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Fall 2019

### EPID 7134 – Research Methods II

Logan Cowan

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Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health  
EPID 7134 – Research Methods II  
Fall 2019

**Instructor:** Logan Cowan, PhD, MPH  
**Office:** Hendricks Hall, Room 2036  
**Phone:** (912) 478-7921  
**E-Mail Address:** lcowan@georgiasouthern.edu  
**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday - 1:00-2:15 Tuesday and Thursday - 9:30-10:45  
**Class Meets:** Monday/Wednesday 2:30-3:45 – Education Building – IRC 2165

Course Catalog available at:  
<http://em.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar/resources/catalogs/>  
under Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health Programs

**Prerequisites:** EPID 7133

**FOLIO Access:** <https://my.georgiasouthern.edu/portal/portal.php>

**Catalog Description**

This course provides instruction and hands-on experience in the analysis and interpretation of data from epidemiologic studies. Topics to be covered include epidemiology research questions that can be addressed by cross-sectional, case-control and cohort studies; the rationale underlying the major techniques used to analyze data from these studies; the conditions under which these methods are appropriate and their relative advantages and disadvantages. Attention will be given to how interactions, confounders and nonlinear relationships among variables can be addressed along with interpretation of statistical software output from epidemiologic studies employing these designs and analytical methods.

**Required Textbook:**

Applied Statistics and the SAS Programming Language (5th Edition) – Cody & Smith

**Required Resource:**

- Calculator
- Access to a reliable computer
- Access to reliable Internet access

**MPH Core Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context.
2. Analyze and Interpret data for public health research, policy, or practice.
3. Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health.
4. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention.
5. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.

### **CEPH Concentration Competencies**

#### *Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health*

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

#### *Public Health & Health Care Systems*

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels

#### *Planning & Management to Promote Health*

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs

#### *Policy in Public Health*

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

#### *Leadership*

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

#### *Communication*

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

#### *Interprofessional Practice*

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

#### *Systems Thinking*

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

### **Performance-Based Objectives Linked to Course Activities (Note: Assessment Activities Described in Next Section)**

1. Understand the different study designs used in epidemiology. (Activities 1, 2, 3)
2. Formulate research questions/hypotheses (Activity 3)
3. Understand analytical techniques and rationale underlying the major techniques used to analyze data from epidemiologic studies (Activities 1, 2, 3)
4. Understand the conditions under which these methods are appropriate and their relative advantages and disadvantages. (Activities 1, 2, 3)
5. Use analytical techniques to address interactions, confounders and nonlinear relationships. (Activities 1, 2, 3)
6. Write SAS code and interpret statistical software output from epidemiologic studies employing these designs and analytical methods. (Activities 1, 2, 3)

### **Assessment of Student Learning**

Activity 1: Exams. Comprehensive examinations covering multiple topic areas will be utilized to allow the student to demonstrate summative competency in terminology, common epidemiologic measures, and study design. These examinations will utilize a variety of questions, including true/false, multiple choice, matching, short answer, & discussion in a timed, monitored environment.

Activity 2: Module Tasks. Mastery of the material from each learning module will be demonstrated through completion of a module task. Module tasks will consist of problem sets and short writing assignments constructed to allow the student to demonstrate competence in epidemiologic measures through both word problems and direct calculations. Problem sets will also be presented within the framework of various epidemiologic study designs in order to provide the opportunity to integrate concepts across topic areas. Module tasks will require students to perform data analysis using SAS statistical software and demonstrate competence in

epidemiologic measures of association for both observational and randomized study designs

Activity 3: Research Article. Students will present an original hypothesis, gather data, conduct data analysis using techniques taught in the course, and write a scientific article to address their findings.

