



HPM 789.002 Master's Paper Development Seminar

(One Credit Hour)

Department of Health Policy and Management
Gillings School of Global Public Health

Spring 2019 Syllabus

Class Location and Time: Rosenau 123, Thursdays 12:30 – 1:45 PM

Meeting Dates: January 10, 17, 31; February 14, 28; March 21; April 4, 18

Instructor: John E. Paul, PhD MSPH, McG-G Hall, 1102-B

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Course Overview

HPM 789.002 is a one-credit hour course for MPH students in Health Policy and Management. The Master's Paper Proposal Defense and the Final Master's Paper, as approved by the student's first and second readers, are critical steps to meet the requirements of the UNC Graduate School for graduation. The goal of this course is to support development of the student's Master's paper. Key steps include: (1) identifying and establishing a relationship with your first reader; (2) identifying, honing, and finalizing a Master's paper topic in consultation with the first reader; (3) developing a Master's paper proposal for defense before the end of the semester; and (4) completing as much other preparatory and background work as possible on the Master's paper itself before the following semester when the paper will be finalized. Completing these steps will not only result in lower stress in completing the Master's paper, they will also result in a higher quality final submission. If appropriate, students are encouraged to prepare their Master's paper as a peer-reviewed, publishable article.

Learning Objectives and HPM Competencies

<i>Course Learning Objective</i>	<i>HPM Competencies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a research question that is relevant to health policy 	Information seeking Analytical thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically evaluate the relevant literature associated with the research question(s) 	Analytical thinking Information seeking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a conceptual model that can be used to address the research question(s) 	Analytical thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sources of data or information relevant to the research question(s) 	Information seeking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a detailed research proposal to examine the research question, including a plan/schedule to complete the Master's Paper 	Communications Analytical thinking

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and consult with other class members summarizing the Proposal multiple times. Provide feedback and constructive criticism to classmates on their proposals | Communications
Self-confidence |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and defend the master’s paper proposal for faculty readers. | Communications
Self-confidence |
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Course Requirements and Assignments

Attendance: Master’s Paper Development is a one-credit hour seminar and meets approximately every other week. Attendance in the scheduled classes, therefore, is critical for making progress, e.g. for giving and receiving feedback on Master’s paper ideas, approaches, and methods. Please let the instructor know ahead of time, if possible, of any unavoidable class absences.

Reading Material: Reading material may be assigned for some class sessions. All reading assignments will either be posted on Sakai or can be accessed on line. In addition to being responsible for reading the assigned material before class, it is recommended that you also obtain or consult a copy of the following book on writing style:

Williams Joseph M. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*, 2nd edition
New York: Pearson Education, 2006.

The “HPM Research Methods Toolkit” is also posted on Sakai. This internally-designed toolkit is intended to be a resource for Master’s and Doctoral students who seek trusted sources regarding research designs and/or analytic methods.

Other Resources:

- Odum Institute (<http://www.odum.unc.edu/odum/jsp/home.jsp>) is an excellent resource for data sources and statistical support.
- Health Sciences Library (<http://www.hsl.unc.edu/>) has exceptional resources, including literature searches and reference manager software.
- Institutional Review Board (<http://ohre.unc.edu>): A number of Master’s papers propose research methods that will likely require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Although you need not submit the IRB application until you have defended your proposal, you should be aware of IRB procedures at <http://research.unc.edu/ohre/dates.php>, as well as the required training in conducting research involving human subjects: <https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/>
- Selected proposals and Master’s papers completed in recent years will be posted on the course Sakai site. Other useful material will also be posted on Sakai.
- Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Guide: <http://gradschool.unc.edu/academics/thesis-diss/guide/ordercomponents.html#titlepage>

Identification of a First Reader: Identification, recruitment, and involvement of your first reader is critical for completion of your Master’s paper proposal. *It is sometimes challenging to identify and gain meaningful commitment and involvement of a first reader. However, failing to do so early in the process is likely to cause substantial delays in both your proposal as well as completion of the paper.* Lists and tables of faculty interests, expertise and research foci are posted

on Sakai. The student should also consult with their academic adviser for first reader recommendations. Note that your adviser can be, but is not automatically, your first reader. Finally, a signed “Student and First Reader Responsibilities Agreement” form should be submitted as early as possible in the semester.

