

University of Florida
College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus
PHC 7587: Theory Development and Testing in Behavioral & Community Public Health (2 credit hours)
Summer 2023
Classroom: HPNP G108, Day/time: Tuesdays 12:30 PM – 3:15 PM

Instructor: Kathryn M. Ross, PhD MPH
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College of Public Health and Health Professions

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Office Hours: By appointment (<https://calendly.com/kmross/smeeting>)

Preferred Course Communications (e.g. email, office phone): Email
Email policy: Response within 24 hours to emails received on weekdays (M-F). Emails received during the weekend or after 5pm on Friday will be answered by 1pm on the following Monday.

Prerequisites: None

Class Limits: Limited to doctoral students or consent of instructor

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

Course Overview

The purposes of this class are to (1) familiarize students with the process of theory development, (2) allow students the opportunity to review and orally present on a psychosocial construct(s) relevant to their own public health research goals, and (3) allow students the opportunity to practice written and oral communication skills. This course uses a student-led discussion format, and each student will lead two discussions during the semester. First, students will be asked to summarize and lead a discussion on a chapter from the textbook used in the course. Second, students will be asked to (1) select key readings that illustrate the use and measurement of a selected psychosocial construct, (2) lead a group discussion on psychometric, methodological, and analytic issues concerning the construct, and (3) draw and present a graphic depiction of a model using the construct. Central to the discussion will be a consideration of how the construct performs in understanding a public health related outcome.

There will be two products resulting from this course: 1) a presentation of a theoretical model developed throughout the semester and 2) either a detailed research proposal written up for submission OR a tested model written up as a manuscript for publication.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will have:

1. Described the history, measurement, and use of a psychosocial construct that is important to public health research.
2. Developed a model of how a selected construct is involved (e.g., main effect, moderator, or mediator) in the theoretical explanation of a public health-related behavior.
3. Developed a testable hypothesis from this theoretical model.
4. Selected and appropriately applied statistical tests to evaluate this hypothesis.
5. Orally presented the results of their theoretical model development and hypothesis testing.
6. Drafted a proposal or manuscript based on these results ready for submission (e.g., to a peer-reviewed journal).

Instructional Methods:

As a doctoral seminar, this course will meet once per week. Class time will focus on active discussion of assigned readings. Additional time will be set aside to apply materials, work on course projects, and provide peer-review and feedback to other students.

What is expected of you?

The success of this course depends in large part on your level of preparation and participation. You are expected to actively engage in the course throughout the semester, completing all assigned readings prior to coming to class. On many weeks, additional required readings will be posted on Canvas; please make sure to check Canvas regularly.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT**Course Schedule:**

This course will meet weekly on Tuesdays during periods 4 and 5 (12:30 PM – 3:15 PM).

Course Materials:

Required Textbook: Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., Jr., & Lasorsa, D.L. (2004). *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 9780761926672

Additional Required Readings: Posted via the course website (Canvas).

Course Website: The course website is available at <http://elearning.ufl.edu>. You will log into the course website using your gatorlink ID and password; if you have trouble logging in, please contact the Help Desk at 352-392-HELP.

Announcements: Class announcements will be sent via the announcements tool in eLearning. Depending on your CANVAS notification settings, you may or may not be notified via email; you are responsible for all information in these announcements whether or not you see them in your email.

Canvas Technology Requirements: Browser requirements may change; please consult <https://wiki.helpdesk.ufl.edu/FAQs/SupportedBrowsersForUFWebsites#elearning> to see a list of supported browsers and recommendations for browser configuration.

For **technical support for the course eLearning site, activities, and assessments**, please contact the Online Course Coordinator:

Truly Hardemon, MEd

Room Number: HPNP 4173

Phone Number: 352-273-5822

Email Address: hardemon@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST.

For **other technical support** for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://elearning.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Course Components: (Note: Detailed instructions will be provided on eLearning as due dates get closer)

1. **Discussion Questions:** Each week, you are expected to come to this seminar prepared to discuss the required readings. To assist with this preparation (and to help focus the in-class discussion), you are asked to submit 2 discussion questions weekly via Canvas. Discussion questions are due by 12pm on each day that class is held.
2. **In-Class Chapter Discussion:** You will be assigned one or more chapters from the book by Shoemaker et al. When presenting in class, you will be expected to:
 - a. Summarize the content of the chapter(s) and how they link with ongoing class discussions
 - b. Lead a class discussion (using 3-5 discussion questions you have prepared as well as any selected from the course Canvas discussion post)
3. **Construct: Selection of Articles:** You are asked to select and make available three peer-reviewed articles focused on your selected psychosocial construct (one each on the construct's history/development, measurement, and use). Articles must be approved by the instructor. Articles are due no less than 7 days before the date that you are scheduled to present in-class.
4. **In-Class Construct Presentation:** On your assigned day, you will lead a discussion focused on your psychosocial construct and the articles that you selected. You should start this discussion with a brief presentation, and the presentation and discussion overall should cover the following:
 - a. An overview of the construct, why it is a construct of interest, and why it is relevant to public health.
 - b. The theoretical/conceptual background of the construct. For example, does it come from a particular disciplinary perspective? Is it associated with any larger theoretical perspectives? Is it similar to other constructs used in the literature?
 - c. Measurement challenges of using the construct. Are there good (i.e., psychometrically sound) measures available? Do they need improvement?
 - d. Methodological challenges associated with the construct. For example, does it require a certain type of research design (e.g., longitudinal) to study it? Have researchers done a good job in using it?

