Theories of Health Behavior & Health Education
BCHS 2520 (2151)
3 Credits
Fall Term, August - December 2014

Thursdays 2:00 – 4:50 pm
A216 Crabtree Hall

OFFICE HOURS: by email appointment
(for our mutual convenience)

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COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Course Description

If you are interested in working to eliminate health disparities in some area, would you know where to begin? What would you choose to do? Why would you do it? Who is responsible for bringing about the needed changes? These are the kinds of questions that will be addressed in this course. The course is designed to introduce students to some of the major theories, models and conceptual frameworks that are frequently used to guide the design of interventions to promote good health or prevent diseases in individuals and communities. This course will provide you with the skills to design a theory-driven health promotion and/or disease prevention intervention. The course material will be presented via lectures, class discussions of assigned readings, in-class exercises and guest speakers. This course is a requirement for students in the MPH degree program in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences. There are no prerequisites for this course.
Course Rationale

This course, Theories of Health Behavior & Health Education, is one of the core courses for the MPH degree. It provides essential information for the design, implementation and evaluation of health interventions. The course will prepare you to take BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research and BCHS 2523 Program Planning. In addition, the course addresses some of the educational content that has been identified as critical for persons pursuing an MPH degree in the 21st century.* This includes knowledge of (among other things):

- Biological, environmental, socio-economic, behavioral, cultural, and other factors that impact human health, influence the global and societal burden of disease, and contribute to health disparities.
- Population health concepts, and the processes, approaches, and interventions that identify and address the major health-related needs and concerns of populations.


Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to do the following.

1. Explain the purpose of selected major theories and describe how they have been used in the design of various health behavior and health education interventions.

2. Select a health or health-related problem of interest from the Healthy People 2020 (or comparable document) or the Millennium Development Goals that will provide the focus for your work throughout the semester.

3. Conduct a literature search using databases available at the University of Pittsburgh in order to identify underlying factors that may be modifiable at various ecological levels.

4. Conduct an interview with individual(s) who have expertise related to your selected problem or population of interest.

5. Design an intervention to address the identified needs of your selected population based on an appropriate health behavior theory/model or concepts that are relevant to your chosen problem.

6. Develop a logic model that describes your intervention including: the assumptions about how change will occur, the resources needed to implement the intervention, the activities to be performed and the outcomes that will occur in the short, medium and long term.
INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES & MATERIALS

Course Readings

- **The primary required text** to be used in this course is: Karen Glanz, Barbara K. Rimer and K. Viswanath, Editors. *Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 4th edition, Jossey-Bass, 2008. The book is available at: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). (The cost for purchasing a new text is approximately $55 (new) and $45 (used) and kindle edition for $46. You can also rent the book for $19-$33.

- **Each week’s assigned readings will be available in CourseWeb** under the appropriate week. To access the materials, log onto: [www.my.pitt.edu](http://www.my.pitt.edu) and click on CourseWeb.

Course Schedule:

**Session 1**

**Date: August 28, 2014**

**Topics: Introductions and review of the syllabus.** In this first class we will focus on getting acquainted with one another and discussing the course goals and the expectations for student performance. In addition, we will discuss the 4 major assignments and the resources available to complete the assignments. To that end, we will briefly discuss two major planning documents: *Healthy People 2020 and the Millennium Development Goals*, soon to be replaced by the sustainable development goals (SDGs) after 2015, which summarize the health goals of United States and the global community respectively. **You will select a health problem from one of these or a comparable document (assignment 1) which will provide the basis for all of the subsequent course assignments.**

**Guest Presenter:** Chelsea Pallatino, MPH, CPH, CHES and current PhD student in BCHS. She will discuss the Millennium Development Goals as they related to her Maternal and Child Health work for SHARE INDIA during two recent summers. This is relevant to those of you who are interested in selecting a problem of international concern for the semester’s assignments.

**Required Reading:** Please familiarize yourself with the content contained in the following websites and the CDC Evaluation Guide on writing SMART objectives which are found in Courseweb week 1.


Session 2

Date: September 4, 2014

Topic: Social determinants of health. This week we are focusing our attention on the social conditions that affect health outcomes and disparities in health between various segments of the population. “Healthy People 2020 highlights the importance of addressing the social determinants of health by including it as one of the four overarching goals for the decade: “Create social and physical environments that promote good health for all.” This concern is also shared by the World Health Organization, which has defined social determinants of health as “the circumstances, within which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are in turn shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies, and politics.” This week’s readings explore the role that fundamental factors, such as education, income/wealth and race/ethnicity play in health outcomes and health disparities—especially in the United States.

