

Department of Health Promotion
& Community Health
Faculty of Health Sciences
American University of Beirut

HPCH 211

Research Methods

Spring Semester, Academic Year 2019-2020

[3 credits]

Course instructor and contact details

Esteban Hadjez B., MD, MSc, PhD.

Office 301-E, Van Dyck Building, AUB (ext. 4677)

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Class time and venue

Monday and Wednesday, 9.00 to 10.15 | Van Dyck Building, room 332.

Course description

This course is an introduction to methodologies for research used in health communication, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. Students will learn how to frame questions, review scientific literature, select appropriate designs and methods to measure knowledge, attitudes and behavior, and analyze data to guide communication strategies. Students are provided with opportunities to apply various techniques of data collection and analysis to interpret research findings and use them effectively in decision-making about health communication activities and programs.

Course Learning Objectives (LOs)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply qualitative and quantitative research methods and tools to assess needs for health communication activities
2. Formulate a research question
3. Demonstrate competence in identifying, obtaining, and using literature from a variety of sources to inform health communication activities
4. Identify and discuss ethical principles to the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information
5. Demonstrate an understanding of research and methodology in the field of health communication

BA HCOM Concentration competencies mapped to HPCH 211

1. Competency 2: Assess health communication needs through adopting a multidisciplinary approach.
2. Competency 3: Demonstrate knowledge in planning, managing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based health communication activities.
3. Competency 7: Apply ethical principles in health communication.

Domain of the Council for Public Health (CEPH) mapped to HPCH 211

Role and Importance of Data in Public Health: Address the basic concepts, methods, and tools of public health data collection, use, and analysis and why evidence-based approaches are an essential part of public health practice

Required readings

Most of the topics discussed in this course are derived from the textbooks: Chalmers, A. (2013). *What is that thing called science?* Berkshire: Open University Press; and Whaley, B. (2014). *Research Methods in Health Communication: Principles and Application*. New York: Routledge.

A list of reading material for each session is provided with the schedule and additional readings from academic journals and reports will be posted on Moodle. Readings not available online will be made available at the AUB bookstore.

Course requirements

Students should read the relevant course material prior to class to enable informed discussion and to participate in class learning activities. Students are requested to come to class with at least two questions pertaining to the readings and should be prepared to be called on to share these questions for discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in class activities by expressing their views in class informed by the course reading material, and any other material that students consider pertinent. Participation in class work is an essential component of the learning process and will also help the course instructors in assessing general understanding of course material. Participation is part of the final grade. Moodle is an on-line course management system. To access the course, students login through Moodle [<http://moodle.aub.edu.lb>] and need to check Moodle regularly for updates on class sessions.

Students evaluation

Students will be evaluated on the following:

1. Participation and contribution to class activities. As previously mentioned, it is expected that students contribute to class activities through the revision of reading material, the elaboration of questions, and their participation in collective discussions, expressing their opinions about the content and perspectives of the course.
2. Mid-term exam. This in-class individual exam includes a number of multiple choice questions and short-answer and open-ended questions related mainly to basic concepts and designs applied in health communication research. It is expected to take place during the eight course week.
3. Group project – individual assessment (part 01). Students are asked to choose a topic for a health communication program, formulate a research question and develop and apply a data collection tool in a real life setting. Emphasis will be placed in the coherence, pertinence and justification of the research project, including methodology and research methods.
4. Group project (part 02) Students are asked to analyze the data collected in part 01 of the project, and present it to the class. Emphasis will be placed in the coherence, pertinence and justification of the research project, including methodology, research design and discussion.

Assessment	Percent	Learning Objectives (LOs)
Contribution to class activities	15	LOs 1, 3 and 5
Mid-term exam	25	LOs 1, 3 and 5
Group project 01	30	LOs 1 to 5
Group project 02	30	LOs 1 to 5

AUB/FHS policies

Attendance

The instructors will take attendance regularly. The Rules and Regulations of the University stipulate that students cannot miss more than 1/5 of the sessions in the first ten weeks of any one course. Otherwise, he/she can be dropped from the course by the instructor without warning and will receive a grade of W.

Academic integrity

Education is demanding and time management to complete the assigned course requirements is essential. Do not hesitate to use the resources available to students in the University [Libraries, Writing Center, and Academic Computing]. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the Student Code of Conduct. If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask your instructor. AUB has a strict anti-cheating and anti-plagiarism policy. Penalties include: a zero on the assignment in question, suspension or expulsion from University and a record of the disciplinary action in the student's file.

Students with disabilities

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform us immediately so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

Non-Discrimination – Title IX – AUB

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at www.aub.edu.lb/titleix. To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator Ms. Mitra Taouk at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or titleix@aub.edu.lb. An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at www.aub.ethicspoint.com.

