

Research Methods Syllabus

10:775:395

Sections

90/91

Sp25

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Weekly Course Flow



Monday: Lecture Opens

Start Here!

New content is available and offered in many formats: power point slides, videos, audio messages, and practice exercises

Wednesday: Lab Opens

Mid-week Check-in

Major and minor lab assessments are available and help you plan the work ahead

Friday: Reminders

Don't Forget

End-of-week reminders about class updates and what's due

End of Week: Assessments

Assessments Due

Assessments are typically due on Wednesday, Friday & Sunday evening by 11:59 PM

Course Learning Goals

Scientific Inquiry

An understanding of the logic of scientific inquiry and study: **Why do seagulls flee when chased by a human as compared to the wind?**



Quantitative Analysis

An ability to define and measure concepts, develop a hypothesis, measure the relationship between concepts, and conduct the appropriate statistical tests as part of a complimentary research design: **What can we see more clearly when looking through a lens?**



Quant vs Qual

An awareness of the differences in quantitative vs. qualitative methods, including differences in the data, data collection and sampling, and differences in analysis: **How many grains of sand are on a beach versus what does the sand feel like?**



Needed Tools

Chambliss & Schutt. 2015. *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation*, 5th or 6th edition.

SPSS available for purchase or free at [virtual Rutgers portal](#)



Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce you to the basic applications of research methods for public health, planning, and public policy students. Our goal is for you to evaluate research designs, sampling strategies, and interpret data to make informed decisions. You will learn how to develop research questions, think critically, probe for answers, and evaluate the findings.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be introduced. A statistical computer package, SPSS, will be used to conduct the data analysis. Qualtrics linked Canvas exercises, datasets, Google folders and shared docs, as well as Excel will be utilized.

No previous research experience is required, but statistics is a prerequisite.

This course is delivered in an asynchronous online modality for Spring 2025. Weekly deadlines are established.

Assignments include both individual and group assignments.

“Authentic assessments” provide the foundation for our course assignments. The course grading includes both a performance-based and an effort-based grading structure, including “ungrading.”

What *exactly* is an authentic assessment?



“Real World” Assessments

- Assessments are designed to replicate tasks you would be assigned in the “real economy”

Aligns to Course Goals

- Learning objectives are clearly defined
- Instruction is offered in multi-formats to help achieve the weekly and semester goals

Incorporates Flexibility and Choice

- Assessments use grading that rely both on performance *and* work effort
- Students earn 35% of the learning plan through work effort to demonstrate competency

Provides Feedback

- Assessment grade includes specific, meaningful, and personalized feedback
- Feedback always provided before next-laddered assessment is due

Respects Student Diversity

- Assessments provide for students varied lived experiences and background knowledge
- Alternative grading includes bonus points and a choice of an “ungraded” effort-based project

This short video helps explain how it works.



*Skip ads that may appear at the start of the video.
[Click here if video does not play.](#)

