

Special Topic in Epidemiology

**EPBI 592: SP TPC:FIELD OPR & METH
Field Operations and Methods**

Instructor: Erika S. Trapl, Ph.D.

Offered: Tuesday and Thursdays, 3:45-5:00 pm for five weeks. March 31 – April 30 (note that the final class of the session is during finals week).

Prerequisite: No previous coursework required, although basic knowledge of research methods and study design is recommended. NOTE: Class size is limited - in order to accommodate EPBI students, non-EPBI students must get permission from instructors to enroll.

Required Texts: TBA

Description of course-series: This 5-week special topics course is part of a year-long series on population-based data collection methods. The series consists of six, one-credit hour courses offered consecutively, three offered each semester beginning in January of each year. A student taking all six courses will learn the steps of carrying out a survey-based study from the early stages of idea development through planning and carrying out data collection (including submission of an IRB application), managing and analyzing data and summarization of results (see below for list of all six courses). However, each course is designed to be independent, so each course may be taken independently.

Description of this course: In this third course of the series, we will focus on the field operations processes and methods necessary to successfully carry out primary data collection. The objective of the course is to provide students with a basic understanding of how to think through the complete data collection process, including recruitment, management of data collection mode and setting, preparation of and training in protocols, monitoring the data collection process, and calculation of response rates.

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| Week 1 | Identifying the study population and developing a recruitment plan, IRB concerns related to recruitment (e.g. equitable, coercion), and understanding relationships between sampling, recruitment, and generalizability of results |
| Week 2 | “Preparing for the field”--creating a comprehensive data collection protocol; |
| Week 3 | Recruiting and training data collection team; using simple tools to manage data collection |
| Week 4 | Pilot testing and focus groups; monitoring the data collection process from recruitment to completed participant; identifying adverse or reportable events to IRB |
| Week 5 | Calculating response rates Identifying and integrating alternative data sources |

Course requirements: Regular class attendance and participation; group participation in development of class project survey; writing up measurement sections of the IRB application; homework assignments

Competencies Covered:

- Identifying study population
- Recruitment of subjects
- Relationship between sampling and recruitment and generalizability of results
- Recruitment and training of interviewers/data collection staff
- Data collection protocols and documentation tools (paper and electronic)
- IRB: recognizing and documenting adverse events
- Pilot Testing – focus groups
- Monitoring data collection process
- Calculation of response rates – link to recruitment efforts
- Alternative data sources
- Linking survey data with other sources of data (charts, billing, lab)