

Nutritional Epidemiology

Monday and Friday 12:35-1:00pm Davison 216

Instructor: Daniel J. Hoffman, PhD

Text: Nutritional Epidemiology, 2nd edition, by Walter Willett, MD, DSc

Reader: Available at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>

Objective: This course will introduce you to the theoretical and practical aspects of nutritional epidemiology, the study of how diseases related to diet change within and throughout societies and populations.

Learning

Objectives: By the end of this course you will be expected to:

1. Describe major study designs used in nutritional epidemiology and explain which food intake methods are most appropriate for specific studies.
2. Demonstrate the ability to interpret complex data from studies of nutritional epidemiology.
3. Describe and explain the major statistical methods used to analyze epidemiologic data and when specific methods are appropriate or not.
4. Critically evaluate a research paper and describe strengths and weaknesses of the research and describe whether or not the conclusions are supported by the data.

Format: The class will be a mix of lecture and discussions. Class participation is essential and the use of the Socratic method will be emphasized to distill major learning objectives.

Grading: You will be graded on your online participation (10%), weekly summaries (25%), final review paper (25%), final exam (25%) and participation during class discussions (15%).

Plagiarism: Submitting words that others have written in published work and not properly giving credit to that work so that it appears as though you wrote those words is plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism of any written work submitted as a final assignment is subject to severe penalties. For more information please read the following materials:

<http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/plagiarism>

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity>

Your written work will be scanned for plagiarized content and a meeting will be scheduled if it is determined that you submitted others' writing as your own. This will be an instructive meeting and any subsequent indications of plagiarism will be handled as an academic integrity matter.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES AND TOPICS

DATE	TOPIC	MERRILL Chpt / WILLETT Chpt.
Sep 6	Principles of Epidemiology and Intro to Nutritional Epidemiology	1-2 / 1
Sept 9 Sep 13	Study Designs Food Intake Methods	3-5 / none none / 4-5
Sep 16 Sep 20	Statistical Analyses in Nutritional Epi Controlling for Total Energy Intake	6-7 / 13 none / 11
Sep 23 Sep 27	Nutrition Transition and Diet Discussion (2 papers and tables)	Topic #1 —
Sep 30 Oct 4	Mediterranean diet and mortality Discussion	Topic #2 —
Oct 7 Oct 1	Undernutrition Discussion	Topic #3 —
Oct 14 Oct 18	Barker Hypothesis Discussion	Topic #4 —
Oct 21 Oct 25	Developmental Origins of Adult Health Discussion	Topic #5 —
Oct 28 Nov 1	Food security and health Discussion	Topic #6 —
Nov 4 Nov 8	SSB and obesity Discussion	Topic #7 —
Nov 11 Nov 15	Calcium and Obesity Discussion	Topic #8 —
Nov 18 Nov 22	BMI and Mortality Discussion	Topic #9 —
Nov 25 Nov 27	BMI v. FMI Discussion	Topic #10 —
Dec 2 Dec 6	Egg intake and CVD Discussion	Topic #11 —
Dec 9	Meat intake and mortality	Topic #12

The schedule for the online and Friday discussions is as follows:

Papers to be read for Friday will be available on Mondays at 3pm. You are to read the first paper and post comments about it by Tuesday at midnight. You are then to read the second paper and post comments by Wednesday at midnight. Finally, there will be a pdf document of tables and graphs and you are to write an interpretation of the most salient results of each table or graph and upload that by Thursday at 6pm. You should restrict yourself to five sentences per table or graph.

Online comments for each paper are to include questions about things you did not understand in the paper, issues that are unclear, your opinion of whether or not they made a strong rationale for conducting the study and why, comments on whether or not their work actually advances the field as described in the discussion and why, etc. The "why" portions of the comments are important and I expect you to include specific quotes that led you to your opinion about the paper.

You are free to read others' comments and probe them further to have classmates explain themselves. Likewise, you are free to explain issues others may be having trouble understanding.

Please feel free to contact if you have any doubts, concerns, or questions.

Note on civility in the classroom:

The Department of Nutritional Science encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes **cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging**, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by individual instructors. Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted.

If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Instructors may specify other consequences in their syllabi. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at:

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml>.

If I detect any cell phone use or see a cell phone, I will ask that you place it in on a table until the end of the class. This is non-negotiable and completely within my rights as the instructor of record for this class. If you disagree with this policy, bring it up with the Dean of the New Brunswick Graduate School or, leave your phone in your backpack.