

**BH 527: Social Science Research Methods  
Spring 2021**

**Deborah Bowen**

University of Washington School of Medicine

Department of Bioethics & Humanities

Box 357120

Office hours: By appointment, A204

Phone: 206-618-6583 (cell)

Email: [dbowen@uw.edu](mailto:dbowen@uw.edu)

**Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 11:30 to 2:30**

**Credits: 3**

**Location: Zoom**

**Course Description**

This course provides an overview and introduction to a broad range of empirical issues and methods for conducting research in bioethics that concerns ethically important issues in clinical research and public health. The course focuses on ethical and social issues using public health genomics as a focus, but students can apply these principles to any topic they choose for graded assignments. Methods covered in the course include qualitative and quantitative (qualitative interviews, focus groups, surveys, and experimental and observational designs). Students will practice writing research questions and developing research proposals, and workshop them during class to learn how to match research methods to research questions. Students conclude the course by drafting a proposal that uses a social sciences empirical approach to address their research question.

**Target audience:** Master's and doctoral students in public health genomics, bioethics, law, medicine, nursing, public health, social work, and other fields, post-docs, and junior faculty who would like to design a bioethics research project using empirical methods, or understand the range of methods to be a better consumer of the diverse bioethics literature.

**Prerequisites:** None. Add code required: email [BHadds@uw.edu](mailto:BHadds@uw.edu) and instructor.

**Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:**

- Understand how social science empirical research contributes to and informs the exploration of ethically salient issues in health care and public health.
- Learn about the assumptions, epistemologies, methods, tools, and products of ethics research using these approaches.
- Identify what conceptual models, research designs, and methods will be used in their research project and justify why the ones chosen are the most appropriate to address these research questions.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** All classes will be held over Zoom, to enable lecture and discussion among participants. At the beginning of each class I will take attendance and check for assignments delivered to the website. Because this class will use a seminar format to discuss the readings, attendance and participation is critical to the success of the class.

**Structure:** For many class sessions, as labelled below, students will provide problem solutions online, and in the class we will discuss the problem solutions. Written write-ups of problems will be required (informal, bulleted, one to two pages of summary) before the class,. The problems will have relevance to the day's topic discussed during the first half of class. The problem will require you to use resources in the readings and beyond, so bringing a laptop to class would be helpful. Problems will be posted on the website for review before each class with a problem in it.

Class participation: Participation will be recorded throughout the quarter on the basis of engagement in class discussions, including the discussions about the problems. The review conducted twice during the sessions is another participation highlight. Students will review each others' grant proposals and offer critiques in class.

Electronic submissions: All written assignments must be submitted via the Canvas drop box on the course website. All submissions must be received by the due date/time unless a prior agreement with the instructors has been made.

Late assignments: In the interest of fairness, any assignments received after the due date and time will receive 2 points off for each day late. If you have extenuating circumstances that will require re-negotiating deadlines, please provide as much warning as possible. You must have prior approval in an email from the instructor to avoid late penalties.

Quality of your writing: High quality writing is the standard for graduate education. I expect that you will have proofread your papers for spelling and grammatical errors before turning them in. I will be paying attention to style as well as content. In general, you will lose points for sloppiness and gain points for clarity. If you know you have trouble in these areas, please let us know so we can take extra actions. Your best strategy is to have someone else review and proof your papers. For guidance, please refer to *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr., (<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>) and *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity & Grace*, by Joseph M. Williams. Both are excellent references for organizing and improving your writing.

Disability Accommodation: If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students Office (DRS), 448 Schmitz, 543-8924 (V/TDD). If you have a letter from Disability Resources for Students Office, please present the letter to the instructor so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

### **Grading:**

The distribution of grade points is as follows:

Participation in class, discussions, problems, reviews	30%
Assignment #1	30%
Assignment #2:	40%
Total	100%

### **Feedback, suggestions, assessment and summative evaluations:**

Seminar members are encouraged to suggest alternative readings and topics for seminar discussion and otherwise recommend ways to maximize our study time together. A formal course evaluation will be collected on forms provided by the Educational Assessment Center during the last class session. Participation in these feedback and evaluation processes is voluntary.

### **Course Requirements:**

➤ Written assignments: There are 2 assignments: Students will receive detailed feedback on the first assignment so that you may incorporate it into the final assignment. Ordered by due date, the individual written assignments are:

#### **Assignment #1 due on the course website on 4/27/2021**

Using R21 format, produce a grant proposal that applies a qualitative methodology to a bioethical issue or problem. (Website for R21 <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r21.htm>)

**Assignment #2 due on the course website on 6/2/2021**

Using the R21 or foundation grant format, submit a quantitative research proposal on a bioethics topic. Use the same R21 format or use a foundation resource

Problem solutions are not graded, but lack of participation in problem discussion will reduce the points you get for participation.