Proposed course outline

Date	Topic	Readings	Learning objectives
Jan 22	Introduction to research methodology	Chalmers, A. (2016). <i>What is this thing called science?</i> [chapters 1 to 4]. Berkshire: Open University Press.	LOs 1 and 5
Jan 27	Positivism and empiricism, session 1	Chalmers, A. (2016). <i>What is this thing called science?</i> [chapters 1 to 4]. Berkshire: Open University Press.	LOs 1 and 5
Jan 29	Research design and purposes of research, practical session	Thompson, T., Cusella, L., and Southwell, B. (2014). Method matters. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1, 2, and 5
Feb 03	Positivism and empiricism, session 2	Chalmers, A. (2016). <i>What is this thing called science?</i> [chapters 5 to 7]. Berkshire: Open University Press.	LOs 1 and 5
Feb 05	Research questions and objectives, practical session	Bonita, R., Beaglehole, R., & Kjellström, T. (2006). <i>Basic epidemiology</i> [chapter 3]. Geneva: World Health Organization.	LOs 1, 2, and 5
Feb 10	Theories as structures: Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend	Chalmers, A. (2016). <i>What is this thing called science?</i> [chapters 8 and 10]. Berkshire: Open University Press.	LOs 1, 2 and 5
Feb 12	Literature review, practical session	Pautasso, M. (2013). Ten Simple Rules for Writing a Literature Review. <i>PLoS Computational Biology</i> 9(7): e1003149 Stone, A., and Seaman, T. (2014).	LOs 1 to 5
Feb 17	Theories as structures: Imre Lakatos	Chalmers, A. (2016). <i>What is this thing called science?</i> [chapter 9]. Berkshire: Open University Press.	LOs 1, 2 and 5
Feb 19	Systematic reviews and meta-analysis, practical session	Noar, S., and Snyder, L. (2014). Building cumulative knowledge in health communication: The application of meta-analytic methods. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Feb 24	Ethnography	Ellingson, L, and Rawlins, W. (2014). Ethnography in health communication research. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1, 4 and 5
Feb 26	Observation, interviews, focus group and oral history, practical session 01	Ford, L., Golden, M., Ray, E. (2014). The case study in health communication research. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Mar 02	Constructivism	Fox, N. (1998). Postmodernism and health. In A. Petersen and C. Waddell (eds.), <i>Health Matters</i> . London: Allen and Unwin	LOs 1, 4 and 5
Mar 04	Observation, interviews, focus group and oral history, practical session 02	Donovan, E., et al. (2014). "Tell me about a time when..." Studying health communication through in-depth interviews. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Mar 09	Marxism and Critical Theory	Comstock, D. (1994). A method for critical research. In M. Martin & L. McIntyre (Eds.), <i>Readings in the philosophy of social sciences</i> . Massachusetts: The MIT Press.	LOs 1, 4 and 5
Mar 11	Feminist research methodology	Lorde, A. (1983). The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. In Moraga, C., Anzaldúa, G. (1983), <i>This bridge called my back: writings by radical women of color</i> . New York: Kitchen Table Press.	LOs 1, 4 and 5

Mar 16	Research ethics	Jurich, J., et al. (2014). Reflections on health communication research methods. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 4
Mar 18	Mid-term exam and group report submission		
Mar 23	Content analysis and discourse analysis, practical session 01	Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. <i>Qualitative Research in Psychology</i> , 3 (2). pp. 77-101.	LOs 1 to 5
Mar 25	Content analysis and discourse analysis, practical session 02	Tian, Y., and Robinson, J. (2014). Content analysis of health communication. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Mar 30	Content analysis and discourse analysis, practical session 03	Yamasaki, J., Sharf, B., and Harter, L. (2014). Narrative inquiry: attitude, acts, artifacts, and analysis. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Apr 01	Secondary data, surveys and scales, practical session	Morgan, S., and Carcioppolo, N. (2014). Survey research methodology in health communication. In B. Whaley (2014), <i>Research methods in health communication: Principles and Application</i> . New York: Routledge.	LOs 1 to 5
Apr 06	Collective mapping and counter-cartographies	Iconoclasistas (2016). <i>Manual of collective mapping. Critical cartographic resources for territorial processes of collaborative creation</i> [chapters 1 and 2]. Buenos Aires: Iconoclasistas.	LOs 1, 4 and 5
Apr 08	Collective mapping, practical session	Mesquita, A. (2018). Counter-cartographies. Politics, art and the insurrection of maps. In <i>Kollektiv Orangotango (2018), This is not an atlas</i> . Bielefeld: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung.	LOs 1 to 5
Apr 13	Workshop on triangulation and research quality 01	Hannes, K. (2011). Critical appraisal of qualitative research. In J. Noyes, et al. (Eds.), <i>Supplementary guidance for inclusion of qualitative research in Cochrane Collaboration Qualitative Methods Group, 2011</i> : Cochrane Methods.	LOs 1 to 5
Apr 15	Workshop on triangulation and research quality 02	Hannes, K. (2011). Critical appraisal of qualitative research. In J. Noyes, et al. (Eds.), <i>Supplementary guidance for inclusion of qualitative research in Cochrane Collaboration Qualitative Methods Group, 2011</i> : Cochrane Methods.	LOs 1 to 5
Apr 20	Class presentation of projects		LOs 1 to 5
Apr 22	Class presentation of projects		LOs 1 to 5