*Students may vary in their ability to achieve levels of competence in this course. Students can expect to achieve course competence only if they honor all course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work in good faith and on time, and meet all other course expectations of them as students.*

**Overview of the content to be covered the semester:**

EPID 7134: Research Methods II (Fall 2019)			
Dates for Topics		Topic or Activity	Activity Due Dates and Times
Begin	End		
8/19	8/25	Course Orientation	
8/26	9/1	Learning Module 1 –Cross Sectional Studies – Linear Regression	
		Review all posted material and read Chapter 5	9/1, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 1 Task	
9/2	9/8	Learning Module 2 – Cross Sectional Studies – Tabular Analysis	
		Review all posted material and read Chapter 3	9/8, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 2 Task	
9/9	9/22	Learning Module 3 – Cross Sectional Studies – Logistic Regression	
		Review all posted material and read Chapter 9	9/22, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 3 Task	
9/23	9/29	Learning Module 4 – Case-Control Studies – Logistic Regression	
		Review all posted material and read Chapter 7	9/29, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 4 Task	
9/30	10/6	Learning Module 5 – Case-Control Studies – Conditional Logistic	
		Review posted material and read Chapter 9	10/6, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 5 Task	
10/7	10/13	Learning Module 6 – Case-Control Studies – Multinomial	
		Review posted material and read Chapter 9	10/13, 11:59PM

		Complete Module 6 Task	
10/14	10/20	Midterm Review and Exam (Module 1-6)	
10/21	10/27	Learning Module 7 – Cohort Studies – Logistic/RR Regression	
		Review all posted material and read Chapter 9	10/27, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 7 Tasks	
10/28	11/10	Learning Module 8 – Cohort Studies – Poisson Regression	
		Review all posted material	11/10, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 8 Task	
11/11	11/24	Learning Module 9 – Cohort Studies – Cox Regression	
		Review all posted material	11/24, 11:59PM
		Complete Module 9 Task	
		Research Article	
11/26	12/2	Thanksgiving Holidays	
12/2	12/8	Presentations, Final Examination Review	
12/9	12/12	Final Examination (Modules 1-9) – December 9, 2018 – 3:00-5:00	

### **Portfolio Inclusion**

Samples of your work may be reproduced for search purposes and/or inclusion in the professor's teaching portfolio. You have the right to review anything selected for use, and subsequently ask for its removal.

### **Instructional Methods**

This course will be held in-person but will also be using FOLIO to deliver learning material. Tutorials for Folio are located on your Folio main page, and there is a help link located in the upper right-hand corner of the Folio course. If you are having particular issues with FOLIO, please let me know as soon as possible. Class time will be divided into lectures and computer lab time supervised by the instructor.

### **Grading**

Examinations (2): 60% of Final Grade

Exams may be any combination of true/false, multiple choice, matching, short answer, & discussion (Activity 1). The examination will be closed book and closed notes. Each examination will be proctored during the class period on the assigned date. Make-up exams will not be administered unless the absence is deemed excused. The validity of excused absences will be determined by the instructor and will be individually assessed. The professor must be contacted prior to the exam time if the student will not be able to complete the exam during the given time frame. Failure to inform the professor prior to the exam will result in the grade of "0" for the test. In rare instances, should an excused absence be granted, it is the student's

responsibility to contact the professor within 36 hours to arrange to take the exam. Each examination will include the material covered in the outlined section of the course specified in the course schedule. Even though the exam will predominately consist of material learned in that portion of the class, it should be viewed as cumulative since many concepts covered in the following portions build upon a foundation constructed in the beginning of the course. The examination questions will include course content as well as all the text material (including handouts and readings) assigned even if the assigned material was not covered specifically on the course website. All exams are to represent the individual's knowledge and should not be discussed with anyone else (i.e. classmates, former students, non-students, other professors, tutors etc.).

