Undergraduate Research in Psychology of Health Disparities  
(PCO 4911)  
Course Syllabus

Course Instructor:

Carolyn M. Tucker, Ph.D.
Florida Blue Endowed Chair in Health Disparities Research
Distinguished Alumni Professor
Richard and Thelma O. C. Barney Term Professor of Health Disparities
College of Medicine
Director, UF Health Disparities Research and Intervention Program
College of Medicine
UF Research Foundation Professor
Professor, Department of Psychology
Professor, Department of Community Health and Family Medicine
Affiliate Professor, Department of Pediatrics

Office: 253 Psychology Building
Office Phone: 352-273-2158
Office Hours: By appointment
E-mail: cmtucker@ufl.edu

Note: If you are unable to reach Dr. Tucker during business hours, please contact her Research Coordinator (Austin Folger) in room 293 of the Psychology Building at 352-273-2167 or at tuckerresearchcoordinator@ufl.edu.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are to:

1. promote your understanding of community-partnered and community-based participatory research focused on reducing and eliminating health disparities;

2. increase your awareness of the health problems that affect diverse low-income racial/ethnic groups in the United States and the potential for research-based interventions to address these problems;

3. promote your understanding of the concept of cultural sensitivity, the difference between cultural sensitivity and cultural competence, and the impact of both of these concepts on the health care experience of diverse racial/ethnic groups;

4. provide you with experience in conducting community-partnered, community-based participatory, clinical and social and behavioral science research, including planning and implementing health promotion and health care interventions, collecting and analyzing data to empirically evaluate the impact of these interventions, and presenting and publishing research findings;
5. provide you with research mentoring by and/or research collaborations with graduate students, post-doctoral team leaders, and Dr. Tucker; and

6. provide you with the opportunity to make professional research presentations and to co-write research articles with graduate students, post-doctoral team leaders, and Dr. Tucker.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Online Training
Before engaging in any research activities (and no later than one week after joining one of Dr. Tucker’s research teams), all RAs are expected to complete the online training required by the UF Institutional Review Board for all individuals conducting research with human subjects at UF. Certificates verifying that these trainings have been completed should be submitted to the lab manager to be filed. Instructions for completing this training are given later in this handbook.

Weekly Meetings
All undergraduate research assistants (RAs) are required to attend one weekly full-team meeting and one weekly sub-team meeting. If you cannot attend one of these meetings, you are required to email your reason for not attending to your director and the team lab manager at least 24 hours prior to the meeting you miss. You will need to make up an extra hour in the lab for missing the weekly meeting and review over meeting minutes with another research assistant. Attendance is considered in calculating your final grade in this course. More than two unexcused absences will result in an unsatisfactory (U) grade for the course.

Office Hours & RA Sign-In
At the beginning of each semester, each RA is required to submit her or his lab hour schedule to the team lab manager. During lab hours, RAs are expected to complete the required readings and to carry out tasks assigned by their director. All RAs are expected to complete required lab hours on a weekly basis, which does not include the big team meeting. Additionally, it is expected that RAs will often have to exceed their weekly lab hours to meet research team goals. RAs are responsible for recording their lab hours and are required to log in their hours promptly to report what they worked on during lab hours each week.

Required Readings
RAs have required readings that will be discussed at weekly Reading Discussions. A list of required readings is provided below. The lab manager will email the required reading for the week as a reminder, and a schedule of reading discussion topics will also be distributed.

Social Justice Panels
Social Justice Panels are opportunities each semester for several RA’s to research an aspect of social justice (economic inequality, gender inequality, etc.) and present information to stimulate debate and thought about these topics.
Participation
All RAs are expected to be active participants in weekly full-team meetings and sub-team meetings. In addition, RAs are expected to volunteer for extra tasks such as taking minutes during meetings and completing miscellaneous or unplanned research-related tasks necessary for the team’s effective functioning.

EXCUSABLE ABSENCES

Illness: If an RA is unable to attend lab hours or weekly meetings (full-team or sub-team) due to an illness, it is the RA’s responsibility to inform her/his supervisor prior to the meeting or lab hours, if at all possible.

Prearranged Appointments: If a prearranged appointment prevents lab hour or meeting attendance, it is the RA’s responsibility to inform her/his supervisor prior to the meeting or lab hours that will be missed.

