

Graduate School of Public Health
PUBHLT 2035: Applications in Public Health
Monday, 5:30pm–7:25pm, VIRTUAL
Wednesday, 5:00pm–6:55pm, VIRTUAL
Credit Hours: 2

Fall Semester 2020: August 19 – November 16 (12 Classes)

Instructor: Mara Leff, MPH (mal227@pitt.edu; Cell: 412.298.6273)

Office: Virtual appointments at student request

Website: <http://courseweb.pitt.edu>

Course Description

The goal of this final course in the public health core curriculum is to apply problem-solving methodologies to address current public health issues. Specifically, students will use a mix of individual and group assignments to facilitate integration of knowledge from different disciplines and then synthesize and apply that knowledge to:

- (1) Assess case studies in public health, including ethics and other areas
- (2) Develop, as part of an interdisciplinary team, an intervention for a public health issue from start (identifying a problem) to finish (developing, assessing, and advocating for an intervention)
- (3) Use systems thinking to assess specific public health issues.

CEPH MPH Competencies

The Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH) has developed a set of competencies that all MPH graduates should master (<https://ceph.org/assets/2016.Criteria.pdf>, See section D4.). The learning objectives listed below address specific competencies that are listed by number after each learning objective. The next section includes the competency descriptions.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention (C9).
- Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management (C10).
- Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations (C14).
- Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making (C16).
- Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges (C17).
- Perform effectively on interprofessional teams (C21).
- Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue (C22).

Learning Objectives

This course is designed to assist MPH students in their development of the competencies described below. Some competencies are cross-cutting competencies, that is, they overlap with those in other departmental and core courses. However, this course provides additional experience and perspectives, especially across disciplines.

The specific CEPH domains and competencies covered in this course include:

Domain: Evidence-Based Approaches to Public Health (overlap with other courses)

(C2) Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context

(C3) Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate

(C4) Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

Domain: Planning and Management to Promote Health

(C9) Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention

(C10) Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management

Domain: Policy in Public Health

(C14) Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations

Domain: Leadership

(C16) Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making

(C17) Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

Domain: Interprofessional Practice

(C21) Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

Domain: Systems Thinking

(C22) Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

Required Software

Course content is available on Courseweb.

Fred Web software is available through <https://fred.publichealth.pitt.edu>

Required Textbooks

There is no required textbook for this course. All documents (including syllabus) and other resource materials will be available on CourseWeb or distributed in class.

Courseweb notes will be posted after each lecture.

Teaching Philosophy:

The “Applications in Public Health” course is the culmination of the Core MPH Curriculum in Public Health and as such, it emphasizes active participation, honing of learned skills, group activities, and continued learning. Because we all know different things and have experienced different events, the course encourages and respects all questions and viewpoints in the classroom and in groups. Furthermore, because public health is a team activity, learning and practicing how to be an effective team-member is critical. Part of this course is honing your skills to work productively as a team member or team leader, respecting all viewpoints, and finding ways to accomplish your goals. You will need these skills in the workplace.

However, should a problem arise in your group’s functioning that you are unable to resolve – please contact me. You are still learning and are not expected to be experts in intergroup dynamics.

The classes will consist of short lectures, followed by in-class group activities and discussions, as well as short presentations by students. The individual and group assignments are designed to hone your individual problem-solving skills, improve your ability to think independently and critically, and facilitate interactions among peers in a multidisciplinary group.

Expectations in the Classroom:

Please turn off cell phones and do not record lecture or presentation unless you have received prior approval from the instructor. Please respect your fellow students and do not use your laptops during presentations; it is very distracting and disrespectful to those around you. However, please bring laptops to class for student group activities because you may need to access internet material and take notes of group discussions.

This class is project-based, where groups will work together to build upon their project over the course of the semester. The last two classes will consist of group presentations.

If you are unable to attend class, you must notify the instructor and members of your group beforehand and provide whatever materials are necessary, e.g., materials for your group discussions or in-class exercises.

When you email the instructor for any reason, please put course title in subject of the email.

Assignments

This course includes **7** at home assignments, a **final group presentation** and a **self-reflection and group survey** – all assignments will be listed in the **Assignments** section on Courseweb. Submit all assignments to the assignment box. Late assignments will receive point deductions. Please follow the directions for the specific assignment.

We ask that you submit all written assignments in two formats – on Courseweb and as a printed version that you submit in class.

Formatting Assignments: All writing assignments, except assignments submitted in PowerPoint, should be typewritten, **double-spaced**, and printed on plain white paper on one side of the page only. Please leave a margin of at least 1 inch to provide room for comments. If your assignment is two or more pages in length, staple the pages together. Head the first page with your name, the assignment number, the date and the title of the assignment. If your submission is a rewrite, please indicate so at the top of the paper, and attach the first draft to the new submission.

Summary of assignments, homework, in-class activities and total points

Assignment #1: Describe your organization's mission and goals and its key strategies for effecting public health change (C9/C14) 10 pts

Assignment #2: Complete interview (either in person or phone) with local organization (C16/C21) 10 pts

Assignment #3: Strategic Plan Part 1 (C9/C16) 10 pts

Assignment #4: Strategic Plan Part 2 (C10) 10 pts

Assignment #5: Strategic Plan FINAL (C22/C14) 10 pts

Personal Assignment #1: Leadership Case Study 5 pts

Personal Assignment #2: Systems Thinking Rich Diagram 5 pts

Final Group Presentation:

(A) Presentation of intervention (group) (C9) (C14) 20 pts

(B) Fellow group member evaluation (individual) (C21) 5 pts

(C) Instructor evaluation of each student's group activity (C9) (C10) 5 pts

(D) Personal reflection 10 pts

Total 100 pts

Grading

Grade	Total Points
A+	98-105
A	93-97
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	≤69