Guest Presenter: Kristi Burry, MPH, CHES, CPH is the Director of Child and Community Health at Homewood Children’s Village (HCV). Ms. Burry will discuss the mission of HCV and the programs that she directs to address the social determinants of health—especially nutrition and physical activity. The HCV is modeled on the Harlem Children’s Zone in New York City.

Required Reading:  See Courseweb Week 2 assigned reading.


Khan, S. (2013). We Are Not All In This Together. The Great Divide Series, New York Times.

Supplemental Reading:


Session 3

Date: September 11, 2014

Topic: An overview of theory. This week will provide you with an overview of health behavior theory. We will discuss the origins and purpose of health behavior theories as a means to help us understand and be able to explain why certain health outcomes happen. We will review the major paradigms for thinking about disease causation in the 20th century leading to the current emphasis on a Social Ecological Model and a life course perspective to health promotion and disease causation. We will also look at theory from a practical perspective. We will discuss the relationship between theory, research and practice in public health and the practical considerations in applying theory to the design of an intervention.

Required Reading: See Courseweb Week 3 assigned reading.


**Supplemental Reading:**


**Session 4**

**Date:** September 18, 2014 **FIRST ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY**

**PLEASE GO TO THE FALK LIBRARY IN SCAIFE HALL. ONCE INSIDE THE LIBRARY, GO TO CLASSROOM 2 ON THE 2ND FLOOR OF THE LIBRARY.**

**Topic:** Workshop: Conducting a Literature Search. The first part of this week’s class will be held in Falk Library. During the first part of the class, you will have the opportunity to begin conducting your literature search. Ms. Barb Folb, the GSPH public health informationist and reference librarian, will guide you through a hands-on exercise on how to undertake a literature search that will assist you with your 2nd assignment.

**Guest Presenters:** Ms. Barb Folb, MM, MLS, MPH. is the reference librarian for the Graduate School of Public Health.

After the workshop, we will continue our discussion of the Social Ecological model. The required readings provide examples of the application of the social ecological model to different types of health problems.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 4 assigned reading.


**NOTE:** Monday, September 22nd and Tuesday September 23rd – ½ hour meetings with Dr. Trauth to get feedback on your 1st paper.

### Session 5

**Date:** September 25, 2014

**NOTE:** Today is Rosh Hashanah, a Jewish high holiday, and I will not be at class. However, the class will meet from 2-3:30pm.

**Topic:** The Brain Game. Our guest speaker, Dr. Judy Cameron, will discuss her work examining how early childhood experiences affect the architecture of the human brain and thus health and human development. She will take you through an exercise that illustrates how the context of children’s lives affects brain development. This exercise also illustrates the concept of “embodiment” from last week’s reading by Nancy Krieger.

**Guest Presenter:** Judy Cameron, PhD. Professor of Psychiatry. Dr. Cameron has a well-established research program studying the impact of everyday life stresses on mental health. She has participated in a number of activities that have translated science to the public including a film segment for ABC’s 20/20 on “Busting Scientific Myths” and a PBS Frontline Special on animal research helping solve the mystery of Parkinson’s disease. She has developed and teaches three courses to Pitt undergraduate and graduate students on communicating science: Speaking of Science, Translating Science, and Translating Science Independent Study.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 5 assigned reading.


Session 6

Date: October 2, 2014

**Topic:** This week we begin our discussion of theories/models used to change individual behavior. We will first focus on several theories that explain behavior change from a cognitive perspective. The first of these is the **Health Belief Model (HBM)**. This Model proposes that health behavior change occurs as a result of an individual's perception of a particular health threat coupled with their beliefs about the benefits of and barriers to taking a prescribed course of action, their self-efficacy and cues or reminders to take action. Today’s readings describe the use of the HBM as part of a multi-level intervention to address childhood asthma in inner-city Detroit.

We will also review the Logic Model discussion from Mary Hawk’s Prezi presentation.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 6 assigned reading.


Here is a link to a Logic Model Video Lecture prepared by Dr. Mary Hawk, BCHS Assistant Professor. Please review it before class.

