

College of Public Health and Health Professions
College of Medicine
Department of Epidemiology

2004 Mowry Road
PO Box 100231
Gainesville, FL 32611-0231
352-273-5468
352-273-5365 Fax
epidemiology.phhp.ufl.edu

College of Public Health & Health Professions
College of Medicine
Epidemiology Journal Club
PHC 7901-1 credit
Fall, 2016
Friday 9:35–10:25 am, CTRB 4240C

Instructor Information

Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH

Dean's Professor of Epidemiology; Chair, Department of Epidemiology, Associate Dean for Research, College of Public Health and Health Professions and College of Medicine
352-273-5468

lbcottler@ufl.edu

Office Hours: By appointment; email Tam Millay (tmillay@ufl.edu) to schedule.

Course Overview

The principal goals of this Epidemiology Journal Club are::

- 1) To understand current methods and concepts used in the field of epidemiology by evaluating published research for adherence to epidemiologic concepts.
- 2) To prepare students to perform peer-review and to think critically. In weekly class discussion sessions, students will review peer-reviewed, published research studies that demonstrate innovative or faculty epidemiologic content or methods. Feedback will be given by student peers and faculty.
- 3) To learn to write, submit and publish a critical review of a recent article in the student's area of focus.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

As a result of this course, students will:

- 1) Learn "best practices" for reviewing and critiquing scientific articles in public health and medicine research journals.
- 2) Critically review scientific literature, analyze and summarize strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations for improvement.
- 3) Critique articles recently published in medical and public health journals.
- 4) Discuss broad issues in Epidemiologic methods and content.
- 5) Become familiar with journals in our field, impact factors, how to choose a journal, and how reviewers are selected.

- 6) Understand ethical issues in field methods and in the review process.
- 7) Prepare for professional peer-review assignments.
- 8) Prepare and submit a letter to the editor.
- 9) Critique letters to the editor written by others.

Course Materials

Course information and grades will be available on Canvas.

Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course. Students will select articles for review and prepare for in-class discussion. Additionally, several journal articles will be assigned as supplements. These readings include:

- 1) <http://www.quora.com/What-are-some-best-practices-for-setting-up-a-medical-journal-club>
- 2) http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/scientificarticlereview.original.pdf
- 3) Roediger, H. L. (2007). Twelve tips for reviewers. The Academic Observer, 20. from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2007/june-july-07/twelve-tips-for-authors.html>
- 4) Golub RM. Correspondence Course :Tips for Getting a Letter Published in JAMA. JAMA 2008; 300:98-99. <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=182156>
- 5) <http://smj.sma.org.sg/5107/5107emw1.pdf>
- 6) <http://www.nejm.org/page/author-center/letter-submission>
- 7) <http://www.consort-statement.org/>
- 8) <http://www.strobe-statement.org/>

Course Requirements

Each student will be required to:

- Select an article, with Dr. Cottler's approval, for individual discussion/presentation. The students will choose an article to demonstrate a specific study design (Cross-sectional design, Quasi- or Randomized designs, Reliability and Validity, Randomized Controlled designs, Longitudinal designs, Case-Control designs) within a specific topic area/discipline of interest to the student. The article needs to be from a top tier journal (e.g., JAMA, New England Journal of Medicine, AJPH, Archives of XYZ or other high impact journal in the field) and a journal that accepts and publishes letters to the editor. Articles must be recent enough to be eligible for a letter to the editor.
- Presentation will include:
 - 1) Reviewing the article title, authors, affiliations of the authors, funding source for the work conducted, abstract, background, methodology, results discussion of the

research regarding strengths and weaknesses noted by the authors, and strengths and weaknesses noted by the student in addition to those presented by the authors.

- 2) Presentations, in Power Point format, will be 20 minutes in length, followed by a 10 minute discussion.
 - 3) Letters to the Editor will be presented as well.
 - 4) Students will be graded on both letters (content and independent thinking) and presentations (staying within time limit, presentation style, and content). Grading will be performed by Dr. Cottler, or the faculty instructor for that class, and student peers.
- One week prior to presentation, the student will send the article to be presented to students; they will give a hard copy to Dr. Cottler. On the day of presentation, the student will bring one copy of their letter to the editor for each student and Dr. Cottler. Based upon feedback from other students and/or the instructor, the letter to the editor will be revised after the class discussion.
 - Letters to the editor will be submitted to the journal; proof of submission will be needed for assignment credit.
 - Each week, non-presenting students will write a 200 word (maximum) summary stating what they learned from the presentation and submit it.

Evaluation/Grading

This course will be graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory following the policies described here

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=762#grades>.

Presentations will be deemed to be “satisfactory” if they reflect quality (75%; clarity, brevity, professional delivery, coverage of all needed information, attractiveness of slides), style (10%) and creativity (15%; new approach to topic, evidence of insightful thinking). Presentations that fall below an instructor assessment reaching 70% or above will be considered to be “unsatisfactory.”

