

**MPH First Year Seminar – Public Health Skills Workshop (SPH680)**

**Fall 2010 & Spring 2011**

Monday 9:00 – 10:20

GEC East, Auditorium

**COURSE LEADERS**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar is two semesters sequences, designed to help students develop public health skills essential for academic and professional success. The seminar will include units addressing:

- **quantitative skills**
- **critical thinking**
- **effective writing**
- **cultural sensitivity**
- **ethics**
- **scientific posters and presentations**
- **public health preparedness**
- **resume and interview skills**

An interdisciplinary team of faculty members will teach the units and lead workshops throughout the year. Students who are already proficient in a particular unit will serve as student teachers in that unit. Class assignments will introduce students to a variety of current public health topics.

All MPH students are required to register for SPH680 for TWO semesters – 1 credit per semester.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the role that statistics plays in assessing study results
- Explain the concepts of standardization and absolute and relative frequency
- Describe the structure of a scientific paper and the process of writing technical reports and peer-reviewed publications
- Write a clear, succinct scientific paper about a public health topic
- Develop and deliver an effective oral presentation
- Design a scientific poster that presents information in a clear and engaging manner
- Write a well-organized abstract
- Describe ethical issues in public health practice and research
- Explain the role of the institutional review board (IRB) in research; complete IRB certification
- Understand the Incident Command System for managing public health response; complete ICS certification

This course will help students develop these and other public health **competencies** (codes in parentheses refer to Association of Schools of Public Health Core Competencies):

- Develop written and oral presentations based on statistical analyses for both PH professionals and educated lay audiences (Biostat 10)
- Comprehend basic ethical and legal principles pertaining to the collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of epidemiologic data (Epi 5)
- Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health and health services (Health Policy 2)
- Apply ethical principles to public health program planning, implementation & evaluation (Behav 9)
- Demonstrate effective written and oral skills for communicating with different audiences in the context of professional public health activities (Communication 7)
- Use the basic concepts and skills involved in culturally appropriate community engagement and empowerment with diverse communities. (Diversity 5)
- Apply basic principles of ethical analysis (e.g. the Public Health Code of Ethics, human rights framework, other moral theories) to issues of public health practice and policy (Professionalism 2)
- Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health (Professionalism 3)

## TEXTBOOK & READINGS

The lectures/workshops will be supplemented with readings from peer-reviewed journals, books, reports, online publications, and other publications. To help you get the most out of the class activities, discussions, and lectures, complete all assigned readings prior to coming to class. **By compiling class handouts and notes, over the course of the semester students will develop their own resource manual for future reference.**

In an effort to provide the most up-to-date, interesting, and relevant readings, a new reading may be added and/or an assigned reading may be removed during the course of the semester. See separate "List of Resources for SPH 680 Students" for list of web articles, books, and other documents.

We will be using the Blackboard Learning System (Blackboard). All required and suggested readings for this course can be accessed via Blackboard. You can access the blackboard page for this course directly at the following url: <https://bls.its.albany.edu/webct/logon/825555334001>. Please become familiar with the course page. We will be using it to communicate with you by posting announcements, additional information about the readings and assignments, and the PowerPoint slides used during class. You can also use Blackboard to chat with your classmates, discuss topics, issues, and questions, and send emails.

## CLASS POLICIES

### Cell phones

To avoid distractions in the class, as a general rule cell phones should be turned off during class. If the student is a caretaker or needs to keep a cell phone turned on for any other emergency issues, the phone should be set to vibrate and the student should sit at the end of the row in order to exit without disrupting the class.

### Participation / Attendance

Throughout the course we will be discussing many topics and will have the opportunity to hear from several guest lecturers. Students are required to attend all required class sessions and arrive on time for class. If circumstances beyond your control result in a missed or late class(es), one missed class session per semester will be allowed without a required make-up assignment. If you miss or are late for more than one class session you will be required to read additional materials related to the topic or view a broadcast/webinar on the topic and write a brief (1 page) summary. The make-up assignment will be due one week from the date of the missed class.

Please be courteous at all times and always be respectful of the opinions and views of others. Do not be shy about asking questions or expressing your views. Your participation in discussions and activities will supplement your learning experience and the experience of your classmates. Students

are recommended to sit as close as possible to the front of the auditorium so that speakers can choose not to use the podium and microphone and be free to move around the auditorium. Because many issues will be covered in the class using multiple lecture, discussion, and group formats, students' learning will be maximized by active involvement in the class during class time, avoiding side conversations, working on other class work, and use of computers or other electronic equipment

### Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be ethical and honest in carrying out all assignments and course requirements. As per University policy on plagiarism, cheating on exams, multiple submission of the same work, forgery, sabotage, unauthorized collaboration with other students, falsification of work, bribery or use of purchased research service reports without appropriate notation, and theft, damage, or misuse of library or computer resources are considered forms of academic dishonesty. Attempts to commit such acts shall also constitute academic dishonesty. Students should become familiar with the University's definitions and policies as detailed in the Undergraduate Bulletin and in the University's Community Rights and Responsibilities.

In-order to help you familiarize yourself with the concept of plagiarism and ways to avoid putting yourself in a position that could jeopardize your academic or professional career, you are being asked to complete the University's Plagiarism online course, "Plagiarism 101 Tutorial", and submit proof of completion (i.e. printed-out copy of "Course Credit Acknowledgement") by Monday September 13, 2010. The tutorial is available at the web address:

<http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html>.

