SYLLABUS
CPH 531: Contemporary Health Issues and Research
Fall 2012

TIME: Thursdays 1:00-3:30pm

LOCATION: Drachman Hall A118

INSTRUCTOR: Nicole P. Yuan, PhD, MPH
Drachman Hall, A202
1295 N. Martin Avenue
PO Box 245209
Tucson, AZ 85724
Phone: (520) 626-7215
Fax: (520) 626-8716
Email: nyuan@email.arizona.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 2:00-4:00pm and by appointment

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Designed to explore a broad spectrum of health education and health behavior issues and programs in order to evaluate their impact (or potential impact). Toward that end, we will read, review, and critique numerous research efforts that were designed to change behavior via health education and/or health behavior programs.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of this course, each student will be able to:
1. Identify contemporary public health issues and explain the diverse approaches used to address them in research and practice.
2. Identify ethical and social justice issues imbedded in the health promotion literature.
3. Evaluate health promotion studies with regards to research aims, methods, findings, limitations, and implications for the practice of public health promotion and education.
4. Select a health promotion topic for which there has not yet been a published systematic review or meta-analysis and write and present a critical review of the existing literature.

MPH/SECTION COMPETENCIES COVERED: (From ASPH MPH Core Competency Model: http://www.asph.org/publication/MPH_Core_Competency_Model/index.html) Some of the key discipline-specific and interdisciplinary competencies covered in this course include the following:
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
  i. Identify basic theories, concepts, and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in public health research and practice.
  ii. Identify the causes of social and behavioral factors that affect health of individuals and populations.
  iii. Describe the role of social and community factors in both the onset and solution of public health problems.
  iv. Specify multiple targets and levels of intervention for social and behavioral science programs and/or policies.

- **Communication and Informatics**
  i. Demonstrate effective written and oral skills for communicating with different audiences in the context of professional public health activities.

- **Diversity and Culture**
  i. Apply the principles of community-based participatory research to improve health in diverse populations.
  ii. Cite examples of situations where consideration of culture-specific needs resulted in a more effective modification or adaptation of a health intervention.

- **Leadership**
  i. Engage in dialogue and learning from others to advance public health goals.
  ii. Apply social justice and human rights principles when addressing community needs.

- **Professionalism**
  i. 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.
  ii. Analyze determinants of health and disease using an ecological framework.
  iii. Appreciate the importance of working collaboratively with diverse communities and constituencies (e.g. researchers, practitioners, agencies and organizations).

- **Program Planning**
  i. Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to specific individual and community health outcomes.
  ii. Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in relation to their strengths, limitations, and appropriate uses, and emphases on reliability and validity.

---

**COURSE NOTES:** Notes are not provided. Copies of most PowerPoint presentations will be available on the D2L course site. See section on **Assigned Readings** for instructions on how to login to D2L.

**ASSIGNED READINGS:** There are no assigned textbooks. All students who are registered for the course will have access to the D2L course site. Each student must login using their UA NetID at [http://d2l.arizona.edu/](http://d2l.arizona.edu/). The course site contains the syllabus and course materials for each class meeting. Course materials include copies of assigned
readings, lecture slides, handouts, and other documents. If emails are sent from D2L, the messages will be delivered to the receiver’s @email.arizona.edu account.

**COURSE FORMAT:** Classes will include lectures, guest and student presentations, class exercises, and discussion on current health promotion topics and methods.

**COURSE SCHEDULE FOR FALL 2012:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>Introduction and Health Promotion Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ethics, Social Justice, and Policy; Research Designs (<em>Annabelle Nuñez</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Research Designs (Continued); Meta-Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis (<em>Dr. Nicky Teufel-Shone</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Health Disparities and Participatory Research (<em>Dr. Scott Carvajal</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Evidence-Based Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sexual Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Physical Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Diet and Nutrition (<em>Dr. Cyndi Thompson</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Interpersonal Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Alcohol and Drug Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tobacco Use (<em>Dr. Lynda Bergsma</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Student Presentations 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - NO CLASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Student Presentations 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Two Reflection Papers** (total of 30 points; RP #1 is 10 points and RP #2 is 20 points; 12% of final grade)

   Each student will write two Reflection Papers on assigned readings from the first half of the semester. The first Reflection Paper is due on Sept 6, and must be written on an article assigned for the Sept 6 class meeting. The second Reflection Paper is due on Sept 20, and must be written on an article assigned for the Sept 20 class meeting. For Reflection Papers and Article Critiques, students may **not** select articles with an asterisk (*) because they do not fit the required format.