Student Presentations and Master’s Paper Proposal: Students will make presentations/ proposal updates across the semester. Presentations and feedback benefit not only the presenter, but also others who may be grappling with similar problems and challenges. The final presentations are at the end of the semester, *with the student’s first reader in attendance*, if at all possible. At the final presentation, students will describe their proposed Master’s paper, including as appropriate: (1) background and significance, e.g., how the research will extend previous research; (2) a conceptual model; (3) hypotheses; and (4) research methods including proposed data sources, research design and analytical plan. *Note that the final presentation in this course is not the proposal defense.* The proposal defense will be held by the student with his/her first and second readers only in a separate session at the end of the semester or beginning of the summer. The typical Master’s paper proposal text is approximately 10-12 pages in length; tables, figures, and appendices may extend the length. Note that much, if not all, of your Master’s paper proposal will become part of your final Master’s paper. *How much you are able accomplish in the semester you are taking HPM 789 will contribute to the quality of your paper in the following semester when you are finishing it, as well as considerably lowering the stress!*

Deliverables and Due Dates

Assignment/Deliverable	Due Date	Comments
Preliminary Master's Paper ideas and research questions	1/17	
Description of proposed topic and specific aims	1/31	
Student and First Reader Responsibility Agreement	2/14	
IRB Training Certification	2/28	
Identification of Second Reader for Master’s Paper	3/21	
Final Master's Paper Proposal Presentation	4/18	
Final Master's Paper Proposal	4/25	
Scheduled date for defense of Master’s Paper Proposal	4/25	

Other Information and Policies

Graduate School Requirements:

Successful defense of your proposal constitutes passing the UNC Graduate School comprehensive examination requirement. After you successfully defend your proposal, you and your first reader should complete a form entitled “Master’s Comprehensive Exam or Approved Substitute Report” which needs to be signed by your first reader. Please be sure to bring that form to your proposal

defense. Once it is signed, please give it to the departmental registrar (Lynnette or Jackie), who will submit it to the Graduate School. *Do not send the signed form directly to the Graduate School yourself.* This form may be found online at: <http://gradschool.unc.edu/documents/mform1.pdf>. Let the instructor know once you have successfully defended your proposal.

Recognizing, Valuing, and Encouraging Diversity:

The importance of diversity is recognized in the mission statement of HPM. In the classroom, diversity *strengthens* the products, *enriches* the learning, and *broadens* the perspectives of all in the class. Diversity requires an atmosphere of inclusion and tolerance, which oftentimes challenges our own closely-held ideas, as well as our personal comfort zones. The results, however, create a sense of community and promote excellence in the learning environment. This class will follow principles of inclusion, respect, tolerance, and acceptance that support the values of diversity.

Diversity includes consideration of: (1) life experiences, including type, variety, uniqueness, duration, personal values, political viewpoints, and intensity; and (2) factors related to “diversity of presence,” including, among others, age, economic circumstances, ethnic identification, family educational attainment, disability, gender, geographic origin, maturity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social position, and veteran status.

Accessibility Accommodations:

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), <http://accessibility.unc.edu>; phone 919-962-8300 or email accessibility@unc.edu. Students must document/register their need for accommodations with ARS before any accommodations can be implemented.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):

CAPS provides therapy, psychiatry, referral, and academic intervention services for UNC Chapel Hill students and post-doctoral fellows. CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building, Emergency Room Drive, for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

UNC-CH Honor Code:

The principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship govern the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University as they have during the long life of this institution. Your acceptance of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in the Code of Student Conduct and a respect for this most significant Carolina tradition. Your reward is in the practice of these principles.

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because

any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work.

If you have any questions about your responsibility or the responsibility of faculty members under the Honor Code, please consult with someone in either the Office of the Student Attorney General (966-4084) or the Office of the Dean of Students (966-4042) .Read “The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance” (<http://instrument.unc.edu>) for complete information

Course Evaluation:

HPM participates in the UNC-CH’s online course evaluation system. Your responses will be anonymous, with feedback provided in the aggregate. Open-ended comments will be shared with instructors, but not identified with individual students. Your participation in course evaluation is an expectation, since providing constructive feedback is a professional obligation. Feedback is critical, moreover, to improving the quality of our courses, as well as for instructor assessment.

Please let the instructor know if you have any questions about the about the above policies and guidance, or any other aspect of the course. *Good luck on your Master’s Paper!*

HPM 789.002 Detailed Course Schedule: *Selected Thursdays, 12:30-1:45, Rosenau 123*

Date	Class	Activity	Deliverable/Milestone	Comment
1/10/19	Class 1	Intro to seminar and objectives		First class
1/17/19	Class 2	Research questions and hypotheses	Preliminary research ideas and research questions	
1/24/19	No class			
1/31/19	Class 3	Presentation and discussion of research ideas	Description of proposed topic and specific aims	
2/7/19	No class			
2/14/19	Class 4	Updates	Student and First Reader Responsibility Agreement	
2/21/19	No class			
2/28/19	Class 5	Updates	Complete IRB training module	
3/7/19	No class			
3/14/19	No class			Spring Break
3/21/19	Class 6	Peer/Instructor Consultations	Identification of second reader	
3/28/19	No class			
4/4/19	Class 7	Peer/Instructor Consultations	Draft slides	
4/11/19	No class			
4/18/19	Class 8	Final presentation and final proposal	Proposal, slides, scheduled date for proposal defense	15 min presentation; 5 min questions.
4/25/19	No class			

Classes end 4/26