



School of Public Health

**PUBH 8720, Grant Writing  
Fall 2020 – Remote learning**

**Instructors**

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**Time and place and method**

Method: Due to COVID-19, remote learning will be used throughout the course.

Regular Class dates: August 17 – November 16, 2020.

**Mondays 3:00 – 4:30, SYNCHRONOUS by ZOOM - REQUIRED**

Thursdays 3:00-4:30. Open time for discussion with instructors and fellow students by ZOOM.

No class will be held on September 7 (Labor Day).

**Please note: We will start each class on time, at 3:00 PM. Please plan your computer time to log into ZOOM a few minutes early, not late.**

We ask that students keep their video ON during classes to facilitate a sense of group involvement and participation.

**Course Description**

The primary aim of the course is to provide graduate students with a solid foundation in scientific writing skills, specifically in writing NIH extramural grant proposals in the health sciences.

**Course Prerequisites**

The course is required for third year PHD students in the Epidemiology program in the School of Public Health. Other graduate students may enroll with permission of the instructor.

**Learning Goals/Competencies**

- A. Identify NIH resources and opportunities for planning an NIH research grant submission

- B. Acquire a thorough working knowledge of each component of an NIH research grant proposal
- C. Understand NIH criteria and processes for review and critique of a submitted grant proposal
- D. Develop expertise in an area of independent research (CEPH competency number 8 for PHD Epi)
- E. Design and propose implementation of a study to answer an important public health question (CEPH competency number 6 for PHD Epi)
- F. Write and present an R21 (or equivalent) NIH grant proposal

### Required Text

None

### Required Readings

Maldonado G. and Greenland S. Estimating causal effects. *Int J Epidemiol* 2002;31:422-429.

We offer this article to help you understand how to be very specific about stating research question and a hypothesis for evaluation in an epidemiologic study.

Other readings may be assigned as needed.

### Online Resource

eCourseware. The syllabus, readings, slides, and class notes will be uploaded in eCourseware.

### Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

Class participation	20%
Weekly assignments (8 assignments, 5 points each)	40%
In class presentation (defense) of proposal	05%
Final grant proposal	35%
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TOTAL	100%

### Assignments

- Weekly assignments will be due no later than Sunday evening at 5:00 PM the day before class, unless otherwise stated.
- Student class presentations (virtual) will occur on November 9 and 16.
- The final grant proposal is due no later than November 23, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

### Class participation

Attendance and active participation in each Monday class session is required.

Participation in Thursday discussion group is recommended but not required.

Private (virtual) meetings with your assigned instructor will occur at least 5 times during the semester and is required as part of your class participation grade.

### Final grant proposal

- Each student will write an independent grant proposal.
- You **may not** use an existing product from your mentor or supervisor.
- You **may** use the topic for your planned PHD dissertation.
- The proposal, unless otherwise negotiated, will take the form of an NIH R21 mechanism.
- The proposal must be responsive to a program announcement or other call for proposals from NIH (or alternative) and must be structured and formatted as required in the instructions for that program announcement, unless otherwise negotiated.

### Late assignments

Any assignment turned in after the due date and time will be downgraded 10% for the first day and 5% for each subsequent day of late submission. Please, don not fall behind!

### Grading Scale

The letter grades for each requirement are assigned using the following grading scale:

- ≥96% | A+ | 4.00
- 93-<96% | A | 4.00
- 90-<93% | A- | 3.84
- 86-<90% | B+ | 3.33
- 83-<86% | B | 3.00
- 80-<83% | B- | 2.67
- 76-<80% | C+ | 2.33
- 73-<76% | C | 2.00
- 70-<73% | C- | 1.67
- 66-<70% | D+ | 1.33
- 60-<66% | D | 1.00
- <60% | F | 0.00

### Promoting a Positive Learning Environment

The School of Public Health recognizes its responsibility to promote a safe and diversity-sensitive learning environment that respects the rights, dignity, and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff. Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of contrasting perspectives and voices, together with the appreciation and valuing of different cultural and socioeconomic group practices. Moreover, we aspire to foster a climate of mutual respect and empathy, among and between students, faculty, and staff, by nurturing an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Courses will strive to provide an opportunity for all students to openly discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation.

### Personal Conduct

As a community of scholars, it is expected that the instructor and students will work together at all times to create an atmosphere that fosters shared discovery and mutual respect. The instructors will be prepared for each class meeting, and likewise, students are expected to arrive prepared to ask questions, discuss, and learn. Students are expected to handle feedback from the instructor in a constructive manner. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and writing assignments, and to participate in class discussions. As mentioned above, we prefer that each student participates in video conferencing meetings (ZOOM) with his/her video on whenever possible.

