good research question, hypothesis and aims.  
Topics and skills covered:  
1. Discuss what makes a good research question and consider whether yours is a good one.  
2. Learn when hypotheses are used in dissertations, and consider whether you need one.  
3. Learn how to construct aims. |
Chapter 7: Research Questions and Hypotheses (pp. 139—154) |
| Assignment/Deadline | Due August 27, 2018  
Assignment #1: Draft Research Question  
Send a draft research question to instructor by August 27th for discussion in class on August 29th. |

September 5, 2018 (Session 3): Choosing the Right Research Method

| Session 3 | September 5, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
Online |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Choosing the Right Research Method: Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>In this session, we will talk about the differences in these research methods and consider how the research question drives the choice of method.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Competencies | DrPH 1. Data analysis methods: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.  
DrPH 2. Designing research studies: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>L2. To consider alternative research methodologies and analytical techniques for a chosen research question, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of each.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Topics and skills covered: | 1. List the characteristics of qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods.  
2. Learn how to choose the best data collection method and data gathering tools.  
3. Discover your study population of interest, and how to choose the best method of sampling or selection respondents.  
4. Learn when it is best to use a mixed methods approach, and in what order.  
5. Learn definitions, delimitations, and study limitations. |
Chapter 8: Quantitative Methods (pp. 155-182)  
Chapter 8: Definitions, Limitations, and Significance  
[HSL LINK HERE from Nancy](#)  
- Statement of Issue (pp. 1-2)  
- Methods (pp. 37-47)  
(Posted on Sakai site)  
[https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98](https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98)  
- Abstract (pp. iii-iv)  
- Methods (pp. 37-42)  
- Limitations (pp. 43-44)  
(Posted on Sakai site)  
[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4243797/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4243797/) |
| Assignment/Deadline | **Due September 3, 2018**  
**Assignment #2**: Revised Research Question, Hypothesis and Aims  
Submit revised research question, hypothesis (if appropriate) and aims to instructor by **September 3rd** for discussion in class on **September 5th**. |
### September 19, 2018 (Session 4): Key Informant Interview Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 4</th>
<th>September 19, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m. Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Topic** | Key Informant Interview Methods: When To Do Them, How to Conduct Them  
Case Study Design Using Key Informant Interviews |
| **Description** | Key informant interview techniques are a variation of a focus group, generally with one person interviewed at a time. Many of the techniques that were discussed in Session 1 apply to this method. We will focus on what is unique about this method of research. |
| **Competency** | DrPH 2. *Designing research studies*: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue. |
| **Learning Objectives** | L3. To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews. |
| **Topics and skill covered:** | 1. Determine when it is appropriate to conduct key informant interviews.  
2. Learn the basic principles for constructing the interview instrument.  
3. Discover how to choose the persons to be interviewed.  
4. Learn tips for conducting the interviews.  
5. Discuss the use of incentives in survey research.  
6. Learn case study research design using key informant interviews. |
[https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98](https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98)  
• Appendix C: Interview Guide (pp. 164-168)  
(Posted on Sakai site)  
[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3746248/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3746248/) |
### Journal Article:


### Assignments/Deadlines

No graded assignment.

### September 26, 2018 (Session 5): How to Design a Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>September 26, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>How to Design a Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

While we have focused earlier in the course on designing questions for focus groups, in this session we will give more consideration to constructing data gathering instruments for all research designs. This includes questionnaires administered by a research assistant, self-administered questionnaires, and hard copy or electronic questionnaires.

**Competency**

DrPH 2. *Designing research studies*: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.

**Learning Objectives**

L3. To learn basic techniques of qualitative data gathering using focus groups and key informant interviews.

**Topics and skills covered:**

1. Review the general principles of questionnaire design.
2. Consider alternative methods of administering the questionnaire.
3. Review two sample questionnaires that have been successfully used in research.
4. Review draft questionnaires submitted by students. (Students who are planning to use a questionnaire to gather data for their dissertation can volunteer to share their draft questionnaire with the class and benefit from a group evaluation.)

**Required Readings**

   - Chapter 15: Designing Questionnaires and Interviews (pp. 241-256)
   - [HSL LINK HERE from Nancy](#)

   - Chapter 7: Implementation Procedures (pp. 234-299)
   - [HSL LINK HERE from Nancy](#)

3. **Sample Questionnaires**:
General Internal Medicine Fellows, UNC Faculty Development Program, 2007. *Patient Questionnaire: the Effect of Patient and Physician Education on HIV Screening.* (Posted on Sakai site)

Osgood, J. L. *Workplace environmental and policy practices that support healthy behavior among employees with prediabetes: Implications for employers.* [Dissertation]. 2017. [https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98](https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98)
- Appendix F: Employee Survey Instrument (pp. 179-197) (Posted on Sakai site)

- Appendix V: Patient/Participant Questionnaire (pp. 176-189) (Posted on Sakai site)

**Assignments/Deadlines**

**Due September 24, 2018**

**Assignment #3: Draft Questions for Data Collection**
If you are planning to use a questionnaire of any type for data collection, draft questions to share for feedback during the September 26th session. Email to instructor by September 24th.

