

## THE ESSENTIALS OF PUBLIC HEALTH

HAP 350

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**Course Description:** Essentials of Public Health is designed to provide the student with theoretical perspectives in public health, and skills and knowledge associated with the primary functions of public health at the local, state, national, and global level. Students will use basic principles of evidenced-based public health, epidemiology, and the demographic measurement of populations and groups to examine the distributive factors of health and disease needs in populations. Enduring understandings of public health history, interventions, laws, communication, health systems, environment, and behavior change will be addressed.

**Course Objectives:** After completing Essentials of Public Health the student will be able to:

- apply knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts intellectual and practical skills including: inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving
- examine personal and social responsibility, including civic knowledge and engagement-local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- integrate and apply learning including synthesis and advanced accomplishments across general and specialized studies

### Methods of Teaching:

Lecture, active learning, discussion, guest speakers

### Method of Evaluation:

Achievement of course objectives will be evaluated on the basis of satisfactory performance in:

- Exam I- 25%-50 multiple choice questions
- Exam 2- 25%-50 multiple choice questions
- Individual work assignments- 25%
- Group project-25%

### Group Project/Presentation

The goal of the project and oral presentation is to inform classmates on the current status of how Nebraska is meeting specific Healthy People 2010 Objectives.

### Content to be included in group project/ presentation

- Overview of identified Healthy People 2010 objective. The overview is to include but not limited to: key demographics; prevalence; health impact; risk factors; health disparities; and relevant legal or ethical considerations. The group will be responsible for making a case of the importance/significance and the impact of meeting the Healthy People 2010 objective.

1. Summary of the most promising research/programs/projects addressing the Healthy People 2010 objective
2. Brief description of public programs/activities in Nebraska to meet the objective and the outcomes of the programs to date
3. Brief description of private sector initiatives/programs in Nebraska to meet the objective and the outcomes of the programs to date
4. Innovative ideas from group related to interventions based upon readings/research studies
5. Identification of professional responsibility as student and future health professional related to the objective
6. Identification of how this objective affects you personally
7. Identification of one way you can make a difference towards meeting the Healthy People 2010 objective

**Components of grading the group project:**

1. Each group will have a maximum of 30 minutes to present in class. Individual student participation during the presentation is mandatory.
2. Points allocated for individual students will be determined by faculty and peer evaluations.
3. Each student must submit an evaluation of their group peer members' effort (form will be provided prior to presentations)
4. Project materials/documentation must be organized in a notebook and submitted to the lead faculty member at the time of the oral presentation. All materials and documentation of work on the project must identify the name/s of the students/s who contributed to specific pieces of the project to provide evidence of equal distribution of the workload.
5. Each group member is responsible for submitting a minimum of one research/theory based article related to the project. Each student will write responses to the following: the population under study; brief description of the importance of the study and how it could be implemented in Nebraska. The article will be included in the notebook.

**Required Readings:** *Betrayal of Trust* by Laurie Garret-selected readings

**Text:** *Introduction to Public Health* 2nd ed., Schneider, Mary-Jane, Jones and Bartlett, 2006.

**Resources:**

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services <http://www.lhs.state.ne.us>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov>

**Academic Integrity:**

If you present the words or thoughts of another person as if they were your own, you are guilty of plagiarism. This is true whether or not you *intended* to do so. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offense. Penalties for plagiarism can range from getting a zero on the assignment in question through getting an F in the course to being expelled from the university. I will penalize acts of academic dishonesty by assigning a grade of F for the course, although I reserve the right to assign a lesser penalty (such as assigning a grade of zero for the assignment) or to appeal to the dean to assign a greater penalty (such as expulsion from the college) at my discretion. Whatever penalty I assign, you should know that every act of academic dishonesty, however small or large, is recorded in a letter placed in the student's permanent academic file in the College of Arts & Sciences.