   Each Reflection Paper must be limited to 2 pages and include the following:
   a) Reason for choosing the article (i.e., what interested you?)
   b) Recommendations for public health practice (i.e., how should the findings be applied to health promotion practice?)
   c) Questions for future research (i.e., what else do you want to know about this topic?)
   d) Ethical or social justice concerns raised by the article (i.e., what ethical or social justice issues are linked to the nature of this problem or research methods used to examine this problem?)

   All papers in this course will be evaluated on organization, formatting, spelling, and grammar. All papers must be typed in Times New Roman font, no smaller than 11 point font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, include page numbers, and printed on 8 ½ x 11-inch white paper. Each Reflection Paper and Article Critique should include the complete citation of the selected article (see specific guidelines for references provided in syllabus). Printed copies of all papers must be submitted to the instructor.
Grading for Reflection Paper #1 (10 points): Students will exchange Reflection Papers #1 with one classmate during the class period, and each student will evaluate the other’s paper using a rubric designed by the instructor. Each student will receive a maximum of 5 points for turning in their own Reflection Paper, and maximum of 5 points for completing a rubric and review of their classmate’s paper. Students will not be graded based on how their classmate evaluated their paper.

Grading for Reflection Paper #2 (20 points): Similar to RP #1, students will exchange Reflection Papers #2 with a classmate during the class period, and each student will evaluate the other’s paper using a rubric. Each student will receive a maximum of 5 points for completing a rubric and review of their classmate’s paper. The instructor will grade each student’s paper which will be worth a maximum of 15 points.

2. One Written Article Critique and Team Presentation (total of 40 points; 30 points written and 10 points oral; 16% of final grade)
For one of the six special health promotion topics covered during the second half of the semester (i.e., sexual health, physical activity, diet and nutrition, interpersonal violence, alcohol and drug use, and tobacco use), each student will write a scholarly critique on one of the articles assigned for that class meeting. Students will submit a list of articles they wish to write about for their written Article Critique. The instructor will compare the lists and assign two students to each article based on students’ preferences.

Each student will write their Article Critique independently. Each critique must not be longer than 5 pages and is worth a maximum of 30 points.

In the assigned pairs, students will give an oral presentation together based on their critiques and lead a brief discussion as time allows. Each presentation should not be longer than 10 minutes and is worth 10 points. Both students will receive the same grade. PowerPoint slides are required. Printed copies of the papers and slides are due to the instructor on the day that the students give their presentation.

The Article Critiques and oral presentations must include the following:
  a) Relevance of topic to current stories/reports in the media (i.e., TV, newspaper, radio, and Internet) and/or local, state, or federal public health programs
  b) Brief description of research question(s) and study variables
  c) Brief description of research design
  d) Threats and controls for internal and external validity
  e) Suggestions for alternative approaches for measuring the same variables
  f) Trade-offs to internal and external validity between the original and suggested approaches for measuring the study variables

For the Article Critiques and Term Paper, refer to the lecture and assigned readings on qualitative research to assess the quality of qualitative methods and analysis. Do not apply the same strategies used to critique quantitative studies that examine causal relationships between independent and dependent variables.

3. One In-Class Article Critique and Group Presentation (total of 30 points; 20 points written and 10 points oral; 12% of final grade)
During one class meeting on a special health promotion topic (to be announced), students will be assigned to groups of 4 students. Each group will be asked to critique one article that is randomly assigned to them. During the allotted class time, each group will write and share their responses to the questions provided in this syllabus. The written responses
are worth a maximum of 20 points. Oral presentation and discussion is worth 10 points. All members of the group will receive the same grade. However, each student will evaluate their teammates’ contributions to the group assignment. If an individual receives low evaluation scores from their teammates, their grade may be modified accordingly.

The questions to be addressed in the in-class group assignment are:

a) What are the study research question(s)?

b) What are the study variables? What are the independent, dependent, and control variables (if they apply)?

c) What is the research design (summarize briefly)?

d) What are threats and controls to internal validity?

e) What are threats and controls to external validity?

f) What are your suggestions for alternative approaches for measuring the same variables?

g) What are trade-offs to internal and external validity between the original and suggested approaches for measuring the study variables?

4. One Term Paper and Panel Presentation (total of 125 points: 100 points written and 25 points oral; 50% of final grade)

Each student will write a Term Paper that is a systematic review of a group of studies that attempt to answer the same/similar research question on a specific health promotion topic. A good example is the assigned systematic review written by Turner and colleagues (2005) on the effectiveness of community-based programs to promote the use of car seat restraint in children.