Religious Observances: If a religious holiday or observance prevents lab hour or meeting attendance, it is the RA’s responsibility to inform her/his supervisor prior to the meeting or lab hours that will be missed.

Personal Emergency: If a personal emergency prevents lab hour or meeting attendance, it is the RA’s responsibility to inform her/his supervisor as soon as possible about the absence.

Meeting/Lab Hours Attendance Policy
All RAs are expected to attend all lab meetings, including subteam and big team meetings. If an RA misses has two absences (2 absences from subteam or 2 absences from big team), excused or unexcused, he or she will receive a warning from Dr. Tucker and need to have a meeting with Dr. Tucker. The first meeting with Dr. Tucker is a discussion of the situation and how to move forward from the two absences. Future absences may lead to probation and potential dismissal.

If an RA fails to attend two full-team meetings within a semester, a written warning is given by her/his supervisor explaining the consequences of further nonattendance.

If an RA fails to attend a sub-team meeting, a verbal warning is given by her/his supervisor explaining the consequences of further nonattendance. If an RA fails to report to any subsequent sub-team meetings after receiving a verbal warning, a written warning is given by her/his supervisor.

If an RA fails to report to scheduled lab hours, her/his supervisor will make a reasonable effort to directly contact the RA to obtain an explanation for the absence and to warn the RA of the consequences of continued absences.
After the 3rd absence from a meeting or failure to report to scheduled lab hours in a semester, the supervisor and the RA work jointly to develop a plan to resolve the RA’s nonattendance. The plan must include documentation of the reasons for the RA’s nonattendance. Further, it is the RA’s responsibility to schedule a meeting with Dr. Tucker in a timely manner, to determine if further action is necessary.

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**Grading**
RAs are graded based upon how well they meet course requirements and their level of performance on the team. A **Satisfactory** or **Unsatisfactory** grade is assigned for this course by Dr. Tucker in consultation with the directors. An **Incomplete** grade will be given to any student who has not fulfilled all course requirements.

**Evaluation Forms**
Undergraduate Researcher Performance Evaluation Forms are completed by the directors and given to each RA at the end of each semester. RAs will also evaluate their directors.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 01/16 H & 01/17 B | • Syllabus and RA Handbook Review (Lab Managers)  
  • Semester Preview (Dr. Tucker)  
  • Open Discussion (Students have 5 minutes to write anonymous questions and drop them in a box; everyone present helps answer the questions)  
    • Homework for Next Meeting:  
      • Review course syllabus and RA Handbook |
| 01/23 H & 01/24 B | • **Presentation:** Qualitative Research Methods  
  (Could include basic training on coding qualitative data.)  
  • HP Presenter: Jaime Williams  
  • B-Med Presenter: Shuchang Kang  
  • Homework for Next Meeting:  
    Review Health-Smart at the Health Department protocol and ICF |
| 01/30 H & 01/31 B | • **Jeopardy Game:** Health-Smart at the Health Department  
  • HP Game Show Hosts (RAs): _____________, _____________  
  • B-Med Game Show Hosts (RAs): _____________, _____________ |
(Game show hosts determine questions and lead the game; Dr. Tucker and graduate students decide if the answers given are correct.)

- Homework for Next Meeting:
- Read an article on childhood obesity that will be assigned by the leaders of the debate on this topic.

**02/06**
**H** & **02/07**
**B**

- **Debate:** *Who is More Responsible for Childhood Obesity—Parents/Caregivers or Businesses and the Media?*
  - HP Grad Student Consultant: ______________
  - HP Debaters (RAs): __________, __________, __________, __________
  - B-Med Grad Student Consultant: ______________
  - B-Med Debaters (RAs): __________, __________, __________, __________

- Homework for Next Meeting:
- Read an article on eating disorders assigned by the presenters of the workshop on this topic.