Given the severe penalties you may incur as a result of plagiarism and the high risk of getting caught, it is wise to do all in your power to avoid committing plagiarism knowingly or unknowingly. The best way to avoid such an offense is to be as thorough as possible in documenting the sources you rely on for the claims you make in your assignments. The most common reasons for plagiarism are (1) carelessness or laziness in providing page references to sources, (2) confusion about just when documentation is and is not required, and (3) feeling overwhelmed or intimidated by the difficulty of an assignment. Remember, I am always happy to talk to you about any and all issues related to plagiarism, and about any assignment.

**Course web site:** This course will have a web site on Blueline at <https://courses.creighton.edu>. Your user name and password for this are your NetID and your BLUE password. The BLUE password needs to be changed every 60 days or it will stop functioning. You can change it at <http://ami.creighton.edu> or call the DoIT helpdesk at 280-1111.

The following items will be available on the course site on Blackboard:

- Course Announcements
  - Course syllabus and other packets\*
  - Class handouts\*
  - Pledge of Academic Integrity form
  - Your grades for the course
  - Discussion groups
  - Assignments
  - Calendars\*
- \* these materials will also be provided in class

The student is responsible for reading the announcements posted on Blueline at least weekly. The student is responsible for reading CEmail messages related to this course daily.

**Course evaluation:** In addition to a course web site, we will use Blueline for course and faculty evaluations. A separate site will be set up that only students and the course secretary can access. Evaluations will be anonymous and aggregated data will be given to faculty only after the course is completed. The course secretary will notify students when evaluations are available to be completed. Submitting these evaluations is mandatory. The course secretary will be able to see a list of students who have not submitted the evaluations and will advise the course leader to hold these students' grades until the evaluations are submitted. Blank evaluations may be submitted.

**Phone Policy:** Out of respect for your colleagues and as a demonstration of professional behavior, all PDAs, cell phones, and pagers must be turned off while you are in class.

## Assignments

### **Week 1 Population-Focused Health**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Define public health
2. Identify the core functions of public health
3. Explore population-focused health
4. Explore historical milestones in the history of public health
5. Discuss current challenges in public health

Readings: A History of the Public Health System

[http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=1091&page=56](http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=1091&page=56)

### **Week 2 Structure and Function of Public Health -**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Describe the current public health system structure in the U.S
2. Compare and contrast the responsibilities of the federal, state, and local public health systems
3. Describe the public health workforce
4. Discuss public health programs provided at the federal, state, and local level

Reading: Chapter 1 Public Health: Science, Politics, and Prevention

### **Week 3 Ethics, Cultural Diversity, and Evidenced-Based Practice-**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Discuss the process of ethical decision making
2. Identify the relationship of ethical principles, rules, and theories in population health decisions
3. Analyze the effect of culture on population health care
4. Discuss the concept of cultural competence
5. Define evidenced-based practice

Readings: Childress, J., Faden, R., Gaare, R., Gostin, L., Kahn, J., Bonnie, R., Kass, N., Mastroianni, A., Moreno, J., Nieburg, P. "Public Health Ethics: Mapping the Terrain." *Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics*. 30(2): 170-8. 2002.

Benatar SR, The HIV/AIDS pandemic: a sign of instability in a complex global system, *Journal Of Medicine And Philosophy*, 2002 Apr; Vol. 27 (2).

### **Week 4 Epidemiology and Population-based Health Care-**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Define epidemiology
2. Describe how epidemiology has developed over time
3. Identify the basic concepts in epidemiology
4. Discuss the levels of prevention and identify interventions used in each level describe case-control, cohort, cross-sectional, ecological and experimental studies used in epidemiology
5. Explore applications of epidemiology used by public health workers

4. Explore the role of public health workers in primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention of substance abuse problems in the community
5. Examine effectiveness of community programs related to mental illness, substance abuse and violence
6. Discuss policies at the local, state, and federal level that address mental illness, substance abuse, violence and human abuse

**Reading:** Bartlett CJ, Coles EC, Psychological health and well-being: why and how should public health specialists measure it? *Journal Of Public Health Medicine* 1998 Sep; Vol. 20 (3).