[http://prezi.com/-epj0idpi_gd/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share](http://prezi.com/-epj0idpi_gd/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share)

**Supplemental Reading:**
Session 7

Date: October 9, 2014

**Topic: Transtheoretical Model & Motivational Interviewing.** This week we continue our examination of cognitive models of individual health behavior change focusing on the Transtheoretical Model—also known as the Stages of Change. This model says that individuals are at different levels of readiness to undertake a behavior change. They move forward using different strategies based on their given stage and based on their assessment of the pros and cons of behavior change where the benefits outweigh the barriers to change. We will also discuss *Motivational Interviewing* which is a patient-centered technique to help individuals change behavior by resolving their ambivalence regarding change.

**Guest Presenter: Jennifer R. Jones, MPH.** Community Engagement Coordinator, Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences. Jennifer will speak about her work with the CDC’s WISEWOMAN project (Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation). The WISEWOMAN Program was established in 1995 and is located in the National Center for Chronic Disease and Health Promotion, Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention. The WISEWOMAN program provides low-income, under-insured or uninsured women with chronic disease risk factor screening, lifestyle programs and referral services in an effort to prevent cardiovascular disease. The priority age group is women aged 40–64 years. CDC funds 22 WISEWOMAN programs, which operate on the local level in states and tribal organizations. WISEWOMAN programs provide standard preventive services including blood pressure and cholesterol testing. WISEWOMAN programs also offer testing for diabetes. Women are not just tested and referred, but can also take advantage of lifestyle programs that target poor nutrition and physical inactivity, such as healthy cooking classes, walking clubs, or lifestyle counseling. Women who smoke are encouraged to quit and are referred to proactive quit lines or quit-smoking classes. The interventions vary from program to program, but all are designed to promote lasting, healthy lifestyle changes.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 7 assigned reading.


Supplemental Reading:


Session 8

Date: October 16, 2014

**Topic:** Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behavior. This week we conclude our examination of cognitive models of individual health behavior change focusing on the Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behavior. This theory focuses on the role of an individual’s attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control play in their behavioral intentions.

**Guest Presenter:** Brian Primack, MD Associate Professor of Medicine, Pediatrics, and Clinical and Translational Science; Director, Center for Research on Media and Health; Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research on Health and Society, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 8 assigned reading.


Session 9

Date: October 23, 2014

**Topic:** This week we transition from examining theories at the individual level to those at the interpersonal level of intervention by focusing on Social Cognitive Theory. This theory emphasizes that behavior change occurs via the reciprocal interaction that occurs between an individual, her behavior and the larger environment. Key to the behavior change process is *self-*
regulation, which occurs via skill development and self-efficacy. We will examine various strategies for self-regulation of individual behavior that have been used in diabetes prevention and management programs such as the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) and the Look AHEAD program to prevent cardiovascular disease in persons with type 2 diabetes.

**Guest Presenter:** Beth Venditti, PhD. Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Epidemiology. She is also a member of the Group Lifestyle Balance Program team that has translated the DPP to community settings.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 9 assigned reading.


**Supplemental Reading:**


Session 10

Date: October 30, 2014

**Topic: Social Relationships and Health.** This week and next we will explore how social relationships and social networks impact health. Human beings are social creatures. We are linked to one another by means of relationships, experiences, norms as well as by shared geographical spaces such as neighborhoods. People also take actions that affect others. For instance, people may imitate—for better or worse, the behavior of others they encounter. People may also choose not to take action—such as, getting vaccinations or using condoms thus affecting the likelihood of the spread of disease. These examples of how the action of one individual affects the health conditions of others are a central concern of public health research and practice.

**Guest Presenter:** Katie Horowitz, MPH, Vice President for Education, Planned Parenthood. Katie will speak on her project: “It’s Ok To Ask Someone! (IOTAS)”, a youth-friendly sexual health text-line to be staffed by peer educators using a custom mobile app. This project is a collaboration of Planned Parenthood of Western PA and Stina Mair, Jessie Burke, and Teagen O’Malley of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences. IOTAS will be piloted during school-year 2014/15 and launched to the greater Allegheny County in the summer of 2015. The intervention targets two audiences and has two distinct goals. For youth texting questions, it aims to increase access to medically-accurate, confidential sexual health information. For peer educators staffing the textline, it aims to increase self-efficacy around healthy sexuality. Using a custom mobile app that harnesses the collaborative possibilities of social media, peer educators will suggest answers and comment and vote on one another's answers, creating an ongoing dialogue and increasing student knowledge and competence. Adult educators will facilitate conversation and oversee all incoming/outgoing texts.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 10 required readings.