#### Module Tasks: 25% of Final Grade

There will be various tasks (i.e. discussions/writing assignments, article critiques, problem sets, case studies, etc.) to be completed over the course of the semester (Activities 3 - 6). These assignments will be due each non-exam week. Tasks may be discussed in a group setting, but each student is responsible for their individual work. Assignments will be due by 11:59PM on the due date stated in FOLIO **and will not be accepted late.**

#### Research Article: 15% of Final Grade

Each student will write a research article based including an introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections. Students will be expected to perform a literature review, develop a research hypothesis, collect/identify data, and perform analysis to answer the research question. They will also be expected to write an article summarizing the research findings. Students will present their research to the class in a poster session format. This will allow students to integrate numerous epidemiologic concepts in the context of epidemiologic research.

Weighting of assignments for purposes of grading will be as follows:

Item	Weight
Midterm Examination	30%
Final Examination	30%
Module Tasks	25%
Research Article	15%

The following scale will be utilized in grading:

89.5% - 100%	A
79.5% - 89.4%	B
69.5% - 79.4%	C
59.5% - 69.4%	D
< 59.4%	F

#### **General Expectations**

1. For every one-credit hour, you should expect to work roughly two hours outside the classroom each week. For example, for a three credit hour course, during a regular fifteen week semester, you should expect approximately ninety hours of work outside of class.
2. Students are expected to keep up with the class, to read the required material, and to submit assignments and activities by due dates and times.
3. Students are expected to independently complete all activities, exercises, assignments, and assessments including exams.
4. Students are expected to produce quality work. Typos and grammar errors should be kept to a minimum. The format and readability of submissions will be taken into consideration when assigning a grade.
5. Remember to check when assignments are due. It is recommended that you stay ahead of schedule on the assignments, so if an emergency happens, your assignment will be completed and ready to submit within the designated time frame. It is your responsibility to keep track of the due dates for each assignment.

### **Response Times**

During a normal work week (i.e., Monday 9:00 AM through Friday 5:00 PM) students can expect responses as follows:

- Email: within 48 hours
- Discussion posts: within 72 hours
- Assignment grades: within 72 hours of submission date.

Exceptions: I may not check FOLIO or GSU email over the weekends. If you send me an email after 5:00 PM on Friday, please do not expect a response until the following Monday.

All assignments will be graded promptly so that students may accurately calculate their grades at any point in time during the semester. There are times when extraordinary circumstances occur (e.g., serious illness, death in the family, etc.). In such circumstances, and/or if you need additional time to satisfactorily complete any course requirement, please consult with the instructor within a reasonable amount of time. Extensions are not guaranteed and will be granted solely at the discretion of the instructor.

### **Course Expectations**

Students must pass with a minimum score of 70%. Course grades are awarded based upon the conventional method outlined above. Failure to achieve a final grade of 70% will result in a failure of the course. Students are responsible for the learning outcomes, competencies and objectives presented above. In addition to these measures, students are also responsible for the specific learning objectives which are set forth at the beginning of each module. Students are expected to listen to all course materials and complete all examinations. To facilitate learning and comprehension of the material presented, students are expected to read the assigned material and



text chapters. Students are expected to participate in course activities, such as discussion, and to complete any assignments as defined by the professor.

While learning epidemiology will involve a considerable amount of mathematical calculations, epidemiology is not just numbers. Understanding what the numbers you calculate mean and how they are interpreted is critical to your success in this course and as a public health professional. How I present numbers with labels and interpretation in the lectures is how I expect for you to do the same in your assignments.

### **Texting and Use of Cell Phones (and Other Technologies)**

Please do not text in class or use your cell phone during class! Texting during class (or in a meeting) is disruptive and rude...at least to me. My preference is that you put cell phones away during class meetings so they are not a source of temptation. Offenders will be asked to leave.

### **Class Attendance and Participation Policy**

Federal regulations require attendance be verified prior to distribution of financial aid allotments. Regular attendance is expected. Your attendance will be verified at the first regular class session.

It is the policy of the University to permit students, faculty, and staff to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. The faculty should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who choose to observe these holidays are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors.