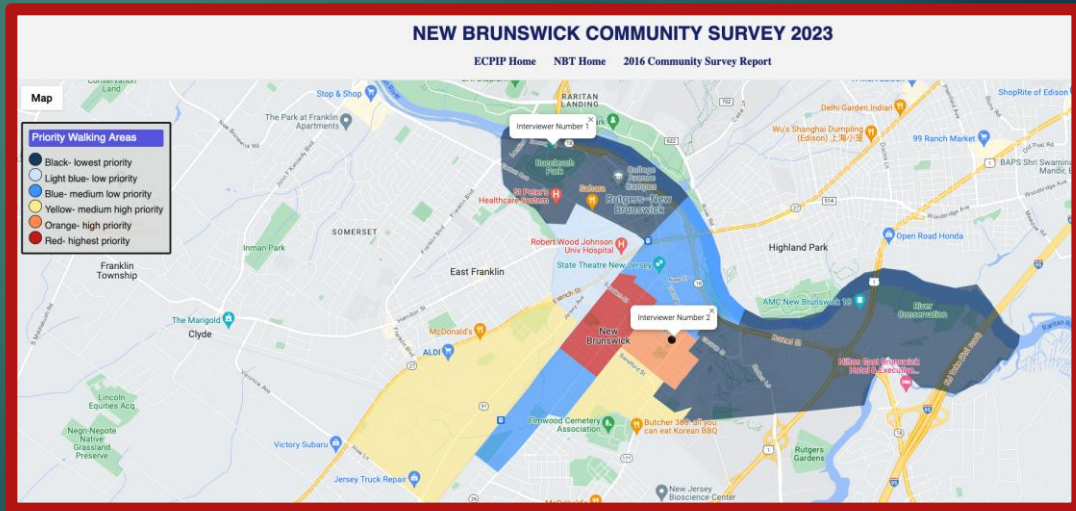


Our New Brunswick community
is our “real world” research focus

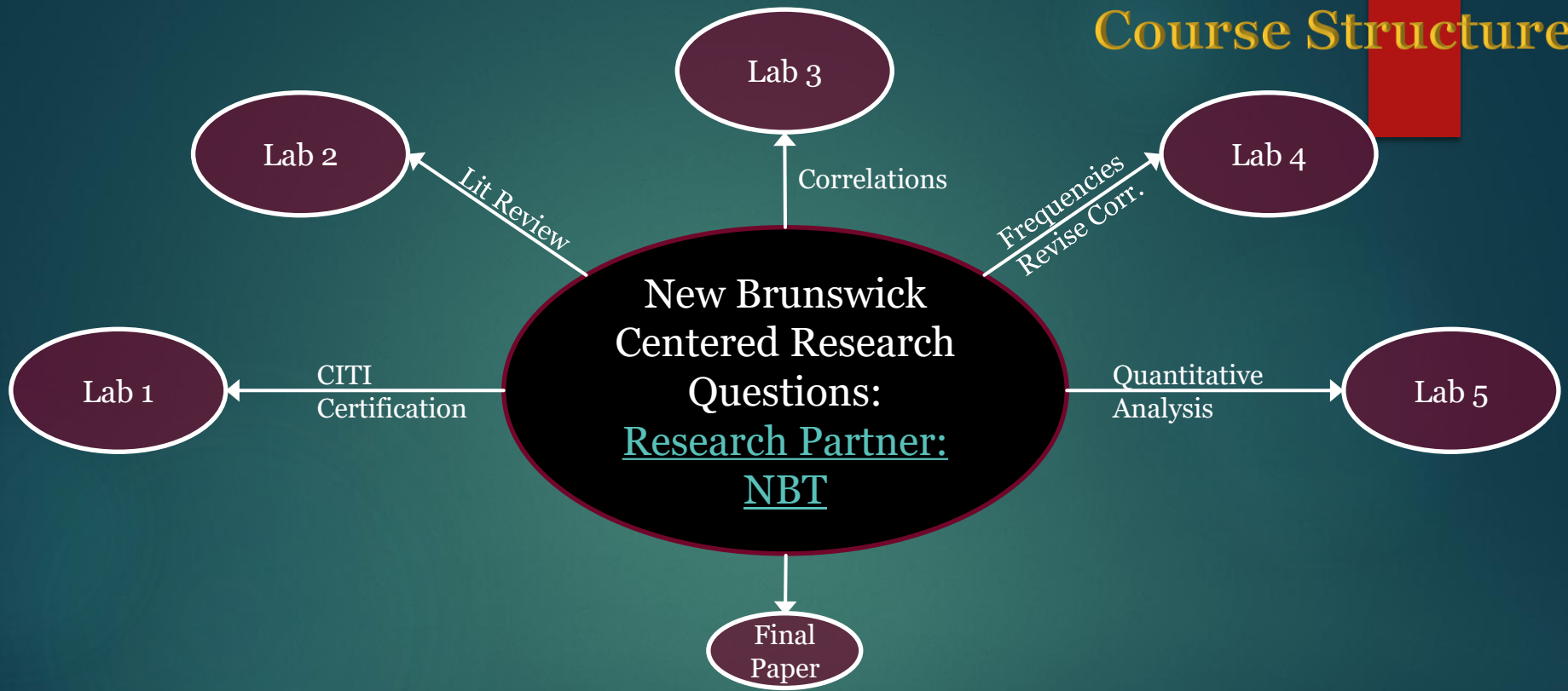
2024 New Brunswick Tomorrow (NBT) Community Survey