And here is the link to the IOTAS video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=cwARdcPfCfM
**Supplemental Reading:**


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**Session 11**

**Date:** November 6, 2014

(SECOND ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY)

**Topic:** Social Networks and Health. This week we continue to explore how health behaviors are influenced by an individual's social network and, in turn, how one's social networks can be used to bring about behavior change.

**Guest Presenter:** Teagan O’Malley, BCHS doctoral student. Teagan will speak about a pilot study she is working on titled: “Microfinance, Borrower Group Dynamics, and Health: A Pilot Study.” Focusing on an on-going microfinance program, this pilot study is designed to examine how health behaviors and health outcomes are related to social network characteristics (e.g., density, closeness, size, composition) among female clients in Puno, Peru. The unique use of social network analysis (SNA) in this project will allow for an in-depth investigation of the impact of the complex relationship of communal banking microfinance and the structure and activity of communal bank social networks and group dynamics on client’s health knowledge and attitudes, healthcare behaviors, and health outcomes. Network characteristics will be assessed to determine whether there are consistent, generalizable patterns in client relationships.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 11 required readings.


**Supplemental Reading:**
Session 12

Date: November 13, 2014

**Topic:** Theory of Gender and Power. This week we will discuss the Theory of Gender and Power (TGP). This theory states that power relationships between genders and within genders arise from the global dominance of men over women. This is a social structural model that explains women’s health risks as a function of three interlinked structures that characterize the gendered relationships between men and women. These three structures are: 1) the sexual division of labor, 2) the sexual division of power and, 3) the structure of affective attachments and social norms. Today’s readings highlight contemporary examples of these dimensions of power between genders and the resultant problems.

**Guest Presenter:** TBA.

**Required Reading:** See Courseweb Week 12 required readings.


**Supplemental Reading:**


**Session 13**

**Date:** November 20, 2014

**Topic:** This week we will discuss **structural intervention approaches**.

**Guest Presenter:** Suzanne Kinsky, BCHS Doctoral student. Suzanne Kinsky has over 12 years’ experience in the HIV and nonprofit field. Most recently, Suzanne was the Director of Access to Care at AIDS United, a national HIV grantmaking and policy organization based in Washington, DC. There, she was responsible for managing and evaluating a grantee portfolio of community-based programs to find and link HIV-positive individuals to care. Prior to coming to AIDS United, she conducted HIV prevention program evaluation and managed statewide HIV testing data for the Maryland AIDS Administration. Suzanne has also been the Women’s Services Director at Our Place in Washington, DC, a non-profit serving incarcerated and recently-released women. In addition, Suzanne was a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow with the Congressional Hunger Center, where she worked on issues of welfare reform and anti-poverty initiatives. Suzanne holds a Master of Public Health degree from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a Bachelor’s degree in Rural Sociology from Cornell University. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh, where her research interests focus on health disparities in the LGBT population.

**Required Readings:** See Courseweb Week 13 assigned reading.


**Supplemental Reading:**


**NOVEMBER 27th THANKSGIVING**

**Session 14**

**Date:** December 4, 2014

**Topic:** Student Presentations.

**Session 15**

**Date:** December 11, 2013

**Topic:** Student Presentations

3rd and 4th ASSIGNMENTS DUE TODAY

**ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING**

**Course Assignments:** Detailed instructions for each assignment can be found in Courseweb under the Assignments tab.

**Assignment #1:** Problem Statement (10%)

Select a problem of interest from either Healthy People 2020 (or a comparable document) or the Millennium Development Goals. The problem selected will be the focus for all 4 course assignments. Students have the option of selecting either a domestic public health problem or a global health issue.

Write a 1-2 page paper discussing the health problem you selected. Your paper must include: 1) a statement of your specific objective related to the HP 2020 or MDG Goals; 2) a discussion of the importance of the health problem you selected. Provide some data to support your choice of
3) State the particular population of interest (e.g. age range, race/ethnicity, gender) or if you are focusing on communities, identify the characteristics of community—e.g. size, income, urban/rural etc.; 4) State why you have selected the particular population (e.g. individuals at risk, schools, communities, state legislators, healthcare providers) as the focus for your paper.

The Guidelines for Assignment 1 are posted under the Assignments tab in CourseWeb.

