Teaching Experience Independent Study (PHP 2980) – Fall 2021

Course Information
Title: PHP 2300 – Research Methods in Behavioral Science

Instructor of record: Don Operario, PhD, MS

Meeting time and place: Thursdays 4 – 6:30pm; location TBD

TA office hours: N/A

Course overview: This graduate-level seminar is designed for students interested in developing foundation competencies in behavioral science research methods to (i) design or critique observational studies addressing public health issues and (ii) design or critique research on behavioral/social interventions to address public health problems. We will review a range of methodologies, including randomized controlled trials, non-randomized evaluations, observational studies, and mixed-method approaches to research. We will develop enhanced capacity to understand and critically evaluate scientific studies and draw appropriate inferences, in order to be critical consumers of research and engaged participants in scientific discourse. We will develop skills in study design and scientific writing. Throughout the course, we will also emphasize ethical and cultural issues that underpin public health research. Participation in this course will involve discussion of graduate-level readings (a textbook and primary research articles; 4-6 articles/chapters per week), 3 homework assignments, and 2 research papers. There will be few lectures in addition to in-class discussion and interaction. The overarching aim of the assigned readings, exams, papers, and seminar discussions is to empower students to think rigorously, systematically, and judiciously with regard to evaluating, interpreting, or conduct behavioral/social research for public health problems.

Description of Teaching Experience
TE planning/supervision meetings time and place: Biweekly meetings over the summer and fall of 2021 to refine course syllabus and prepare for the Teaching Experience in the fall. An end-of-semester supervision meeting will also take place in December 2021 (see “Methods of evaluation” below).
**Overall goal:** To gain knowledge and practical experience related to course design and acquire experience and skills in classroom teaching for higher education.

**Professional development objectives:**

- Bolster reflective course design skills through assisting course instructor with refining the course syllabus, developing a reading list, and designing course assignments
- Strengthen classroom teaching skills through preparation and teaching of lecture on topics related to research methods in behavioral sciences
- Promote mentoring relationships with both the course instructor and course students throughout regular supervision meetings, course participation, and assignment feedback

**Planned Sheridan Center workshops/events attended:** I have attended the following Sheridan Center courses and seminars, which have provided me with foundational knowledge that will be applied in the present Teaching Experience: Certificate I (Fall 2019), Course Design Seminar (Spring 2020), and Teaching Consultant program (Fall 2020). I will also serve as Experienced Teaching Consultant with the Sheridan Center concurrently to this course (Fall 2021), which will help me reflect on teaching principles and techniques throughout the semester.

**Planned readings related to teaching:**

- [https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/effective-teaching-anti-racist-teaching](https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/effective-teaching-anti-racist-teaching)
Allocation of time:

Summer 2021 (June-August):

- ~4 hours/week are being devoted to attending weekly/bi-weekly meetings with the course instructor and refinement of course syllabus (i.e., restructuring course plan, assignments, and readings). **Total: 48 hours.**

Fall 2021 (September-December):

- Attend classes (2h30/week). **Total: 30 hours**
- Preparation for weekly classes: readings, revising lesson plan and presentations (3h/week). **Total: 36 hours.**
- Preparation for lecture on Observational Study Designs (4 hours/semester). **Total: 5 hours.**
- Biweekly meetings with course instructor to discuss course progress (1 hour/week). **Total: 6 hours.**
- Weekly office hours open to course students (1 hour/week). **Total: 12 hours.**
- Sheridan Center Experienced Teaching Consultant program (attending 4 Teaching Consultant sessions + facilitating 4 Certificate I seminars + facilitating 4 peer micro-teaching sessions + preparation time). **Total 30 hours.**
- Grading and providing feedback on students’ assignments (~2h/week). **Total: 24 hours.**
- End-of-semester feedback and reflection session with instructor (2 hours).

Methods of evaluation: Formative evaluation will consist of biweekly supervision meetings with course instructor, during which instructor and student will reflect on course progress and student’s contributions to the course. A longer end-of-semester meeting between instructor and student will take place after completion of all planned TE activities. During this meeting, the instructor will provide the student with overarching feedback on the student’s participation in the course and will assign a final grade for the TE.