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**October 3, 2018 (Session 6): How to Complete an IRB Application**

| **Session 6** | **October 3, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.**
| **Online** |
| **Topic** | **How to Complete an IRB Application** |
| **Description** | All DrPH students must apply for UNC IRB approval for their dissertation research. Additionally, some of your respective institutions may require an IRB application. |
| **Competency** | DrPH 2. *Designing research studies*: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue. |
| **Learning Objectives** | L7. To prepare an IRB application. |
| Topics and skills covered: | 1. Review the UNC IRB application and learn how to complete one. 2. Review IRB applications from your home institutions, and brainstorm ways to answer questions that are different than the UNC IRB application. 3. Review a successfully completed UNC IRB application, submitted by another DrPH student. |
## Required Readings

   (Posted to Sakai Site)

2. **UNC Research IRB Process**: Review UNC Research’s FAQ webpage about the IRB and the Office of Human Research Ethics:  
   [https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/faq/](https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/faq/)

## Assignments/Deadlines

Determine if your home institution requires an IRB application. If so, review the form before class to determine if there are any problematic questions. Prepare to share the form with the class to brainstorm ways to answer these questions.

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### October 10, 2018 (Session 7): How to Manage/Analyze Quantitative Data from Survey Instruments and Data Analysis Plan

#### Session 7

October 10, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
Online

#### Topic

How to Manage/Analyze Quantitative Data From Survey Instruments AND Data Analysis Plans

#### Description

Once you have administered your survey instruments, whether it is questionnaires or online web surveys, there are steps that the research must take for rigorous management and analysis of the information that has been gathered. In this session, we will go through the steps of proper data management, and how to plan for the analysis.

#### Competency

DrPH 1. **Data analysis methods**: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.

#### Learning Objectives

L8. To understand components of a good dissertation proposal and draft a version ready to defend.

   **Topics and skills covered:**

   1. Learn how to construct a data dictionary.
   2. Learn how about coding and data entry.
   3. Learn how to check the data.
   4. Regroup responses for analysis.
   5. Prepare a data analysis plan.

#### Required Readings

   Chapter 16: Data Management (pp. 257-270)  
   [HSL LINK HERE from Nancy]
| 2. Dissertation Proposal: Erwin, P.C. *How changes at the local health department level are associated with improvements in health outcomes at the state level.* [Dissertation proposal].  
- Patient Survey (pp. 57-64)  
  (Posted on Sakai site)  
- Survey (pp. 42-49)  
  (Posted on Sakai site)  
| Other Required Resources | Survey review: Please print the 2-page survey, “Excerpts from General Internal Medicine (GIM) Patient Survey”, posted on the Sakai site, and have ready for review during the online session.  
| Assignments/Deadlines | **Due October 10, 2018**  
**Assignment #4: Draft IRB Submission**  
Complete the UNC IRB application, and the one for your home institution, if required. Email completed application(s) to instructor by October 10th session.  
| **October 17, 2018 (Session 8): Sample Dissertation Methods from Two Former DrPH Students**  
| Session 8 | October 17, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
Online  
| Topic | Sample Dissertation Methods from Two Former DrPH Students: Gina Ogilvie, MD, DrPH (cohort 5), and Lisa Koonin, DrPH (cohort 6)  
| Description | In this session you will benefit from a dialogue with two graduates of the DrPH program concerning their research methods. Lisa will share her experience conducting key informant interviews, and Gina will share her methods of using secondary (quantitative) data from an ongoing study in her organization.  
| Competency | DrPH 2. *Designing research studies*: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.  
DrPH 14. *Designing interventions*: Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.  
| Learning Objectives | L8. To understand components of a good dissertation proposal and draft a version ready to defend.  
| Required Readings | No readings required for this session.  
| Assignments/Deadlines | **Due October 17, 2018**  
**Assignment #5: Contact Dissertation Committee Chair**  

Send an email to your dissertation committee chair and let them know you will send a draft proposal by **November 1, 2018** and would appreciate feedback by **November 15**. Ask if they foresee any problem with this timeframe.

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**October 31, 2018 (Session 9): How to Prepare and Present Descriptive Data**

| Session 9 | October 31, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
Online |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic</strong></td>
<td><strong>How to Prepare and Present Descriptive Data</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>All dissertations, whether using quantitative or qualitative methods, will contain descriptive data. This may be demographic data describing the key informants or focus group participants, or descriptive data from responses to questions posed to them. If your research method involves a program survey or intervention, there will be opportunities to present findings using descriptive measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competency</strong></td>
<td>DrPH 1. <strong>Data analysis methods</strong>: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Learning Objectives** | L6. To organize and describe data, and display it effectively.  
Topics and skills covered:  
1. Discuss what kind of data should be presented in tables, and what kind of data are better presented in graphs.  
2. Determine which types of graphs—bar, paired bar, line, or pie—work best for different types of data.  
3. Learn about and how to avoid common mistakes in graphical presentation of data.  
4. Determine the proper technique to label graphs. |
   - Chapter 3: Graphing Data (pp. 33-50)  
   - Chapter 4: Choosing a Suitable Graph (pp. 51-68) |
| **Class Activity** | Review of mock graphics submitted by class. |
| **Assignments/Deadlines** | **Due October 29, 2018**  
**Assignment #6: Mock Graphs**  
Prepare two mock graphics to share in class: one table or chart, and one graph. Choose graphics that will be appropriate to present your dissertation research data. It is suitable to make up the actual data at this point—the purpose of this assignment is to think about useful formats of tables and graphs that will most effectively present your findings. Email the
two graphics as a PowerPoint to the course instructor by October 29, 2018. Everyone’s graphics will be incorporated into a PowerPoint presentation for class discussion during the October 31st session.