Students participating in authorized activities as an official representative of the University (i.e., athletic events, delegate to regional or national meetings or conferences, participation in university-sponsored performances, and **JPHCOPH funded**) will not receive academic penalties and, in consultation with the instructor of record, will be given reasonable opportunities to complete assignments and exams or given compensatory assignment(s) if needed. The student must provide written confirmation from a faculty or staff advisor to the course instructor(s) at least 10 days prior to the date for which the student will be absent from the class. The student is responsible for all material presented in class and for all announcements and assignments. When possible, students are expected to complete these assignments before their absences. In the event of a disagreement regarding this policy, an appeal may be made by either the student or the instructor of record to the corresponding college dean. (*University Graduate Catalog*)

### **Academic Misconduct**

As a student registered at this University, it is expected that you will adhere to only the strictest standards of conduct. It is recommended that you review the latest edition of the *Student Conduct Code* book, as well as the latest *Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog* to familiarize yourself with the University's policies in this regard. Your continued enrollment in this course is

an implied contract between you and the instructor on this issue; from this point forward, it is assumed that you will conduct yourself appropriately.

### **Plagiarism**

According to the Academic Dishonesty Policy of Georgia Southern University, Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- A. Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them.
- B. Using published or unpublished sources of information without identifying them.
- C. Paraphrasing material or ideas without identifying the source.
- D. Unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic material.

If you are accused of plagiarism by a JPHCOPH, the following policy, as per the Judicial Affairs website: (<http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/judicial/faculty.htm>) will be enforced:

#### **PROCEDURES FOR ADJUDICATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY CASES**

##### **First Offense - In Violation Plea**

1. If the professor and the Dean of Students agree that the evidence is sufficient to warrant a charge of academic dishonesty, the professor should contact the Office of Judicial Affairs to determine if this is a first violation of academic dishonesty. The incident will be reported via the following website: <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/judicial/faculty.htm>
2. If it is a first violation, the professor should talk with the student about the violation. **If the student accepts responsibility in writing and the professor decides to adjudicate the case, the following procedures will be followed:**
  - a. The student will be placed on disciplinary probation for a minimum of one semester by the Office of Judicial Affairs.
  - b. The student will be subject to any academic sanctions imposed by the professor (from receiving a 0 on the assignment to receiving a failing grade in the class).
  - c. A copy of all the material involved in the case (Academic Dishonesty Report Form and the Request for Instructor to Adjudicate Form) and a brief statement from the professor concerning the facts of the case and the course syllabus should be mailed to the Office of Judicial Affairs for inclusion in the student's discipline record.

##### **First Offense - Not In Violation Plea (student does not admit the violation)**

If the professor and the Dean of Students agree that the evidence is sufficient to warrant a charge of academic dishonesty, the professor should contact the Office of Judicial Affairs to determine if this is the first or second violation of academic dishonesty. The student will be charged with academic dishonesty and the University Judicial Board or a University Hearing Officer would hear the case. If the student is found responsible, the following penalty will normally be imposed:

- a. The student will be placed on Disciplinary Probation for a minimum of one semester by the Office of Judicial Affairs.
- b. The student will be subject to any academic sanctions imposed by the professor.

## **Second Violation of Academic Dishonesty**

If the professor and the Dean of Students agree that the evidence is sufficient to warrant a charge of academic dishonesty, and if it is determined this is the second violation, the student will be charged with academic dishonesty and the University Judicial Board or a University Hearing Officer would hear the case.

**If the student is found responsible, the following penalty will normally be imposed:**

- a. Suspension for a minimum of one semester or expulsion.
- b. The student will be subject to any academic sanctions imposed by the professor.

## **NOT RESPONSIBLE FINDING**

When a student is found not responsible of academic dishonesty, the work in question (assignment, paper, test, etc.) would be forwarded to the Department Chair. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the work is evaluated by a faculty member other than the individual who brought the charge and, if necessary, submit a final grade to the Registrar. For the protection of the faculty member and the student, the work in question should not be referred back to the faculty member who charged the student with academic dishonesty.