**02/13**
**H** & **02/14**
**B**

- **Workshop:** *Eating Disorders Reframed*
  (Based on intersectional feminist theory, this workshop contextualizes eating disorders within the oppressive society in which they take place. Discussion focuses on disparities between majority and minority groups and strategies for placing blame for eating disorders where it belongs.)
  - HP Grad Student Consultant: ______________
  - HP Workshop Leaders (RAs): ______________, ______________
  - B-Med Grad Student Consultant: ______________
  - B-Med Workshop Leaders (RAs): ______________, ______________

- Homework for Next Meeting:
  - Review Health-Smart Church Center protocol and ICF

**02/20**
**H** & **02/21**
**B**

- **Jeopardy Game:** *Health-Smart Church Center Program*
  (Game show hosts determine questions and lead the game; Dr. Tucker and graduate students decide if the answers given are correct.)
  - HP Game Show Hosts (RAs): ______________, ______________
  - B-Med Game Show Hosts (RAs): ______________, ______________

- Homework for Next Meeting
  - Review Health-Smart PK Yonge protocol
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02/27 H &amp; 02/28 B</td>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong> <em>What’s happening at Health-Smart P. K. Yonge?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Presenter: <em>Victoria McNeil</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- B-Med Presenter: <em>Maggie Hogan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Read an article on perceived discrimination and health assigned by the presenters of the workshop on perceived discrimination and obesity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/06 H &amp; 03/07 B</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong> – No Big Team Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/13 H &amp; 03/14 B</td>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong> <em>Overview of the Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight (HSHW) Program and Program Challenges</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Presenter: <em>Dr. Tucker</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- B-Med Presenter: <em>Dr. Tucker</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Read an assigned article on the health-related quality of life measure used in the assessment battery for the HSHW Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/20 H &amp; 03/21 B</td>
<td><strong>Workshop:</strong> <em>The Effects of Perceived Discrimination on Obesity</em> (Focuses on recent studies that have discovered health consequences of chronic stress resulting from discrimination.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Grad Student Consultant: __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Workshop Leaders (RAs): __________________________, __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- B-Med Grad Student Consultant: __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- B-Med Workshop Leaders (RAs): <em>Chris Wilde</em>, __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Review Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight protocol and ICF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/27 H &amp; 03/28 B</td>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong> <em>Evaluation of the Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight Program</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Presenter: <em>Dr. Butler</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- B-Med Presenter: <em>Dr. Butler</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Read the summary of the Health-Smart Church Center Program and the Operational Plan Guide for this program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/03 H &amp; 03/29 B</td>
<td><strong>Panel Discussion:</strong> <em>HSCCP Consultation Challenges and Lessons Learned</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HP Consultant (Postdoc or Mrs. Rentz): __________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Presentation:  What’s happening at Health-Smart P. K. Yonge?*  
- HP Presenter: *Victoria McNeil*  
- B-Med Presenter: *Maggie Hogan*  
- Homework for Next Meeting:  
- Read an article on perceived discrimination and health assigned by the presenters of the workshop on perceived discrimination and obesity.  

*SPRING BREAK – No Big Team Meetings*  

*Presentation:  Overview of the Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight (HSHW) Program and Program Challenges*  
- HP Presenter: *Dr. Tucker*  
- B-Med Presenter: *Dr. Tucker*  
- Homework for Next Meeting:  
- Read an assigned article on the health-related quality of life measure used in the assessment battery for the HSHW Program  

*Workshop:  The Effects of Perceived Discrimination on Obesity* (Focuses on recent studies that have discovered health consequences of chronic stress resulting from discrimination.)  
- HP Grad Student Consultant: __________________________  
- HP Workshop Leaders (RAs): __________________________, __________________________  
- B-Med Grad Student Consultant: __________________________  
- B-Med Workshop Leaders (RAs): *Chris Wilde*, __________________________  
- Homework for Next Meeting:  
- Review Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight protocol and ICF  

*Presentation:  Evaluation of the Health-Smart for a Healthy Weight Program*  
- HP Presenter: *Dr. Butler*  
- B-Med Presenter: *Dr. Butler*  
- Homework for Next Meeting:  
- Read the summary of the Health-Smart Church Center Program and the Operational Plan Guide for this program.  