At the beginning of the semester, students will create groups of 4 for the Term Paper Panel Presentations. Each group will work together to identify a general health promotion topic for the panel and specific topics for each member's Term Paper that are related to the main topic. For example, the main topic for a panel may be the effectiveness of obesity interventions. Term paper topics for the individual panel members may include the effectiveness of obesity interventions targeting Latinos, effectiveness of school-based obesity interventions for high school students, effectiveness of obesity interventions for older women, etc. Of note, the panel topic does not have to be focused on intervention research. Another panel topic may be the impact of risk and protective factors on a particular health behavior or outcome. Other ideas relevant to the course material may also be considered. Topics of genuine interest to the students and have not been addressed in the course are strongly encouraged.

Each group should consult with the instructor about their panel topic and term paper topics. Each group must submit one written description by September 27. The written description should include some sample articles (citations or abstracts) for each term paper topic to provide evidence that there are published articles on the topic. Individual students may also seek consultation with the instructor about their term paper topics and selected articles, as needed.

Each student will write their Term Paper independently. The Term Paper is due in class on November 15. The paper should be a maximum of 15 pages and is worth a maximum of 100 points. The systematic review should be based on 5-15 research articles published within the past 10 years, but may include 1-2 historical articles if they are considered to be seminal to the body of literature. Articles should be identified using online research databases (e.g., PubMed, Medline, and PsycINFO) available on the UA library websites. Each student is required to attend a drop-in session/workshop or meet individually with
one of the MEZCOPH liaison librarians, Annabelle Nuñez or Mari Stoddard, to receive guidance on advanced database searching and bibliographic management.

MEZCOPH liaison librarians:

Annabelle Nuñez  Mari Stoddard
(520) 626-7508  (520) 626-2925
anunez@ahsl.arizona.edu  stoddard@ahsl.arizona.edu

For References: The Term Paper should include a formatted reference section at the end of the paper. Similar to the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH), students are required to use the American Medical Association (AMA) Style Manual for formatting references. There are several useful online resources about the AMA Style Guide. One such resource is: http://libguides.hsl.washington.edu/ama, but students are encouraged to find others and/or seek the assistance of the College librarians. Journal title abbreviations are available at the U.S. National Library of Medicine website. Enter journal titles at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/journals to obtain title abbreviations. Refer to articles published in AJPH and other public health and biomedical journals for examples of formatting citations in text and creating reference lists using the AMA Style Guide.

The written paper should address the following (100 points):

a) Background on selected topic
b) Purpose of systematic review within a public health context (i.e., why is this review important to the field of public health?)
c) Selection of articles/studies (i.e., selection process and relevance of articles)
d) Brief description of research designs/methods used by the studies
e) Summary of major findings across the studies
f) Major strengths and limitations of the studies
g) Ethical and/or social justice issues raised by review
h) Recommendations for public health practice based on results from review

* To receive full credit for selection of articles, students must attend a drop-in session or individual meeting with one of the MEZCOPH liaison librarians (Annabelle or Mari). Records of attendance will be submitted to the instructor.

Each group will give a 30-minute panel presentation, including “executive summaries” of each individual term paper, and respond to questions as time permits. The panel presentations will take place during the last two class meetings. PowerPoint slides are required and a printed copy must be submitted on the day of the presentation. The presentation is worth a maximum of 25 points. All members of the group will receive the same presentation grade. However, each student will evaluate their teammates’ contributions to the group assignment. If an individual receives low evaluation scores from their teammates, their grade may be modified accordingly.

The panel presentation should include the following (25 points):

a) Overview of panel topic
b) Executive summary of Term Paper #1
   a. *For each executive summary include brief description of specific topic, selection of articles/studies, major findings across studies, and critique of studies.
c) Executive summary of Term Paper #2

d) Executive summary of Term Paper #3

e) Executive summary of Term Paper #4

f) Recommendations for public health practice based on 4 papers

5. Class Attendance/Participation
(total of 25 points; 10% of final grade)

Students are expected to attend each class and actively participate in discussions. Students must notify the instructor if they are unable to attend a class due to a religious holiday/special event, emergency, or unusual situation. If a student is absent from class, they are responsible for the material that was covered and the work that was assigned. Additional work may be assigned by the instructor. Students are encouraged to share observations based on work and personal experiences, exposure to different media sources, and/or supplemental readings.

