

# School of Public Health

## Syllabus and Course Information



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

### PubH 6055-Section 001 Social Inequalities in Health Spring 2018

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<b>Credits:</b>	2
<b>Meeting Days:</b>	Wednesdays
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	11:15 a.m. – 1:10 p.m.
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	Mayo Building D199
<b>Instructor:</b>	Rhonda Jones-Webb, Dr.P.H.
<b>Office Address:</b>	1300 South 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 300, Room 386
<b>Office Phone:</b>	612-626-8866
<b>Fax:</b>	612-624-0315
<b>E-mail:</b>	jones010@umn.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Any time before or after class and by appointment

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#### I. Course Description

This course examines the causes of social inequalities in health and what can be done to reduce them in the U.S. We specifically examine individual, community, organizational, and policy level approaches to reducing health disparities.

#### II. Course Prerequisites

The course is designed primarily for graduate public health students with professional interests in interventions to reduce health disparities and promote health equity. Students in other related health professions (e.g., medicine, nursing) or human services professions (e.g., public affairs, social work) with an interest in health issues are also welcome. This course fulfills a “Critical Issues- Health Behavior and Policy Intervention” course requirement for Community Health Promotion majors in the School of Public Health. The course also meets the requirement for the Health Equity minor at the University of Minnesota.

#### III. Course Goals and Objectives

As a result of taking this course, students will:

1. Gain an understanding of the use of constructs such as race, ethnicity, and social class in health research in the U.S
2. Gain an understanding of how data on race, ethnicity, and social class can be used to inform health

interventions in the U.S.

3. Gain an understanding of policy, community, organizational, and individual level strategies to reduce social inequalities in health and promote health equity.
4. Apply concepts and tools learned to a health or health care disparity.

#### IV. Class Norms/Climate

1. Listen to others carefully, respectfully and with empathy.
2. Allow time and space for all to speak who wish to speak.

#### V. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

Students learn in different ways. The course therefore uses a variety of learning formats including lecture, seminar-style discussion of readings, guest speakers, and field trips to stimulate critical discussion.

#### VI. Course Text and Readings

Course readings are available on line on the course website.

#### VII. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

##### ASSIGNMENTS

There are six course assignments:

1. Attend all class sessions and participate in class discussions.
2. Reflect on class readings. To encourage classroom discussion, students will be asked to complete written reactions to class readings and lead class discussions of readings.
3. Submit a brief description of your paper topic. **Due February 7<sup>th</sup>**
4. Submit a detailed outline of final paper. **Due: March 28<sup>th</sup>**
5. Write a final paper (10-12 pages). Write a paper on a health or health care disparity and strategies to reduce the disparity. **Due: May 2<sup>nd</sup>**
6. Give a 15-minute presentation on multi-level intervention to the class. **Due: April 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

##### Instructions for Completing Assignments

1. *Class Participation.* Participation is based on attendance, participation in class discussions, and facilitating a discussion of class readings. If you are unable to attend class due to medical, family or work-related issues, please contact me in advance **(15 points)**.
2. *Reflections on Readings.* Much of the course will include seminar-style discussion of readings, therefore completing **all** the assigned readings before class is very important. To facilitate discussion, select 3 articles you have read for the week and submit an email about one-single spaced page on 1) the strengths and weakness of each study, 2) what changes you would make in the study (e.g., design, program components, measures, analysis, conclusions, and 3) the most important new things you learned. Do not outline or exhaustively summarize the readings; instead let me know what you are *thinking* and *learning* from the readings and what you agree with or disagree with and why. The first reaction piece is due Tuesday, **January 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Comments must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to each class (otherwise it's difficult for me to read them before class). They must be emailed to [jones010@umn.edu](mailto:jones010@umn.edu). Make sure you retain a copy, just in case your email is lost (5 points for each satisfactory e-mail submitted; a total of 6 are required **(30 points)**). See sample reflections on course website.
3. *Facilitating Class Discussion of Readings.* Each of you will be asked to facilitate at least one class discussion of readings. Please note if you are facilitating a discussion of the readings, you do not need to submit a personal reflection, you do however need to submit a summary of the article to guide the discussion. (See instructions for facilitating class discussion of the readings on the course website). Your summary of the article should be submitted by 3:00 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to the class. Also, if you are leading a discussion of the readings, let me know which article you select the Friday before the class you are facilitating.
4. *Detailed Outline of Paper.* Please provide a detailed 2-page outline of your paper (single-space) on

**March 28<sup>th</sup>.** The outline should include the major headings for your paper and supporting evidence for each section of the paper. (See sample outline on course website). Your outline will allow me to provide feedback on your paper before you submit a final draft. You will receive feedback on your paper on **April 4<sup>th</sup> (5 points)**.

5. *Paper.* Imagine you are working for a member of Congress in the current administration who believes our nation is not doing enough to reduce racial, ethnic, and class-based health disparities. You have been asked to write a paper for Congress outlining your vision of a multi-level and comprehensive strategy to reduce disparities. The paper should 1) provide an overview of a specific health or health care disparity, 2) present an explanation of why the disparity exists, 3) suggest strategies at multiple levels--policy, community, organizational, and/or individual--that could be implemented to reduce the health disparity and improve health equity, 4) discuss potential challenges in implementing the strategies and how you hope to overcome them; and 5) discuss which component(s) would you rank as having highest priority, if funding is limited; discuss why. **Please select strategies at a minimum of three levels.** The strategies you propose should target those risk factors that contribute to the health disparity, i.e., why the disparity exists. Provide support for your strategy based on class readings, the extant literature, and personal experience/observation **(40 points)**.