← Research topics you select for your “real world” research

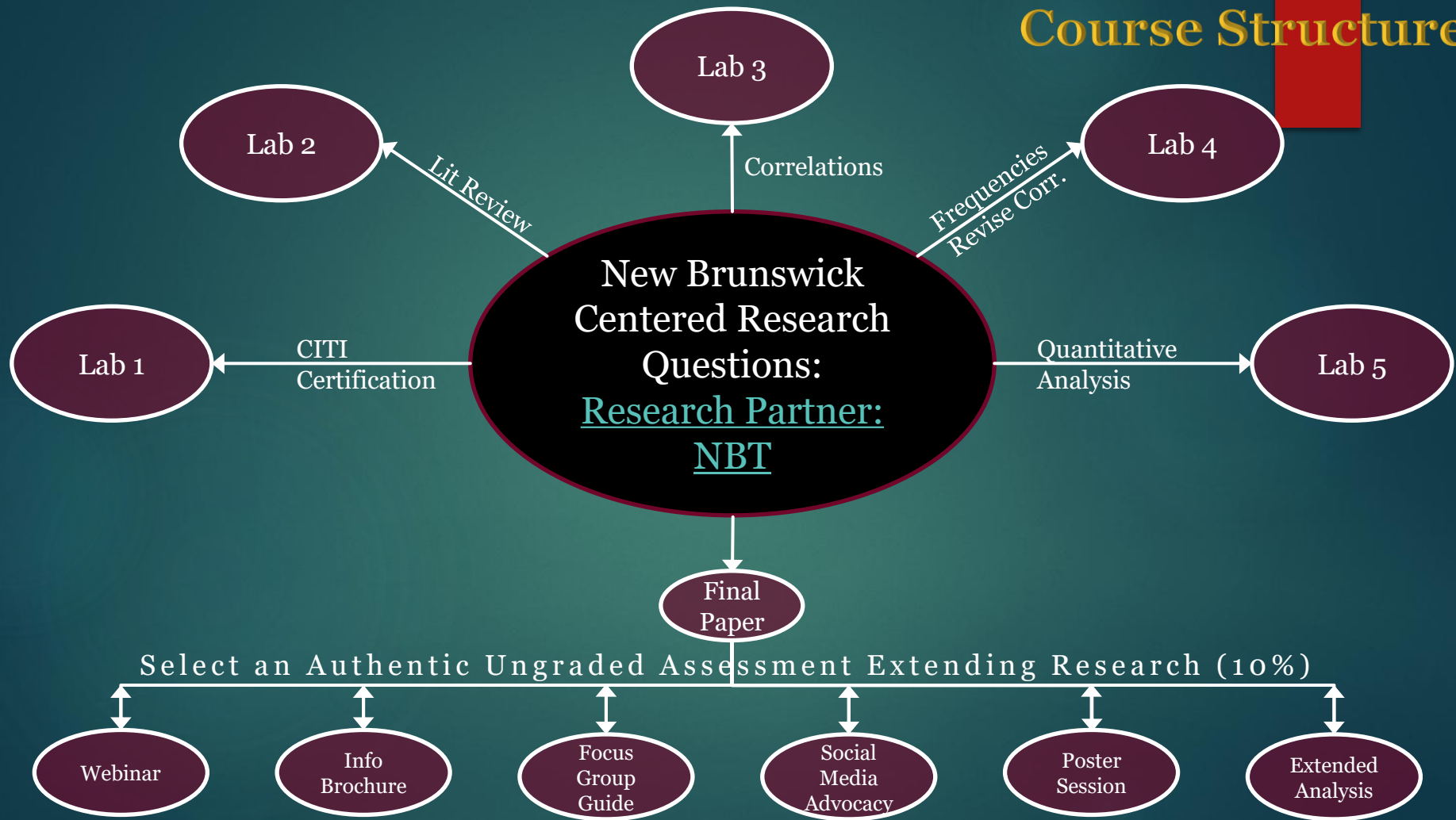


Course Structure



Labs are key components of
the Final Paper (65%)