In the case of a Department Chair bringing charges against a student, an administrator at the Dean's level will ensure that the student's work is evaluated in an appropriate manner.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In accordance with provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and the Georgia Open Records Act, any information related to a violation of academic dishonesty or the outcome of a judicial hearing regarding academic dishonesty, is prohibited and must be treated as confidential by members of the faculty."

## **Disability-related Accommodations**

Georgia Southern University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities as required under federal law. Disabilities may include ADD or AD/HD, autism spectrum disorder, brain injury, chronic medical conditions, communication disorders, hearing loss, learning disabilities, mobility impairment, psychological disorders, visual impairment or temporary injuries. The purpose of disability accommodation is to provide equal access to the academic material and equal access to demonstrate mastery of the material. If you have a disability and need accommodations, please contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC). You will need to meet with a SARC staff member who can help you gather documentation of your disability or refer you to an appropriate resource for assessment. Once documentation of the disability is approved, SARC staff will provide you with an accommodation letter detailing the approved accommodations which you should present to me so we can discuss and implement your accommodations. Disability accommodations work best starting at the beginning of the semester, but can be approved and started at any point in the semester. Accommodations start at the time the accommodation letter is presented to faculty within reasonable timelines; accommodations are not given retroactively. SARC on the Statesboro campus is located on the second floor of Cone Hall and the phone number is (912) 478-1566. SARC for Savannah and Liberty campuses is located on the second floor of Memorial College Center and the phone number is (912) 344-2572.

## **University Calendar for the Semester**

The University Calendar is located with the semester schedule, and can be found at:  
<http://em.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar/resources/calendars/>

### **One Final Note**

The contents of this syllabus are as complete and accurate as possible. The instructor reserves the right to make any changes necessary to the syllabus and course material to ensure better student learning. The instructor will announce any such changes in class. It is the responsibility of the student to know what changes have been made in order to successfully complete the requirements of the course.

This syllabus, my lecture notes, and all materials distributed and presented during this course are protected by copyright law. You are authorized to take notes in this class but that authorization extends to only making one set of notes for your personal use and no other use. You are not authorized to sell, license, commercially publish, distribute, transmit, display, or record notes from this class unless you have my written consent to do so.

## STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The Student Conduct Code is the official University publication governing student conduct and behavior. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with the rules and regulations governing student life. Student conduct procedures, appeal procedures, and disciplinary sanctions are found in the Student Conduct Code at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct>. I acknowledge that I have read and understand this statement referencing the Student Conduct Code.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The University goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces educated, literate people. Because cheating and plagiarism are at odds with that goal, they shall not be tolerated in any form. Students are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations as set forth in the Student Conduct Code. Therefore, all work submitted by a student must represent that student's own ideas and effort; when the work does not, the student has engaged in academic dishonesty. Plagiarism occurs when a person passes in another person's work as his or her own, borrows directly from another person's work without proper documentation, and resubmits his or her own work that has been previously submitted without explicit approval from the instructor. For example, academic dishonesty occurs whenever a student participates in any of the following: Cheating submitting material that is not yours as part of your course performance; using information or devices that are not allowed by the faculty; obtaining and/or using unauthorized materials; fabricating information, research, and/or results; violating procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of an assignment, test, or other evaluation; collaborating with others on assignments without the faculty's consent; cooperating with and/or helping another student to cheat; demonstrating any other forms of dishonest behavior. Plagiarism directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them; using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them; paraphrasing materials or ideas without identifying the source; self-plagiarism - resubmitting work previously submitted without explicit approval from the instructor; unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic material. NOTICE: The list above is intended only to provide general guidelines for recognizing and avoiding common types of academic dishonesty. It is in no way an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all the types of academic dishonesty. For more information about academic honesty, see the Student Conduct Code at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct>. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Academic Dishonesty Policy.

I have read the syllabus and understand the contents and course requirements.

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Student Name (print)

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Student Signature

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Date