For this assignment, select a health or health care disparity that you believe merits greater national attention, e.g., limited access to health care among the poor. Next, describe in *detail* a multi-level approach to addressing your topic, i.e. discuss strategies at the policy, community, organizational, and/or individual level that should receive greater funding priority. Next, explain why you selected these strategies and if there is any evidence for their effectiveness. Also, discuss any challenges you anticipate in implementing the strategies and how you plan to overcome them. Indicate which component(s) should be given highest priority and why.

Example: Violence affects all Americans, but particularly African American men and women. Various hypotheses have been proposed why violence rates are especially high among African American males, e.g., higher levels of unemployment, lower levels of education, high availability and promotion of alcohol in inner cities. For this example, you might propose policies that increase the minimum wage and provide tax incentives for businesses to locate in inner cities; policies that seek to change the alcohol environment, (e.g., restrict off-premise alcohol outlets in problems with high crime rates) and local media campaigns.

The paper should be 10-12 double-space typed pages. Points will be deducted for spelling errors. At the beginning of class (**February 7<sup>th</sup>**), you will be asked to submit a paragraph via email on the topic you selected and why you selected it.

*Presentation of Paper.* Students will be asked to give a 10-minute presentation based on their papers (Assignment 5). Please allow an additional 5 minutes for Q&A. Your presentation should introduce your topic, describe what strategies are needed to reduce the health disparity you selected and why. You may include PowerPoint slides in your presentation **(10 points)**.

## **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS**

**Week 1:** January 17 Overview and Introduction to Course

**Week 2:** January 24 What is Race, Ethnicity, and Social Class and How Do We Measure Them?

**Week 3:** January 31 Why do Race, Ethnic, and Class-based Health Disparities Exist?

**Week 4:** February 7 Policy-Level Strategies to Reduce Health Disparities

**Topics Due (include a few sentences describing your topic –what topic, why it is important and why you selected it**

**Week 5:** February 14 **Field Excursion**

Representative Rena Moran  
Deputy, Minority Leader  
DFL District: 61A  
329 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155  
651-296-5158

**Week 6:** February 21 Community Level Strategies to Reduce Health Disparities

**Week 7:** February 28 **Field Excursion**  
Mike Hoyt  
Pillsbury United Communities  
Pillsbury House + Theater  
3501 Chicago Avenue, South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
612 824-0708

**Week 8:** March 7 **Guest Speaker:**  
Takayla Lightfield  
American Indian Cancer Foundation

**Week 9** **Spring Break - March 12- March 16**

**Week 10** March 21 Organizational Strategies to Reduce Health Disparities

**Week 11:** March 28 **Field Excursion**  
Westside Community Mental Health Services  
11:30-12:15

**Detailed Outline Due**

**Week 12:** April 4 Individual level Strategies to Reduce Health Disparities

**Week 13:** April 11 **Guest Speaker:**  
Charles Rogers, Ph.D., Assistant Professor  
University of Minnesota, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health.  
Disparities in Early Detection Screening and Colorectal Cancer among African  
American Men

**Week 14:** April 18 Student Presentations

**Week 15:** April 25 Student Presentations

**Week 16:** May 2 Student Presentations

**Final Paper Due**

## VIII. Other Course Information and Policies

### **Grade Option Change** (if applicable):

For full-semester courses, students may change their grade option, if applicable, through the second week of the semester. Grade option change deadlines for other terms (i.e. summer and half-semester courses) can be found at [onestop.umn.edu](http://onestop.umn.edu).

**Course Withdrawal:**

Students should refer to the Refund and Drop/Add Deadlines for the particular term at [onestop.umn.edu](http://onestop.umn.edu) for information and deadlines for withdrawing from a course. As a courtesy, students should notify their instructor and, if applicable, advisor of their intent to withdraw.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course after the noted final deadline for a particular term must contact the School of Public Health Office of Admissions and Student Resources at [sph-ssc@umn.edu](mailto:sph-ssc@umn.edu) for further information.

**Student Conduct Code:**

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf).

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

**Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:**

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf)) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html>.

The Office for Community Standards has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty <https://communitystandards.umn.edu>. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

**Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:**

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>.

**Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:**

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

**Sexual Harassment:**

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf>

**Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:**

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity\\_Diversity\\_EO\\_AA.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf).

**Disability Accommodations:**

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center Student Services is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DRC at 612-626-1333 or [drc@umn.edu](mailto:drc@umn.edu) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

**Mental Health and Stress Management:**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

**The Office of Student Affairs at the University of Minnesota:**

The Office for Student Affairs provides services, programs, and facilities that advance student success, inspire students to make life-long positive contributions to society, promote an inclusive environment, and enrich the University of Minnesota community.

Units within the Office for Student Affairs include, the Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education, Boynton Health Service, Central Career Initiatives (CCE, CDes, CFANS), Leadership Education and Development – Undergraduate Programs (LEAD-UP), the Office for Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Office for Community Standards, the Office for Student Engagement, the Parent Program, Recreational Sports, Student and Community Relations, the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Student Parent HELP Center, Student Unions & Activities, University Counseling & Consulting Services, and University Student Legal Service.

For more information, please see the Office of Student Affairs at <https://osa.umn.edu/>.

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility: for courses that do not involve students in research:**

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.\*

**OR:**

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility, for courses that involve students in research**

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom and conduct relevant research. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.\* When conducting research, pertinent institutional approvals must be obtained and the research must be consistent with University policies.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, (Dr Kristin Anderson, SPH Dean of Student Affairs), or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

*\* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".*

**Student Academic Success Services (SASS):** <http://www.sass.umn.edu>:

Students who wish to improve their academic performance may find assistance from Student Academic Support Services. While tutoring and advising are not offered, SASS provides resources such as individual consultations, workshops, and self-help materials.

*Template update 8/2017*