Written letters will be graded satisfactory based on quality (clean and attractive product (10%), no errors in punctuation or grammar (10%), well thought out logic (10%), clear and concise writing (20%), grasp of topic (10%) and quality of analysis (40%). Written products that fall below an instructor assessment of 70/100 will be considered to be “unsatisfactory.” For a satisfactory grade, the presentations will be weighted 50%, the letter 35% and assignments 15%/ For specific content requirements, see the Course Requirements section of this syllabus.

It is possible to receive a grade of Incomplete (I) with instructor permission and at instructor discretion for unforeseen circumstances, but it must be requested by the student. Grades of I not completed within one year are converted to F or U.

Course Outline (Note dates when class meets two hours)

8/26 **No Class**

9/2 **No Class**

- 9/9 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 8:30) Course overview (# 1 reading)
CONSORT and STROBE websites (#7 and #8 readings)
- 9/16 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 8:30) Ethical issues in scientific review and publishing
(visit ORI website)
- Self-plagiarism
 - Conflict of interest
 - **Readings:** Read ORI website and bring one article on the Ethical Principles of Journal Writing (Use Nature, Science, JAMA, NEJM or another high impact journal)
 - Bring Letter to the Editor
 - Read #2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
 - Discuss when and how to write Letters to the Editor
- 9/23 Librarian Guest Lecture (Nancy Schaefer): how to access journals, Impact Factors
- 9/30 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 2:30)
- Review material from past class
 - Student presentations (3)
- 10/7 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 8:30)
- Student Presentations (4)
- 10/14 No Class (Homecoming)
- 10/21 **No Class**
- 10/28 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 8:30) Student Presentation (3)+ review a journal article review from the standpoint of the editor
- 11/4 Student Presentation (2) + review a journal article review from the standpoint of the editor
- 11/11 No Class-Veteran's Day
- 11/18 Student Presentation (1) + review a journal article review from the standpoint of the editor
- 11/25 No Class - Thanksgiving
- 12/2 (Meet for 2 hours-begin at 8:30) Final Discussion of journal article review and how to continue journal reviews

Statement of University's Honesty Policy
University of Florida Academic Honesty Statements

“I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree and adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

“All faculty, staff and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.”

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

Citations and Plagiarism

The two key purposes of citation are to: 1) give appropriate credit to the authors of information, research findings, and/or ideas (and avoid plagiarism), and 2) facilitate access by your readers to the sources you use in your research.

Quotations: When directly quoting an outside source, the borrowed text, regardless of the amount, must be surrounded by quotation marks or block quoted. Quoted text over two lines in length should be single-spaced and indented beyond the normal margins. Every quote must include a source—the author, title, volume, page numbers, etc.—whether an internal reference, footnote, or endnote is used in conjunction with a bibliography page.

Paraphrasing or Citing an Idea: When summarizing an outside source in your own words or citing another person’s ideas, quotation marks are not necessary, but the source must be included. This includes, but is not confined to, personal communications from other students, faculty members, experts in the field, summarized ideas from published or unpublished resource, and primary methods derived from published or unpublished sources. Use the general concept of “when in doubt – cite.”

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the academic honesty policy of the College. If a student plagiarizes others’ material or ideas, he or she may receive an “E” in the course. The faculty member may also recommend further sanctions to the Dean, per College disciplinary action policy. Generally speaking, the three keys of acceptable citation practice are: 1) thoroughness, 2) accuracy, and 3) consistency. In other words, be sure to fully cite all sources used (thoroughness), be accurate in the citation information provided, and be consistent in the citation style you adopt. All references should include the following elements: 1) last names along with first and middle initials; 2) full title of reference; 3) name of journal or book; 4) publication city, publisher, volume, and date; and 5) page numbers referenced. When citing information from the Internet, include the WWW address at the end, with the “access date” (i.e., when you obtained the information), just as you would list the document number and date for all public documents. When citing ideas or words from an individual that are not published, you can write “personal communication” along with the person’s name and date of communication.

Policy Related to Class Attendance

Absences must be conveyed to Dr. Cottler in advance, or on the day of the absence for illness.

Policy Related to Make-up Exams or Other Work

Students are expected to attend and be prepared to participate in all class sessions. Personal issues with respect to class attendance or fulfillment of course requirements will be handled on an individual basis.

Statement Related to Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to you, which you then give to the instructor when requesting accommodation. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

Counseling and Student Health

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the UF Counseling & Wellness Center, 352-392-1575. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>.

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, including primary care, women's health care, immunizations, mental health care, and pharmacy 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: www.health.ufl.edu/shcc.

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:
Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789.

BUT – 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.