Schedule, Assignments and Activities Overview

**** All assignments are due the WEEK OF the due date. Please submit online by midnight Friday.**

<i>DATE</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Preparation for Class/Readings</i>	<i>In-class Activities</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
WEEK 1 (MON) 8/24 AND (WED) 8/19	Course Overview: Where do I fit into the Public Health Ecosystem?	None	Introductions	
WEEK 2 (MON) 8/31 AND (WED) 8/26	Public Health: Mapping the Organizational Landscape/ Creating a Mission Statement	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>	Work on organizational mission statements	Post groups and topics of interest on Courseweb by class

DATE	Topic	Preparation for Class/Readings	In-class Activities	Assignments
WEEK 3 (MON) 9/7 AND (WED) 9/2	Getting your Message Out There and Using the Power of Advocacy: Media and Communications	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>		
WEEK 4 (MON) 9/14 AND (WED) 9/9	What is This All Going to Cost? Budgeting/Cost Effectiveness and Resource management and tracking	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>		Assignment #1 DUE: Describe your organization's mission and goals, and its key strategies for effecting public health change
WEEK 5 (MON) 9/21 AND (WED) 9/16	You Can't Go It Alone: Working with Stakeholders and Partnership Development	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>		
WEEK 6 (MON) 9/28 AND (WED) 9/23	What Makes a Good Leader and How to Approach Governance?	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>		Assignment #2 DUE: Complete interview (either in person or phone) with local organization
WEEK 7 (MON) 10/5 AND (WED) 9/30	Create Effective Initiatives that Move the Needle: Program Development and Implementation	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>	Review interview responses around leadership	Complete Personal Assignment #1: Leadership case study (5 points)
WEEK 8 (MON) 10/12 AND (WED) 10/7	Evaluation and Data...and More Data	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>		Assignment #3 DUE: Strategic Plan Part 1

DATE	Topic	Preparation for Class/Readings	In-class Activities	Assignments
WEEK 9 NO CLASS – SELF CARE				
WEEK 10 (MON) 10/26 AND (WED) 10/21	Systems Thinking!	Readings: See <i>postings on Courseweb</i>	FRED mapping tool demonstration	Assignment #4 DUE: Strategic Plan Part 2 Personal Assignment #2: Rich Diagram (5 points)
WEEK 11 (MON) 11/2 AND (WED) 10/28	Where to Next? Careers in Public Health and Thinking Towards the Future	Readings: None		
WEEK 12 (MON) 11/9 AND (WED) 11/4	Final Presentations Day 1	Readings: None		Assignment #5 DUE: Strategic Plan FINAL
WEEK 13 (MON) 11/16 AND (WED) 11/11	Final Presentations Day 2	Readings: None		Final Project Reflection DUE Online group reflection Due (access via survey monkey link posted on Course Web)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

If you have any disability for which you may require accommodation, you are encouraged to notify both me and the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union (voice or TTD 412-648-7890 or at www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs, or by email at drsrecep@pitt.edu as early as possible in the term.

Diversity & Academic Civility

Students, faculty and guests participating in this course represent a diversity of individual perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, which enriches the course for all involved. I urge (and expect) you to be respectful of others, their beliefs and opinions. While intellectual

disagreement is constructive and encouraged, harsh statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will not be tolerated. If you feel uncomfortable as a result of class discussions or activities, please discuss the situation with me so we can address your concerns.

Classroom Recording Policy

To ensure free and open discussion of ideas, you may not record classroom activities without my advance permission. Any such recording, properly approved in advance, may be used only for your private use or for all other students enrolled in this class, but you may not copy, distribute, publish or otherwise use the recording for any other purpose without the express written consent of me or any other course instructors. Any student who records a class session must provide a copy of the recording to me or the instructors if requested to do so.

Academic Integrity Statement

I encourage you and your fellow students to work together and discuss all assignments (indeed that is a requirement of the course), but any final work you submit must be original and must be your own. All students are expected to adhere to the school's standards of academic honesty. Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. The Graduate School of Public Health's policy on academic integrity, which is based on the University policy, is available online in the Pitt Public Health Academic Handbook www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements. The policy includes obligations for faculty and students, procedures for adjudicating violations, and other critical information. Please take the time to read this policy.

Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX for Pitt Public Health Course Syllabi

The University is committed to combatting sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University's Title IX office so that the victim may be provided appropriate resources and support options. What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am made aware.

Two important exceptions to this requirement exist:

- 1) Designated University employees who service as counselors and medical professionals do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality. Find them here: www.titleix.pitt.edu/report/confidentiality
- 2) Academic work is an important exception to the reporting requirement. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University's Title IX office.

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

- Title IX Office: 412-648-7860
- SHARE @ the University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930
(8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)

For any safety concern, contact the University of Pittsburgh Police: 412-624-2121.

Other reporting information is available here: www.titleix.pitt.edu/report-0

Statement from the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

[This statement was developed by Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with GSWS instructors.]

Email Communication

We will use your authorized University of Pittsburgh email address (username@pitt.edu) to communicate about assignments and other class business, either directly or via Courseweb. For your convenience, please check your Pitt email account daily, and prior to coming to class, in case I must cancel a class meeting.

The Writing Center

Having difficulty with writing requirements and assignments? Pitt's Writing Center is a place for you to work on your writing. Center staff members are experienced, trained writing consultants and services are free to all University of Pittsburgh students. Learn more at www.writingcenter.pitt.edu or call the center at 412-634-6556.