Course Structure



EFFORT-BASED ASSESSMENTS



3
Surveys

Total: 5 points



Lecture
Practices

Total: 10 points



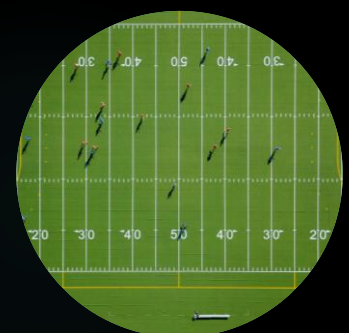
Lecture
Quizzes

Total: 10 points



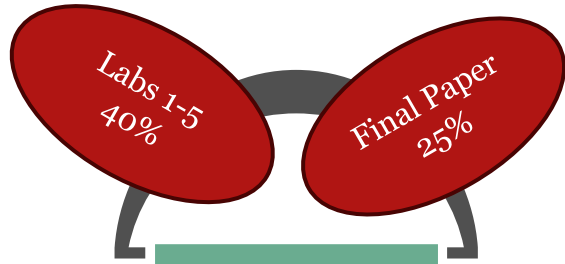
Ungraded
Research

Total: 10 points



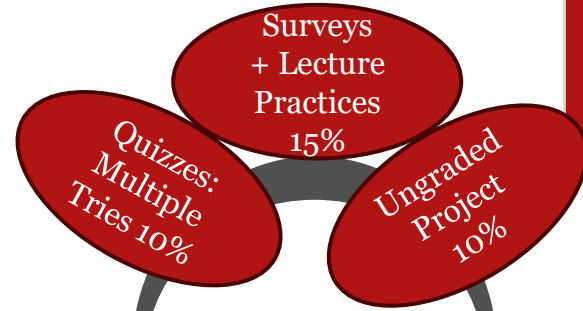
Bonus
Points

Total: 3 points



65%

**Performance-based
Grades**



35%

**Effort-based
Grades**



Assessment Weights + Bonus Points

Performance-based grades (65%) + Effort-based grades (35%) = Final Grade (100%)

Bonus points earned through mandatory homework assignments allow students to earn 3-course points, exceeding the 100-point course rubric. This provides a buffer for missed, late, incomplete, and flawed assessments. There is no rounding of final course grades after bonus points earned are applied to the final grade.

Grading Components



Module Assessments

- Intro Survey (2%)
- Midterm Survey (1%)
- Evaluation Survey 2 (2%)
- Lecture Practices (10%)
- Lecture Quizzes (10%)
- Homework (3%)



Lab Assessments

- Lab 1 (5%)
- Lab 2 (5%)
- Lab 3 (10%)
- Lab 4 (10%)
- Lab 5 (10%)



Research Assessments

- Research Paper (25%)
- Ungraded Assignment (10%)

Bonus Points!!!

Homework assessments are required. If completed in a timely manner, students earn 3 bonus points, which are added to their final course grade.

Course Schedule

Schedule tracks when lectures and labs open each week

Schedule details when assessments are posted and when they are due

Schedule calculates the weight of each assessment and whether grading is performance or effort based

Schedule indicates whether assessment is completed on an individual basis or as a group collaboration

Link to the full schedule on Canvas

Course Essentials

Syllabus



Course Calendar



Course Tools & Tutorials



Text Book Online Resources



Many Ways to Communicate



Individual Zoom meetings will be scheduled weekly based upon the most-frequently requested time slots to respond to questions.



Canvas calendar is where you schedule office hour appointments; this is the primary mode for additional assessment feedback.



Students should post general questions to the “Ask a Question” Forum as we prioritize responding to these questions – it’s just like raising your hand in class.



One mandatory group Zoom meeting is required to provide peer review and feedback to the Final Paper *before* submission.



Emails should be sent to both Professor and your graduate Lab Assistants for fastest response; allow 72 hours for a response.



Major lab assignments require individual and group collaborations. Plan ahead, and do not wait until the deadline. Some lab assignments have varying due dates.





The Fine Print



Letter grades assigned as follows: A=90-100; B+=87-89; B=80-86; C+=77-79; C=70-76; D=60-69; F=59 and lower.



Students are responsible for managing their progress in the course. Bonus points earned will be totaled and reported at the end of the term. You may schedule an office appointment at any time to receive a progress update.



Academic integrity is vital to the mission of Rutgers, to education at Rutgers, and membership in the Rutgers community. It is a core shared value that supports trust among students, and between students and professors. Please review the Rutgers Academic Code and Academic Oath at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>



Artificial Intelligence (AI) software is a tool that may be utilized under limited circumstances: writing syntax and searching for ideas and sources you independently verify. It may not be used to write assessment narratives. If you have questions about how and when to use AI, please ask us!