### **Week 9 Population-based health care for Vulnerable Populations-**

- Objectives:** The student will:
1. Explore predisposing factors affecting vulnerability
  2. Discuss the effects of public policies on identified vulnerable populations
  3. Describe strategies used by public health to eliminate health disparities of vulnerable populations
  4. Compare the health status of rural versus urban residents
  5. Describe barriers faced by migrant workers in accessing health care
  6. Discuss successful programs that encourage health promotion among rural residents and migrant workers

**Readings:** Gwatkin DR. "Health inequalities and the health of the poor: what do we know? What can we do?" *Bull World Health Organ.* 2000; 78(1):318.

Pogge T. "Responsibilities for poverty-related ill health." *Ethics Int Aff*, 2002; 16(2)71-9.

### **Week 10 Disaster Management-Pandemic Planning**

- Objectives:** The student will:
1. Discuss types of disasters, including natural, human-made, and epidemics
  2. Evaluate the effects of disasters on people and communities
  3. Discuss phases of preparation, response, and recovery
  4. Examine the role of public health in disaster management
  5. Identify elements of community collaboration
  6. Discuss the community process involved in planning for a pandemic

**Readings:** Stand on Guard for Thee: Ethical Considerations in Preparedness Planning for Pandemic Influenza. *A Report of the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics Pandemic Influenza Working Group.* November, 2005.

Thompson, A., Faith, K., Gibson, JL and Ross Upshur. (2006) "Pandemic Influenza Preparedness: an Ethical Framework to Guide Decision-Making." *BMC Medical Ethics.* 7(12).

### **Week 11 Global health issues-**

- Objectives:** The student will:
1. Identify examples of global interdependence on public health issues.
  2. Recognize the impact of a country's economy on addressing health issues
  3. Discuss elements of human dignity and freedom related to specific global health issues

Reading: Chapter 4 Epidemiology: The Basic Science of Public Health

**Week 5- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control-**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Discuss the current impact of selected infectious diseases on society
2. Explain how the elements of the epidemiologic triangle interact to cause infectious disease
3. Define surveillance and discuss the functions and elements of a surveillance system
4. Provide examples of infectious disease control interventions at the three levels of public health prevention
5. Discuss examples of evidence-based practice used in the prevention and control of HIV, Hepatitis, TB and STIs

Reading: Chapter 9 The "Conquest" of Infectious Diseases

**Week 6 Non-infectious Diseases**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Discuss the current impact of selected non-communicable diseases on society
2. Explain how the elements of the epidemiologic triangle interact to cause non-infectious diseases
3. Define surveillance and discuss the functions and elements of a surveillance system
4. Provide examples of non-communicable disease control interventions at the three levels of public health prevention
5. Discuss examples of evidence-based practice used in the prevention and control of selected non-infectious diseases

Reading: Chapter 11 The Biomedical Basis of Chronic Diseases

**Week 7 Environmental Health-**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Explain the relationship between the environment, human health and disease
2. Identify principles of environmental health
3. Describe legislative and regulatory policies that impact environmental health
4. Examine local, state, and federal environmental health issues
5. Discuss the role of the public health workforce in environmental health
6. Describe environmental health assessments

**Readings:** Jessica Pierce, Christina Kerby, The Global Ethics of Latex Gloves: Reflections on Natural Resource Use in Healthcare, *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics*, January 1999.

Chapter 19 A Clean Environment: The Basis of Public Health

**Week 8 Mental Health, Violence, and Human and Substance Abuse**

Objectives: The student will:

1. Examine the extent of mental illness in the population
2. Discuss violence as a public health epidemic
3. Analyze personal attitudes toward substance abuse

4. Examine the role of the United States in global health

**Reading:** Marmot M, Achieving health equity: from root causes to fair outcomes. Commission on Social Determinants of Health, *Lancet* 2007 Sep 29; Vol. 370 (9593).

**Weeks 12, 13, and 14 Group presentations-30 minutes each**

STD's  
Diabetes  
Heart Disease  
Cancer  
Infant Health  
Lead Toxicity  
Violence Prevention  
Oral Health  
Air and Water Quality  
Obesity  
Asthma

**Week 15- Finals Week**