



## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Population Health 820: Graduate Research Seminar**  
Fall 2019

**Credits**  
1.0

### **Course Attributes**

The goal of this class is to improve your skills in scientific communication and your ability to evaluate and discuss population health research. You will be required to deliver a professional presentation of your work to a diverse audience, attend presentations of other students' work, and participate in discussions of the presented research. Graduate student standing is required for this seminar. All masters and doctoral students in the Population Health and Epidemiology graduate programs should regularly attend Wednesday seminars during their time as a student in the department. MS students are required to take the course for credit once, and PhD students are required to take the course for credit twice.

Canvas course website <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/169093>

### **Meeting Time and Location**

Wednesdays at noon-1:00pm, September 11 – December 4, 2019  
WARF Office Building Room 758  
610 Walnut Street

### **Instructional Mode**

Course mode of instruction: all face-to-face

### **How Credit Hours Are Met By The Course**

One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week over the spring semester.

### **Instructors**

Amy Trentham-Dietz, PhD, MS  
Professor, Population Health Sciences  
Associate Director of Population Sciences, Carbone Cancer Center  
School of Medicine and Public Health  
610 Walnut St., WARF Room 307D  
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Preferred method of contact: before or after class in person, or by email. Preferred pronouns she/her/hers.

Deborah Ehrenthal, MD, MPH, FACP  
Associate Professor, Population Health Sciences and Obstetrics & Gynecology  
School of Medicine and Public Health  
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Preferred method of contact: before or after class in person, or by email. Preferred pronouns she/her/hers.

### **Instructor Availability**

Office hours available upon request. All students are encouraged to meet individually with the course instructors after their seminars to discuss feedback on their presentations.

### **Course Description**

Research seminar for students in the population health and epidemiology graduate programs. Presentations given by graduate students, professors, public health professionals and experts designed to cover the depth and breadth of research in the field of population health.

### **Requisites**

Graduate or professional standing

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Recognize elements of a well-organized presentation of research ideas at multiple stages of development.
2. Summarize proposed or ongoing research using an abstract format consistent with those presented at national or international population health research conferences.
3. Construct a well-organized oral and graphic presentation using appropriate software (e.g. Power Point, Prezi etc.).
4. Demonstrate effective communication skills by presenting research ideas to class.
5. Apply principles of research design to analyze strengths and weaknesses of peer's research.
6. Demonstrate an ability to provide constructive oral and written feedback on research in a manner that encourages sharing of ideas and growth.
7. Use constructive feedback to improve oral and written communication skills and research methods.
8. Develop active listening skills to provide thoughtful questions and answers after research presentations.
9. Identify new research opportunities, tools, and skills available to students in population health through professional development opportunities offered during the course.

### **Grading**

Assessments will include:

- a) Timely provision of a tentative title and available dates for a presentation (5%)
- b) Providing a final title and abstract for the presentation (20%)
- c) Presentation of research ideas (50%)
- d) Active participation through class attendance and providing feedback to other students (25%). Since this is a seminar course, regular in-person attendance is required. 85% attendance (12/14) is required for full credit.

Grading is not assigned on a curve but relative to the provided rubric. Grades will be assigned according to the following cut-points:

- A 93-100%
- B 83-92%
- C 70-82%
- D 60-69%
- F <60%

## Required Textbook And Other Course Materials

This course does not have required textbooks or other materials. Helpful resources may include the following:

- Alley M (2002) The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid. Springer.
- Anholt R (2005) Dazzle 'Em With Style: The Art of Oral Scientific Presentation. Academic Press. 2nd Edition.
- Day RA, Gastel B (2006) How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper. Greenwood. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.
- Ibrahim AM (2018) Use of a Visual Abstract to Disseminate Scientific Research. Version 4. <https://www.surgeryredesign.com/resources/>
- Morgan S, Whitener B (2006) Speaking about Science: A Manual for Creating Clear Presentations. Cambridge University Press.

## ASSIGNMENTS

In the first class, we will review the syllabus, discuss the course objectives, and set the schedule for the seminars. For the remainder of the course, students will give seminars, attend talks by other students, and participate in discussions led by students, staff, and faculty. You should present your thesis or dissertation research proposal, or research that you are carrying out related to your thesis or dissertation, including challenges and findings. Consult one of the instructors or your advisor if you need guidance on choosing the topic for your presentation.