AND

Due November 1, 2018
Assignment #7: Draft Dissertation Proposal
Send a draft dissertation proposal to your dissertation committee chair, with a copy to the instructor, by November 1, 2018. Request written feedback by November 15th, which may be in the form of “Track Changes”.

November 14, 2018 (Session 10): Qualitative Methods of Analysis-the Low Tech Way

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Qualitative Methods of Analysis: The Low-Tech Way</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>The objective of this session is to learn how to prepare and analyze the data from qualitative research instruments, whether from focus groups, key informant interviews, or other questionnaires with open-ended responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>DrPH 1. <strong>Data analysis methods</strong>: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Learning Objectives | L4. To know how to conduct low-tech qualitative evaluation methods.  
L5. To be knowledgeable of high-tech qualitative evaluation software, such as MAXQDA.  
Topics and skills covered:  
1. Using notes from the mock focus group conducted during Session 1, learn how to organize and manage qualitative data using the long-table method of sorting, color-coding transcripts and similar techniques.  
2. Identify and group related themes from the focus group.  
3. Assess the strength of findings from the focus group.  
4. Interpret the results from the focus group. |
### Required Readings

   - Chapter 9: Qualitative Methods (pp. 183-214)  
   (Note: This chapter was assigned for Session 1, but it is also relevant for Session 10.)

   - Chapter 6: Analyzing Focus Group Results (pp. 137—162)

  [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1955280/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1955280/)

  (Posted on Sakai site)

  (Posted on Sakai site)

### Class Activity
- Data analysis from the focus group held during Session 1.

### Assignments/Deadlines
- **Due November 14, 2018**
  - **Assignment #8**: Qualitative Data Analysis  
    Using a low-tech method of your choosing (long-table approach, index cards, colored markers, etc.), code the transcript from the mock focus group held during Session 1. Identify general themes. Summarize what was learned from the focus group. Be prepared to discuss your methods and findings during the class session. **November 1, 2018**. Request written feedback by **November 15th**, which may be in the form of “Track Changes”.

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**November 28, 2018 (Session 11): How to Prepare and Present Focus Group and Key Informant Data and Findings**

| Session 11 | November 28, 2018: 4:00—5:25 p.m.  
| Online |

**Topic**

- How to Prepare and Present Focus Group and Key Informant Data and Findings

**Description**

Presenting qualitative data from open-ended questions, whether gathered in surveys, focus groups, or key informant interviews, often requires techniques that are different from the presentation of quantitative data. In
In this session, we will talk about the ways to do this and critique some examples.

**Competency**

DrPH 1. *Data analysis methods*: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.

**Learning Objectives**

L6. To organize and describe data, and display it effectively.

Topics and skills covered:

1. Identify the principles of qualitative report writing.
2. See prime examples of report structures.
3. Discuss sample focus group reports.

**Required Readings**

   (Posted on Sakai site)
   [https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:47170b8d-2cc7-4b4c-97f5-31e9901174ef](https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:47170b8d-2cc7-4b4c-97f5-31e9901174ef)
   - Chapter 5: Results, General Findings, Theme 1 (pp 69-74)
     (Posted on Sakai site)
   [https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98](https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:21e7f07e-9da1-47cf-8af1-ceb0e62d5b98)
   - Chapter 4: Results (pp. 57-115)
     (Posted on Sakai site)
   (Posted on Sakai site)

**Assignments/Deadlines**

**Due December 10, 2018**

**Assignment #9: Final (Revised) Dissertation Proposal**

Revise dissertation proposal based on feedback from your committee chair. Email final proposal to instructor by December 10, 2018.

**TBD (Session 12): Next Steps in the Dissertation Proposal Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 12</th>
<th>January 2-5, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date, Time, and Room TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Next Steps in the Dissertation Proposal Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>In this course wrap-up, we will talk about steps to move you forward from your current dissertation proposal draft to scheduling the proposal defense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>DrPH 1. <strong>Data analysis methods</strong>: Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels. DrPH 2. <strong>Designing research studies</strong>: Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue. DrPH 14. <strong>Designing interventions</strong>: Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
<td>L8. To understand components of a good dissertation proposal and draft a version ready to defend. Topics and skills covered: 1. Learn how to select and invite dissertation committee members. 2. Discuss the care and feeding of committee members. 3. Learn how to schedule a dissertation proposal defense. 4. Discuss what to expect at a dissertation proposal defense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Readings</td>
<td>No readings required for this session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments/Deadlines</td>
<td>No graded assignment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>