*Panel Discussion:  HSCCP Consultation Challenges and Lessons Learned*  
- HP Consultant (Postdoc or Mrs. Rentz): __________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04/04 B</td>
<td>• HP Panelists (8 RAs): ____________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• B-Med Consultant (Postdoc or Mrs. Rentz): ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• B-Med Panelists (8 RAs): ________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read Dr. Norton’s biosketch and identify questions to ask Dr. Norton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/10 H or</td>
<td><strong>Overview of Our Research for UF Guest: Dr. Norton</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/11 B</td>
<td>• Homework for Next Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prepare questions for the activity next week titled “Everything You Always Wanted to Know…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/17 H &amp;</td>
<td><strong>Discussion: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Sexual Minorities, and Dr. Tucker but Never Had a Chance to Ask</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/18 B</td>
<td>• Senior RA Farewells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Team-Member Awards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Research Assistant Evaluation Form

**RA NAME:** _____________________________  **EVALUATOR:** ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Above Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>No Basis for Judgment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Quality of work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Time management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Flexibility/Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Shows good Judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Cultural Sensitivity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Response to feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please rate your RA’s performance by checking one of the boxes for each listed item.

Explain any item(s) you rated as “Needs Improvement” or “Not Satisfactory.”

What do you consider to be the RA’s professional and/or personal strengths?

Are there any areas you believe the RA could work to improve upon?

List all projects and major tasks the RA worked on this semester, and rate their contribution to each (using the performance scale listed on the first page).

Use this space for any additional comments:
SUPERVISION

Dr. Tucker supervises all members of her research teams. Additionally, each RA is mentored by an undergraduate director or peer mentor, who helps train the RA in research lab procedures and providers her/him with team adjustment support. Undergraduate directors (i.e., associate directors of research) help lead the research projects and are supervised by graduate student directors. The graduate student directors supervise all RAs. If a supervisor believes that an RA is not engaging in the behaviors expected of an RA, the supervisor will take the following steps:

- Inform the RA about performance expectations to ensure that the RA understands the course and team requirements
- Discuss the RA’s performance with the RA and suggest steps for improvement
- Refer the RA to Dr. Tucker if the RA’s behavior does not improve
- Dr. Tucker and the RA agree on 3-week performance goals that must be met to stay on the research team
- If these goals are not met, Dr. Tucker holds a discontinuation on the team meeting with the RA

Shared roles and responsibilities of supervisors and RAs are to:

- Give and be unselfish (give-and-take; balance of responsibility)
- Engage in professional behavior
- Respect each other and be willing to negotiate
- Complete projects on time
- Share a passion for the project
- Teach and learn
- Develop a relationship for mentorship and partnership
- Maintain focus
- Collaborate

All RAs should:

- have regular contact with their supervisor
- always try to learn from their supervisor, but should not hesitate to demonstrate their ability to teach their supervisor
- be open and honest with their supervisor and should not be afraid to ask questions if they are struggling
- attempt to resolve conflicts with their supervisor, but if a mutually acceptable resolution cannot be reached, RAs should consult with another director or Dr. Tucker
DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS

UF’s Policy for Students with Disabilities
Students requesting course accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.
## Supervisor Evaluation Form

**SUPERVISOR NAME:** __________________________  **EVALUATOR:** __________________________

**SUB-TEAM:** __________________________  **DATE:** __________________________

Please rate your supervisor’s performance by checking one of the boxes for each item listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Above Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>No Basis for Judgment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treats you with respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages and supports you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises you for tasks you do well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledges your strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly states her/his expectations regarding tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives direct feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives constructive feedback in a sensitive and compassionate manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively solicits your feedback regarding team-related issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens carefully to your comments and suggestions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes an effort to get to know you personally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is available to meet with you if you request</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays a professional manner when performing team duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a positive attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Leadership skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds well to feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives specific and helpful suggestions regarding ways you can improve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explain any item(s) you rated as “Needs Improvement.”

What do you think are your supervisor’s specific professional and/or personal strengths?

Are there any areas you believe your supervisor could work to improve upon?

Are there any ways in which your supervisor could enhance or improve the quality of your experience on the team?

Use this space for any additional comments:

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
REQUIRED READINGS


Tucker, C. M., Lopez, M., Campbell, K., Marisiske, M., Daly, K., Nghiem, K., Rahim-Williams, B., Jones, J., Hariton, E., & Patel, A. (in press). The Effects of a Culturally Sensitive, Empowerment-Focused, Community-Based Health Promotion Program on Health Outcomes of Adults with Type 2 Diabetes. *Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved*.