Class attendance is an important component of the course. In the event of an unavoidable absence, please notify the instructor beforehand if at all possible. Certain behaviors are disruptive and disrespectful to the instructor and other students and are not acceptable. These include tardiness, use of cell phones or PDAs, or engaging in side conversations while others are talking. If arriving late is unavoidable, notify the instructor in advance, if possible. Set your cell phone to silent if it must be available for an emergency. Students who engage in these behaviors may be asked to leave and not allowed to return until a meeting with the instructor has occurred during which a plan to avoid future classroom disruptions has been worked out.

### Make-Up and Absentee Policy

Students missing class are responsible for the content presented and are not excused from assignment due dates. You may be asked to make up for the missed class in the form of written critical commentaries on the readings, additional assignments, or tests. Please let the instructor know in advance if you will be absent on a given class day.

### Writing Standards

Effective managers, leaders, and teachers are also effective communicators. Written communication is an important element of the communication process. The School of Public Health graduate program recognizes and expects exemplary writing to be the norm for course work. **An important suggestion: When the instructors have returned your work with edits and comments in track changes, do not just accept the changes without first reading them carefully and trying to understand why the suggestions are made. This is how you learn to improve your writing! If you have questions about the edits, questions, comments, or suggestions please contact your assigned instructor and discuss your uncertainty.**

### Academic Conduct

All written work submitted must be the student's original work and conform to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) which are available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. This also applies to oral sources, such as material taken from lectures or interviews. Plagiarism is a serious violation of [University policy](#). Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

It is the student's responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning plagiarism. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions, such as reduction or zero grade in that assignment, suspension or expulsion, by the School of Public Health and The University of Memphis. (<https://www.memphis.edu/osa/students/academic-misconduct.php>). If there is evidence of plagiarism in work that is published, the student could face legal and/or financial consequences. If the student has any doubt about acknowledgment of appropriate sources, they are encouraged to speak with their instructor or advisor. Here is more information on [what constitutes plagiarism](#).

Cheating is also not acceptable at the University of Memphis. Cheating includes but is not limited to the following: using any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or tests; acquiring tests or other academic material before such material is revealed or distributed by the instructor; failing to abide by the instructions of test taking procedures; influencing, or attempting to influence, any university employee in order to affect a student's grade or evaluations; any forgery, alteration, unauthorized possession, or misuse of University documents.

**Your written work will be submitted to Turnitin, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources.** As part of this process, you will be required to submit electronic versions of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not

submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (As referenced by the University's Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

#### Awarding an Incomplete Grade

A grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be assigned by the instructor of any course in which the student is unable to complete the work due to EXTRAORDINARY events beyond the individual's control. The "I" may not be used to extend the term for students who complete the course with an unsatisfactory grade. Unless the student completes the requirements for removal of the "I" within 45 days (for undergraduate courses, or 90 days for graduate courses) from the end of the semester or Summer term in which it was received, the "I" will be changed to an "F," regardless of whether or not the student is enrolled.

#### Withdrawal Policy

In accordance with University policy, withdrawal is not permitted after the date specified in the University Calendar for that term. Exceptions are made to the policy only in case of such extreme circumstances as serious illness, relocation because of employment, etc.

#### Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Memphis does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations. *The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor (at the beginning of the course) of any disabling condition, which will require modification to avoid discrimination.* Faculty are required to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Students with accessibility issues or learning accommodation issues due to a disability should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to submit an official request for course accommodations. Contact DRS at 901.678.2880 or at [drs@memphis.edu](mailto:drs@memphis.edu). (<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/index.php>).

#### Special Needs

Any student who has special needs for assistance and/or accommodation, and who is registered with the Office of Student Disability Services should meet with the instructor during the first week of classes.

#### Inclement Weather Policy

In the event that inclement weather requires the cancellation of classes at the University of Memphis, local radio and television media will be notified, according to the [Emergency Closing Policy](#). Additionally, the University of Memphis has established an inclement weather hotline 901-678-0888.

#### COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy - Masks and Social Distancing

All students, faculty and staff will wear masks in all public spaces, including our classroom (lab) per the COVID-19 policy. The first time a student enters a classroom without wearing a face covering, the student will be asked to leave the class until they return a covering. Further violations will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability. Students who repeatedly or flagrantly violate these community expectations may be referred for discipline under the Student Code and, if appropriate, immediately removed from campus by the Dean of Students.

#### Student Health

Students who are experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or a higher than normal temperature should inform me by email so they can be excused from class and should stay home.

Students should contact their health care provider or the Student Health Center at <https://www.memphis.edu/health/>.

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at [deanofstudents@memphis.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu).

#### Student Resources

Students who need additional resources can contact the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.