Collegial and respectful conduct is expected in class, all online posts, and emails exchanges. Class members should consider themselves colleagues who collaborate to help each other develop a solid understanding of materials and concepts.



Timely submissions of assessments are required. Late work (unless excused) will receive a 1/2 grade/per day grade deduction. Assessments are submitted through Canvas, Google Docs, or Qualtrics – please pay attention to submission instructions.

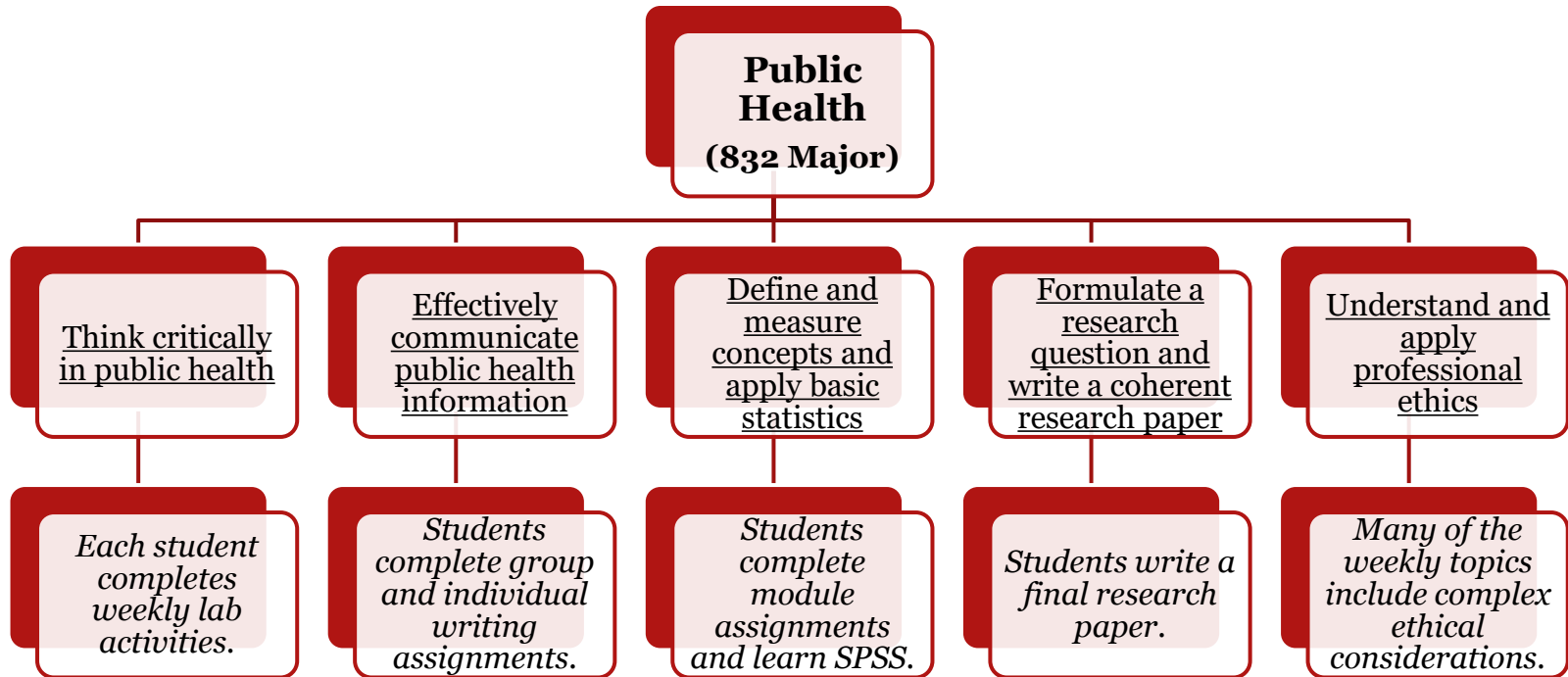


Seek help early! Don't wait until the last minute if you are having difficulties.



And have some fun, learning something new this semester and adding “real world” content to your portfolio!

Supplemental Public Health Course Learning Goals and Assessment Measures



Let's Get Started: Take the Survey

T1 Introductory Survey Link

Current survey goals:

Reviews course structure

Gathers student course preferences
and basic introduction

Gathers views on grading &
assessment

**Effort-based Assessment: 4 pts. (includes
introductory skills lab activities on course site)**