GRADING AND EVALUATION: Students will be evaluated based on their performances on five assignments (some with presentations): two Reflection Papers, two Article Critiques, and one Term Paper. Late assignments will be penalized by 10% for each extra day. Participation in class discussions will also be included in the final grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper #1 (due 9/6)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper #2 (due 9/20)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Written Article Critique and Presentation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One In-Class Article Critique and Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Term Paper (due 11/15) and Presentation</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total possible points for class = 250 points

A = 250-225 points; B = 224-200 points; C = 199-175 points; D = 174-150 points

TELEPHONE AND COMPUTER USE: All cell/smart phones must be set to silent or vibrate in order to not disrupt the class and disturb fellow students and instructor. The use of laptop/tablet computers is limited to taking notes, scanning completed assignments, participating in classroom exercises, and reviewing assigned readings, lecture slides, and other postings to the D2L course site. They may not be used to check email, read/post to Facebook, chat online, search the internet, read unrelated materials, play games, and other activities that cause distractions (except during class breaks). If students violate this policy, they may not be allowed to use their computers during class.

COMMUNICATIONS: All students are responsible for reading emails sent to their UA account from the instructor and the announcements that are placed on the course web site. Information about assignments, readings, grades, and other course related topics may be communicated with these electronic methods. The official policy may be found at: http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/emailpolicy.htm

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION: If a student anticipates issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the instructor. If a student determines that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that they be registered with Disability Resources (621-3268; drc.arizona.edu) and notify the instructor of their eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The instructor will then help coordinate
the accommodations. The current official policy may be found at: http://catalog.arizona.edu/2011%2D12/policies/disability.htm

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All UA students are responsible for upholding the University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity available through the office of the Dean of Students and online. The policy may be found at http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity. In this course, if plagiarism or other cheating is detected on an assignment, the student will receive a verbal warning and be required to redo the assignment with the deduction of one letter grade for that assignment. A second offense will result in an automatic failure for that assignment as well as a written warning and a report to the Section Chair, the Dean of the College of Public Health, and the Assistant Dean of Students and Alumni Affairs. A third offense will result in automatic course failure and a report to the Section Chair, the Dean of the College of Public Health, and the Assistant Dean of Students and Alumni Affairs. Plagiarism may occur when a student copies text word-for-word without using quotation marks, fails to paraphrase, and/or fails to correctly reference materials used for preparing a written assignment. This includes fictitious or incorrect references. If a student wants clarification on what might constitute plagiarism, please contact the instructor. This policy is instituted because scientific writing is a fundamental skill at the graduate level in public health. Plagiarism or other cheating demonstrates that the skills necessary for this course have not been mastered by the student.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: The Dean of Students has set up expected standards for student behaviors and has defined and identified what is disruptive and threatening behavior. This information is available at: http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/disruptiveandthreateningstudents. Students are expected to be familiar with the UA Policy on Disruptive Behavior in an Instructional Setting found at http://policy.arizona.edu/disruptive-behavior-instructional and the Policy on Threatening Behavior by Students found at http://policy.arizona.edu/threatening-behavior-students.

GRIEVANCE POLICY: Should a student feel he or she has been treated unfairly, there are a number of resources available. With few exceptions, students should first attempt to resolve difficulties informally by bringing the concerns directly to the person responsible for the action, or with the student's Graduate Advisor, Section Chair, Division Director, Assistant Dean for Student and Alumni Affairs, or the immediate supervisor of the person responsible for the action. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, the student may file a formal grievance using the Graduate College Grievance Policy found at http://grad.arizona.edu/academics/policies/academic-policies/grievance-policy.

GRADE APPEAL POLICY: http://catalog.arizona.edu/2012-13/policies/gradappeal.htm

SYLLABUS CHANGES: Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate.
AUGUST 23

Introduction and Health Promotion Framework
No assigned readings. The following 1-page article will be discussed in class.


AUGUST 30

Ethics, Social Justice, and Policy


Research Designs

SEPTEMBER 6

Research Designs (Continued)


Meta-Analysis


SEPTEMBER 13

Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis (Dr. Nicky Teufel-Shone)


SEPTEMBER 20
Health Disparities and Participatory Research (Dr. Scott Carvajal)


SEPTEMBER 27
Evidence-Based Practice


Sexual Health


Physical Activity


**OCTOBER 18**

**Diet and Nutrition (Dr. Cynthia Thomson)**


**OCTOBER 25**

**Interpersonal Violence**


Alcohol and Drug Use


Tobacco Use (Dr. Lynda Bergsma)