- e. Plans for using the construct in future research. Bring up any particular issues that may be problematic.

5. **Final Oral Presentation:** You are asked to prepare a final oral presentation of your theoretical model that will be delivered in class. Your presentation should last for around 12-15 minutes, and should include:

- a. A background/literature review that provides justification for selection of the construct and development/testing of the theoretical model
- b. An overview of your proposed theory, including your broader theoretical model and the parts of the model / proposed hypotheses that you would test in a study (include theoretical statements and necessary theoretical/operational definitions and linkages)
- c. An analysis plan with justification provided on how this plan will appropriately test your model (e.g., how will you measure your constructs and test the selected hypotheses developed from your theoretical model?)
- d. If you have tested these hypotheses: results of your analyses. If you are proposing to conduct a study (i.e., if no data are available): example figures/tables that would represent your hypothesized results.
- e. A discussion of your theoretical model and evaluation plan (and, if available, results). Discuss your results and what they mean (or might mean, hypothetically, if you had data and your hypotheses are supported or not supported) in context of your theory and the broader literature related to your selected construct(s). Include a discussion of the overall strengths/weaknesses of your methods and evaluation plan in this discussion, and discuss potential implications and future directions.

Final slides for this presentation should be uploaded to Canvas by 2 pm on July 22nd.

6. **Final Paper:** You have two options for the final paper:

- a. If you have available data to test your theoretical model: Using the theoretical model and analysis plan you've developed, test your model and submit a manuscript ready for peer-review. This paper should be written using APA formatting, including an abstract and the following sections: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion.
- b. If you do not have data to test your model: Using the theoretical model and analysis plan you've developed, submit a proposal to conduct a study to evaluate this model. This proposal should be written using APA formatting, including an abstract and the following sections: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. In your results section, use tables and figures to represent examples that demonstrate your hypothesized results. In your discussion section, discuss what your results might mean if hypotheses are supported or not supported, in context of your theory and the broader literature. Your discussion should also discuss strengths/limitations of your methods and your proposed evaluation plan.

Bring two printed copies of a draft of your final paper to class on July 29th.

Final papers should be submitted via Canvas by 2pm on August 5th.

7. **Participation:** This doctoral seminar requires *full* participation from all attendees in order for it to be successful. Full participation includes careful reading of all articles and chapters prior to the start of class, and coming to class prepared to discuss these readings.

All activities (i.e. discussion posts, exams, and prevention presentation) are due at the times listed. All submissions will be through e-Learning. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Grading

Requirement	Due Date	Points
Discussion Questions	Ongoing, by 11 AM each class day	10
In-Class Chapter Discussion	As assigned	10
Construct: Selection of Articles	No less than 7 days prior to your class construct presentation	5
In-Class Construct Presentation	As assigned	10
In-Class Theory Evaluation Plan Presentation	Submitted via Canvas by 11:00 AM on 7/18/2023; presentations (& workshopping) in class 7/18/2023	10
Final Oral Presentation	Slides submitted via Canvas by 11:00 AM on 8/8/2023; presentations in class on 8/8/2023	20
Final Paper	Bring printed draft to class 8/1/2023 for peer review workshop; Submit final paper via Canvas by 11:00 AM on 8/8/2023	25
Participation	Ongoing	10
TOTAL		100

Point System

Points earned	≥93	90-92	88-89	83-87	80-82	78-79	70-77	68-69	66-67	60-65	58-59	≤58
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

NOTE: Points are **not** rounded up at the end of the semester, and grades are not curved.

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. The GPA for graduate students must be 3.0 based on 5000 level courses and above to graduate. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if based on credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher that have been earned with a B+ or higher.