**Assignment #2: A Review of the Literature Regarding your Problem of Interest (30%)**

Write a 10-12 page critique based on your literature search regarding your problem of interest. You must use the following headings to organize and summarize your discussion. The

1. **Underlying factors**: identify and discuss the underlying social and behavioral factors that affect your chosen health problem;
2. **Modifiable factors**: discuss what factors are modifiable and could potentially be the focus of an intervention;
3. **Interventions**: discuss interventions that have been done relative to your problem that have been reported in the peer-reviewed literature; and,
4. **Conceptual Frameworks**: identify and discuss the theories, models, constructs, or frameworks that guided the design of the interventions you identified.

Guidelines for Assignment 2 are posted under the Assignments tab in CourseWeb.

**Assignment #3: Expert Interview (20%)**

Conduct an interview with someone who has expertise in either your health problem area or the population of interest. Write a 4-5 page summary describing your interview. An Interview Guide form is posted under the Assignments tab in CourseWeb.

**Assignment #4: Intervention Design (30%)**

Design an intervention to address your chosen health problem that is guided by an appropriate conceptual framework (i.e. a theory(s), model(s) or concepts) that addresses the health problem selected from HP 2020 or the Millennium Development Goals.

**Write a 5 page paper and develop a one-page logic model** that describes a theory-driven intervention to address your health problem. Based on your literature search, you should have identified some modifiable factors that explain why the health problem exists. The answers to the why questions should suggest targets for intervention at some ecological level—individual, interpersonal, organizational, community or policy. The Guidelines for Assignment 4 are posted under the Assignments tab in CourseWeb.

**Assignments and Grading:**

Readings will be assigned for each session and students will be expected to be ready to discuss their reflections on the assigned material for each class. The in-class lectures, exercises and
guest presentations are designed to broaden, expand and clarify the student’s understanding of health behavior theories. **Students are required to complete the following assignments:** 1) select a health problem and population of interest from the Healthy People 2020 or similar report or, from the United Nations Millennium Development Goals; 2) write a review of the literature relevant to your problem of interest; 3) interview an expert—i.e. an individual researcher and/or practitioner who works with your population of interest and/or the problem area; and, 4) based on the literature search and expert interview, design an intervention that is guided by a conceptual framework (i.e. a theory, model or concepts) that addresses the health problem selected from HP 2020 or the Millennium Development Goals. You will also develop a one page logic model to demonstrate how you will implement and evaluate your intervention.

Grades will be determined using the following criteria:

1. Description of the health problem of interest: 10%
2. Literature search: 30%
3. Expert interview (your observations and critique of the discussion): 20%
4. The theory-driven intervention and logic model: 30%
5. Participation in class discussions: 10%

Grades can range from A+ to C:
97-100 = A+
93- 96 = A
89- 92 = A-
85- 88 = B+
81- 84 = B
77- 80 = B-
73- 76 = C+
70- 72 = C
< 70 = F

**COURSE POLICIES**

Policy Regarding Attendance: If a student is not able to be present, please contact the instructor in advance by email. Students are responsible for reading the assigned material for the week they missed.

Policy Regarding Late Assignments: Assignments are due on the dates listed in the syllabus. If an assignment is late points will be deducted for each day it is late.

Disability Services: If you have a disability that requires a special accommodation, please contact me and the Disability Resources and Services, (412) 648-7890, 216 William Pitt Union as early as possible in the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations.
Policy Regarding Academic Integrity: All students are expected to adhere to the school’s standards of academic honesty. Any work submitted by a student for evaluation must represent his/her own intellectual contribution and efforts. The GSPH policy on academic integrity, which is based on the University policy, is available online at: http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=126

The policy includes obligations for faculty and students, procedures for adjudicating violations, and other critical information. Please take the time to read this policy.

Students committing acts of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, cheating on exams, misrepresentation of data, and facilitating dishonesty by others, will receive sanctions appropriate to the violation(s) committed. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, reduction of a grade for an assignment or a course, failure of a course, and dismissal from GSPH.

All student violations of academic integrity must be documented by the appropriate faculty member; this documentation will be kept in a confidential student file maintained by the GSPH Office of Student Affairs. If a sanction for a violation is agreed upon by the student and instructor, the record of this agreement will be expunged from the student file upon the student’s graduation. If the case is referred to the GSPH Academic Integrity Hearing Board, a record will remain in the student’s permanent file.

Statement on Classroom Recording: If a student needs to record a lecture, please let the instructor know in advance.