**Required Textbook**

Aday, L. and Cornelis, L. Designing and conducting health surveys, San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 2006, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

Creswell, J W Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Los Angeles: Sage, 2006

**Other Readings**

Additional course readings and web-references are posted to the course website and listed below.

**Schedule**

Week	Date	Topic and problem	Grant topic	Presenter
1	3/30	Topic: Overview of study design and methods <b>Problem1:</b> How do you formulate a good social science research question? Due 4-6	Aims	DB
2	4/6	Topic: Overview of qualitative methodologies <b>Problem2:</b> Exploring the meaning of SES in clinical care due 4/13	Significance	DB
3	4/13	Topic: How to design a qualitative study <b>Problem3:</b> How to implement a new screening tool for risk of chronic disease in a health care setting due 4-20	Qualitative methods and questions	DB
4	4/20	How to use theory	Theory guide	DB
5	4/27	Topic: Quantitative methodologies <b>Problem4:</b> How to review a grant due 5-4	Quantitative Measures	DB Assig 1 due 4/27/21
6	5/4	Topic: Review of grant <b>Problem5:</b> What tools would I use to measure perceptions of risk? Due 5-11	Grant review	DB, all
7	5/11	Topic: How to design a quantitative study <b>Problem6:</b> What design is right for identification of physician attitudes about stakeholder input? Due 5-18	Study Design	DB
8	5/18	<b>Problem7:</b> How to create a budget conducted in class Mixed methods research Observational research Psychophysiological research <b>Problem8:</b> Grant review 2 due 6-2	Example grant budget	DB
9	5/25	No class		Assig 2 due 5/25/21
10	6/1	Review of Assignment 2	Grant review	DB, all

## **Readings**

### **Week 1**

Aday, Chapters 1-4  
Creswell chapters 1-2

### **Week 2**

Creswell Chapters 4-5  
Lipowski EE. Developing great research questions. *Am J Health Syst Pharm.* 2008;65(17):1667-70.  
Griffiths G. Qualitative research: The research questions it can help answer, the methods it uses, the assumptions behind the research questions and what influences the direction of research. *Family Practice*, 1996; 13(Supp 1): S27-30.  
Starks H, Trinidad SB. Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qual Health Res.* 2007;17(10):1372-80.

### **Week 3**

Creswell 3,6 7 9 10  
OBSSR booklet on qualitative research (on website)  
Hsieh HF, Shannon SE. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qual Health Res* 2005;15(9):1277-88.  
Attride-Stirling J. Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qual Res* 2001;1(3):385-405.  
Hermanowicz JC. The great interview: 25 strategies for studying people in bed. *Qual Soc* 2002;25(4):479-99.  
Freeman T. 'Best practice' in focus group research: Making sense of different views. *J Adv Nurs.* Dec 2006;56(5):491-97.  
Sim J. Collecting and analysing qualitative data: Issues raised by the focus group. *J Adv Nurs.* Aug 1998;28(2):345-52.

### **Week 4**

Theory at a glance document on class website

### **Week 5**

Aday ch 4-7

### **Week 6**

Grant that is assigned to you before class  
Reviewer documents (on class website)

### **Week 7**

Aday chapters 8-11 and 12-16  
Junghans C, Feder G, Hemingway H, Timmis A, Jones M. Recruiting patients to medical research: double blind randomized trial of "opt-in" versus "opt-out" strategies. *BMJ.* 2005 Oct 22;331(7522):940.  
<http://www.consort-statement.org/>  
<http://www.strobe-statement.org/>

### **Week 8**

[http://obssr.od.nih.gov/mixed\\_methods\\_research/index.aspx](http://obssr.od.nih.gov/mixed_methods_research/index.aspx)  
Hartung DM, Touchette D. Overview of clinical research design. *Am J Health Syst Pharm.* 2009 Feb 15;66(4):398-408.

Glasgow RE, Magid DJ, Beck A, Ritzwoller D, Estabrooks PA. Practical clinical trials for translating research to practice: design and measurement recommendations. *Med Care*. 2005;43(6):551-7.

Matthews, KM and Gallo, LC Psychological Perspectives on Pathways Linking Socioeconomic Status and Physical Health *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 2011. 62:501–30

Onwuegbuzie, AJ and Collins, KC A Typology of Mixed Methods Sampling Designs in Social Science Research *The Qualitative Report* Volume 12 Number 2 June 2007 281-316

Lawrence A. Palinkas, et al. Mixed Method Designs in Implementation Research

[Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research](#), 2011, Volume 38, [Issue 1](#), pp 44–53|

### **Week 10**

Grant that is assigned to you before class

Reviewer documents (on class website)