

**Department of Health Promotion & Behavior
College of Public Health
University of Georgia**

**HPRB 9630 Critique of the Literature
Fall Semester 2007**

Course Information

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Course Meeting Time and Location

Arranged

Textbooks and Other Required Course Material

All readings are available on the course Web-CT site.

Course Description

Critical interpretation of research and theoretical writing.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

- I. Conduct an extensive search of the literature on a topic (or topics) related to health promotion and behavior.
- II. Critically review and evaluate the identified literature.
- III. Evaluate methodologies and research designs.
- IV. Integrate, synthesize and report on the key elements of the literature.
- V. Discuss with the instructor and class what is known and not known about the topic and implications for health promotion and behavior.

Identify gaps and develop researchable questions based on the review.

Course Requirements for Grading Purposes

1. Weekly assignments / summary of literature reviewed (50%)
2. Literature review paper (50%)

Weekly assignment - Each week the student will review six articles related to their topic and summarize and report those articles to the class. At least five of the six reviewed studies must be a data-based study. The articles will be summarized in a table that the student will build during the quarter. The table must include the following components:

1. study - authors & date
2. purpose of evaluation or research
3. sample size
4. sample description
5. comparison group description
6. evaluation/study period
7. impact/outcome measures (study variables)
8. research design
9. summary of findings
10. methodological issues

The weekly report will consist of a copy of the table that lists the reviewed articles for that week. In addition, the student must be prepared to discuss the articles in class as they relate to the following questions:

1. What were the research question(s) addressed by the studies?
2. What was proven by the studies?
3. What would you do to improve the studies?
4. What does this add to our body of knowledge?
5. How does this relate to your research question?

Literature review paper - This paper, due at the end of the semester, will be the culmination of the literature review which will enable the student to summarize and critique the body of literature related to their research question. This paper could also contribute to the development of the prospectus and proposal for dissertation. The purpose of the review is to provide a state of the science discussion of the issue/problem, what we know about it at this point in time, and/or how we may intervene to prevent or reduce the effects of the issue/problem. General categories and/or studies that could be included are as follows:

- Studies that provide the theoretical underpinnings for the behavior of interest
- Studies that examine the relationship between predisposing, enabling, and reinforcing factors and the behavior of interest.
- Studies that examine variables of interest with the specific target group.
- Studies that examine measures for the variables of interest.
- Studies that examine variables of interest for the group within specific contexts or settings.
- Process studies that look at issues related to program development and/or implementation.
- Impact and/or outcome studies that evaluate the effectiveness of selected programs on the behavior and/or with the target group.

The final paper should include the following sections:

- An introduction which provides a brief foundation for the issue/problem to be studied.
- A detailed review and state of the science discussion of the issue/problem.
- A summary and/or conclusions about the literature and what we know for sure at this point in time.

The final paper must be typewritten, double-spaced using standard 1" margins with a title page and complete references. References should follow American Psychological Association Publication Manual 5th edition style. The length of the paper may vary with the issue/problem. Not every study reviewed each week must be included in the final paper. The student should strive to provide a comprehensive discussion of our current body of knowledge and all of the literature that may entail. The tables developed for the weekly assignments may be used in the paper but are not required to be used. Any tables or diagrams referenced in the paper should be attached at the end of the paper after the references in appropriately labeled appendices.

Topical Outline

1. Literature Critique Process
 - a. Identification of literature
 - b. Critique of literature
2. Related Search Issues
 - a. Sub-group analyses
 - b. Publication bias
 - c. Type III error
 - d. Translation / dissemination
3. Writing a Critique
 - a. General considerations
 - b. Specifics of writing
 - c. Review examples
 - d. Community guide search methods
4. Related Critique Issues
 - a. Methods for analyzing data
 - b. Meta-analyses
 - c. Observational vs randomized studies
 - d. Evidenced-based research / practice

Grading Policy

The course will be graded on a percentage basis according to total points earned in the course. Late assignments will be accepted reduced one letter grade for every day late. Grades will be given according to the following scale: 90 - 100% =A, 80 - 89% = B, 70 - 79% = C.

Attendance Policy

Be there or be chair.

University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.

General Disclaimers

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.