Assignments will include:

- 1) Timely provision of a tentative title and available dates for a presentation (5%). By noon on the first Friday of the semester (September 6), provide your top 3 preferred dates in rank order to deliver your seminar and a tentative title for the seminar. Provide this information through the Canvas website on the 'Assignments' page; directly enter this information as text into the assignment page. If more than 1 person requests the same date, the presenter will be decided randomly. The title can be preliminary and will be listed on a seminar schedule circulated in the Department. *Strategy tip*: You are more likely to get your top choice for your presentation date if you pick dates early in the semester.
  - You are strongly encouraged to check with your thesis or dissertation advisor before setting the date for your seminar, since your advisor should attend your presentation. You are also strongly encouraged to invite all members of your committee along with any other faculty, staff, or guests that may be appropriate to attend your presentation as soon as you know the date of your talk. *Strategy tip*: Use the seminar as your actual thesis defense. After the public presentation during the seminar hour, you can move to a different room for your committee members to ask questions and finish your exam.
- 2) Providing a final title and abstract for the presentation (20%). By noon on the Wednesday before your seminar (one week in advance), provide the final title and an abstract for your presentation. Provide this information through the Canvas website on the 'Assignments' page; directly enter this information as text into the assignment page. The abstract should be single-spaced with a 1-page limit. You can follow the format for abstracts in a top journal in your (sub)discipline. Alternatively, you can follow the instructions for authors using the format for JAMA, available at <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/pages/instructions-for-authors#SecAbstracts>. In the abstract, indicate the stage of your research – finalizing the topic, conducting the

- literature review, analyzing data, etc. – so that the audience can gauge what aspects of your project are more amenable to feedback.
- 3) Presentation of research ideas (50%). Your seminar is an opportunity to improve your presentation skills in front of a friendly audience. You are expected to prepare a slide presentation using PowerPoint or similar software. Practice your presentation (preferably multiple times) before giving your seminar and consider the following:
- Time: Allow adequate time for presentation and follow-up Q&A and discussion. Your presentation should be approximately 30 minutes long allowing for 20 minutes of questions in a 50-minute session. Generally, you should have no more than one slide for each minute of presentation, i.e., no more than 30 slides for a 30-minute talk.
  - Consider the Audience: Realize that many people may be unfamiliar with your area of research. Therefore, make sure to explain technical terms and concepts.
  - Content: As in the abstract, indicate the stage of your research – finalizing the topic, conducting the literature review, analyzing data, etc. – so that the audience can gauge what aspects of your project are more amenable to feedback.
  - Slide Format: Avoid small font sizes (e.g., less than 16- or 18-point), fonts with serifs, animation that is more distracting than useful, and cluttering a slide with too much content. Choose color schemes and templates that will be visible under the room conditions. No more than 6-7 lines of text per slide.
  - Audience: The audience will be primarily comprised of other graduate students and the course instructors. As noted above, students are encouraged to request in advance that their thesis or dissertation advisor attend their seminar.
  - Discussion: About 20 minutes after each seminar will be reserved for discussion. Students are expected to ask questions of the speakers. Presenters should tell the audience if they want to reserve most substantive questions until the end of the prepared talk, stopping only for clarification questions during the presentation.
  - Logistics: Check that you have a laptop that will connect to the room's projector. If you need a laptop or an adaptor cord, please check with the Department Office (707 WARF).
- 4) Active participation through class attendance and providing feedback to other students (25%). You are expected to ask questions of the speakers on a regular basis. After each seminar given by other students, you must complete a feedback sheet (on paper) that will be collected and given to the speakers. You are encouraged to write substantive comments on the feedback sheet rather than purely superficial statements. Since this is a seminar course, regular in-person attendance is required with 83% attendance (10/12) required for full credit.

### **Academic Integrity**

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to [studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/](http://studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/).

### **Civility Policy**

Members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison community are expected to deal with each other with respect and consideration. The civility policy for this course promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among the faculty and students. We do not intend this policy to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. Rather, we seek to maintain a safe, harassment-free workplace for the students, faculty, and staff. Positive communication is encouraged and volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions and language will not be tolerated. If the civility policy for this course is violated, the individual is subject to removal from the class and possibly the course altogether. In addition, the proper authorities at the UW Departmental, School, and University levels will be notified of such behavior accordingly and further action may be taken if necessary.

### **Accommodations For Students with Disabilities**

#### **McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement:**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

<http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

### **Institutional Statement On Diversity and Inclusion**

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>