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	NG	S-U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Policy Related to Make Up Work

If you have a scheduling conflict that prevents you from fulfilling a certain course requirement, please contact Dr. Ross as soon as possible. **Late assignments are not accepted** unless arrangements have been made ahead of the due date with the instructor. Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **MUST** e-mail Dr. Ross within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Policy Related to Required Class Attendance

Please note all faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For information regarding the UF Attendance Policy see the Registrar website for additional details:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the Graduate Catalog (<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#attendance>). Additional information can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

Inclusive Learning Environment:

Public health and health professions are based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act." If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs website: www.multicultural.ufl.edu

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior for graduate students, and violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Website for additional details:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>
<http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html>

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

I take your comments on these evaluations very seriously and use them to improve the course during future semesters. Further, evaluation results and comments directly influence the tenure and promotion process and are considered valuable feedback on my teaching by the department.

On Campus Face-to-Face

We will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor’s guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please use the UF Health screening system

(<https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>) and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class.

- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>).

Policy Related to Guests Attending Class:

Only registered students are permitted to attend class. However, we recognize that students who are caretakers may face occasional unexpected challenges creating attendance barriers. Therefore, by exception, a department chair or his or her designee (e.g., instructors) may grant a student permission to bring a guest(s) for a total of two class sessions per semester. This is two sessions total across all courses. No further extensions will be granted. Please note that guests are not permitted to attend either cadaver or wet labs. Students are responsible for course material regardless of attendance. For additional information, please review the Classroom Guests of Students policy in its entirety. Link to full policy:

<http://facstaff.php.ufl.edu/services/resourceguide/getstarted.htm>

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, it is strongly recommended you register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu> within the first week of class or as soon as you believe you might be eligible for accommodations. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you must then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please do this as soon as possible after you receive the letter. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- **The Counseling and Wellness Center** 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu> . Online and in person assistance is available.
- **U Matter We Care website:** <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/> . If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- **The Student Health Care Center at Shands** is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The

clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>

- **Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from: Alachua County Crisis Center:** (352) 264-6789
- <http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>
- **University Police Department:** Visit UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website: <https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>



Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone

at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

Summer 2021 Weekly Course Schedule*

**Adjustments may be made to the schedule and/or assigned readings as needed*

Week/ Dates	Lecture Topics	Readings	Presentations
Week 1: May 16	Course Introduction		
Week 2: May 23	The Role of Theory in Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 1 • Sutton & Staw (1995) • Weick (1995) • DiMaggio (1995) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAPTER _____
Week 3: May 30	Theoretical Concepts, Issues in Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 2 • Clark & Watson (2019) • Articles on Canvas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONSTRUCT _____ • CHAPTER _____
Week 4: June 6	Theoretical Statements Involving Two Variables, Theoretical and Operational Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 3 & 4 • Articles on Canvas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONSTRUCT _____ • CHAPTER _____
Week 5: June 13	No class (work on literature review)		
Week 6: June 20	Theoretical Statements Involving Three Variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 5 • Fairchild & MacKinnon (2009) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAPTER _____
Week 7: June 27	SUMMER BREAK (No Class)		
Week 8: July 4	July 4 Holiday (No Class)		
Week 9: July 11	Theoretical Statements Relating Four or More Variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 6 • Muller et al. (2005) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAPTER _____

Week 10: July 18	Theoretical Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAPTER _____
Week 11: July 25	Creativity & Theory Building, Using and Evaluating Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoemaker et al. Chap 8 & 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Presentations (please submit evaluation plan via Canvas by 11 AM EST)
Week 12: Aug 1	Peer Review / Academic Writing Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mensh & Kording (2017) • Provenzale & Stanley (2005) 	NOTE: Please bring two printed copies of your final paper draft to this class
Week 13: Aug 8	Final Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD 	NOTE: Final papers & slides due by 11 AM EST

Additional Readings/ Articles (preliminary list; lease note that additional articles may be posted via Canvas):

Week 2:

Sutton, R.I., & Staw, B.M. (1995). What theory is not. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 371-384.

Weick, K.E. (1995). What theory is not, theorizing is. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 385-390.

DiMaggio, P.J. (1995). Comments on "What theory is not". *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 391-397.

Week 3:

Clark, L., & Watson, D. (2019). Constructing validity: New developments in creating objective measuring instruments. *Psychological Assessment*, 31(11), 1412-1427.

Week 6:

Fairchild, A. & MacKinnon, D. (2009). A general model for testing mediation and moderation effects. *Prevention Science*, 10, 87-99.

Week 9:

Muller, D., Judd, C. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (2005). When moderation is mediated and mediation is moderated. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89, 852-863.

Week 12:

Mensh, B., & Kording, K. (2017). Ten simple rules for structuring papers. *PLoS Comput Biol* 13(9): e1005619 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005619>

Provenzale, J. M. & Stanley, R. J. (2005). A Systematic Guide to Reviewing a Manuscript. *American Journal of Roentgenology*, 185, 848-854.