### Syllabus

This syllabus is a guide and may be modified. If the syllabus is modified, students will be given notice in a timely fashion. Students are responsible to apprise themselves of changes to the syllabus.

## GRADING

Students will be graded on a pass / fail grading system.

In order to receive a passing grade **each semester** students will be required to:

- Attend all required class sessions (or complete make-up assignments for missed classes)
- Attend **two** public health presentations sponsored by the SPH, and submit a 1 page summary
  - guest faculty seminars
  - doctoral defense presentations
  - SPH 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration activities (listed below\*)
  - National Public Health Week talks
  - Graduate Student Organization sponsored V-week
  - Volunteer preparedness exercises
- Attend **one** MPH student presentation and write and hand-in a 1 page summary. If unsure as to whether a particular presentation meets the criteria, please contact Dr. Maniccia (dmaniccia@uamail.albany.edu).
- Online tutorials
  - Students will be required to complete the plagiarism tutorial and submit proof of completion by classtime on Monday September 13, 2010 (fall semester requirement).
  - Students will be required to complete the CITI IRB training and submit certificate by classtime on Mon. March 7, 2011 (spring semester requirement).
  - Students will be required to complete two online ICS classes (IS-100.b and IS700.a) and submit both certificates by classtime on Mon. May 2, 2011 (spring semester requirement).
  - Certificates completed prior to the class for these requirements may be submitted if they are still current/unexpired (within previous year for plagiarism)

\* **School of Public Health 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** celebration activities

- September 23: Encounters at the End of the World: discussion with Sam Bowser and Henry Kaiser
- September 24: Back to the Future: Public Health as Social Justice in Divided Democracy, Dan Beauchamp
- October 1: Moolaade
- October 15: Albany Senior Services Senior Expo
- October 25: Genes, Diet, and "Epidemics of our time": integrating evolutionary theories, epidemiologic observations, and clinical experiments for prevention, Simin Liu
- October 26: Precious
- November 18: Vaccine Safety, Paul Offit
- December 1: International AIDS day Lecture, Jack DeHovitz
- Others will be added

**CLASS SCHEDULE**  
**Fall 2010**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	August 30	Introductions and overview
	<i>September 6</i>	<i>Labor Day No Classes</i>
2	September 13 <b>Plagiarism tutorial due</b>	Quantitative Skills for Public Health – why do you need them (Gensburg)
3	September 20	Quantitative Skills for Public Health – basic algebra review (Gensburg)
4	September 27	Quantitative Skills for Public Health - standardization (Gensburg)
5	October 4	Quantitative Skills for Public Health – absolute vs. relative frequency (Gensburg)
	<i>October 11</i>	<i>No class- Columbus Day- NOTE this is not an official school holiday, other classes may be in session</i>
6	October 18 midterm point	Critical Thinking – Constructing an Argument (Stephens) The Toulmin System
7	October 25	Critical Thinking II – Critical Thinking in Professional Life (Hoff) What is critical thinking in practice How to think about, integrate, and extend from published material
8	November 1	Effective writing (Hoff & Slocum) Writing in a professional environment
9	November 8	Effective writing (Weller) Doing literature reviews
10	November 15	Effective writing (Eidson & Maniccia) Learning how to write and communicate more effectively
11	November 22	Effective writing (Eidson) Writing FAQ and letters to the editor workshop
12	November 29	Crossing Boundaries (Stephens) Research outside your comfort zone
13	December 6	Crossing Boundaries (Stephens) The value of working with groups; Research from the ground up

**CLASS SCHEDULE**  
**Spring 2011**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
	Winter break	Begin online CITI Institutional Review Board training; <b>Must be completed by March 7, 2011 (web link on blackboard)</b>
1	January 24	Ethics: NYSDOH and IRB, Dr. Robert Stone 10:00 Maggie Watson: PHLOT Program
2	January 31	Risk Communication, John Emery and Mary Burt 10:00 PHLOT Core Students: APHA/SNUG
3	February 7	Career Services Mock Interview/Interview Skills: Tony Torres
4	February 14	Career Services Resume Workshop: Cathy Parker and Katrina Chamberlain
	<b>February 21</b>	<b>No class – winter break</b>
5	February 28	Professional Ethics: Dr. Tim Hoff
6	March 7	<b>CITI IRB certificate due at class time</b> Presentations and Abstracts: NYSDOH and SPH Perspectives Dr. Millicent Eidson and Dr. Dayna Maniccia
7	March 14	Posters—Dr. Eidson and Dr. Maniccia
8	March 21	Effective Presentations: CDC Perspective, Dr. Millicent Eidson
9	March 28	Intro to ICS: Incident Command System for Public Health Response; Psychological First Aid—Mark Waldenmaier
10	April 4	ICS: Preparedness—Mark Waldenmaier and guests
11	April 11	ICS: PODs—Mark Waldenmaier and guests
	<b>April 18</b>	<b>No class – Spring Break</b>
12	April 25	<b>No class – Spring Break</b>
13	May 2	ICS: Sheltering—guests <b>IS-100.b and IS700.a certificates due at class time</b>