

**Graduate School of Public Health**  
Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences  
BCHS 2509: Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health  
Summer 2021: 2217  
3 credits; Monday pm – 2 – 4:50

**Instructor: Martha Ann Terry, PhD**  
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Pronouns: she/her/hers



### ***Course Description***

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The core course provides an overview of the social and behavioral sciences and their importance in the interdisciplinary field of public health. A primary emphasis is on the social-ecological model, its application to public health issues, and its use in the development of policies, strategies, interventions and programs. The course content will introduce students to several relevant social and behavioral theories as well as a range of community health assessment and planning models used by public health professionals in both domestic and international venues. Through a series of assigned readings, discussion exercises, group projects, quizzes and written assignments, students will enhance their knowledge and awareness of the role of social and behavioral sciences in public health and its relevance to their specific discipline. At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

identify the important social and behavioral determinants of health; describe the inter-relationships between the social, behavioral, bio-medical, physiological, and environmental factors related to individual and community health; identify the major health disparities related to social, behavioral and economic factors; describe the role of culture and socio-economic status in health behavior, access to services, and decision-making; and understand the importance of community partnerships and participatory approaches in the development, implementation, management and evaluation of community policies and programs.

### ***Course Rationale***

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New challenges from chronic and communicable diseases, environmental threats, and man-made and natural disasters continue to face public health.

Dramatic demographic shifts are occurring in the United States as well as around the world. In this time of dynamic change it is essential that

decision-makers gain a better understanding of how to prevent, delay, or reduce the overall impact of chronic conditions on the health of the public.

Education in the traditional core areas of epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, public health biology and infectious diseases, and the social and behavioral sciences is essential for public health professionals. However, ***given the current state of the world and considering the future, the social and behavioral sciences, including the associated focus on social determinants of health, structural inequities, community-based participatory practice, and cultural sensitivity, are becoming increasingly important to those working in public health.***



In recent years there has been a growing recognition that the social and behavioral sciences play a critical role in public health practice and in public health academics and training. Disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, and health education have emerged as important and essential subspecialties in both public health practice and research educational and training programs.

Public health professionals play a major leadership role in a range of systems. To be most effective they

must look beyond biological risk factors to the complex nature of the influence of social, behavioral and environmental factors on the public's health and welfare.

Students in this class will learn how to use social and behavioral sciences theory and information to 1) examine public health problems from multiple points of view; 2) identify structural and systemic inequities; 3) conduct assessments using a strengths-based approach; 4) design SMART objectives to evaluate programs and policies; and 6) identify and engage appropriate stakeholders.



### ***Course Objectives***

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

Explain an ecological perspective on health (CEPH Competency K12);

Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health (CEPH Competency K9);

Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities (CEPH Competency K10);

Discuss how structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational,

community and societal levels (CEPH Competency 6);

Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health (CEPH Competency 7);

Select and apply appropriate qualitative methods for collecting data related to health issues (CEPH Competency 2);

Analyze qualitative data and interpret it for research, policy and practice (CEPH Competencies 3 & 4);

Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs (CEPH Competency 8);

Design SMART objectives to evaluate health promotion programs (CEPH Competency 11); and

Propose appropriate strategies identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes (CEPH Competency 13).



## Teaching Philosophy

My job is not to tell you the truth. There are many truths, depending on our experiences, attitudes, background and the context. My job is to create a safe environment in which you can explore topics that intrigue you and that may challenge you, with the goal of inspiring you to think beyond where you have thought before and to entertain perspectives with which you may not be familiar. I do not care that you think what I think, just that **you think**. I know some stuff, you know some stuff; I believe that you learn as much from each other as you learn from me, and that I learn as much from you as you learn from me. Learning comes from many places, so let's explore those places together.



## Diversity

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. Pitt Public Health is committed to creating and fostering inclusive learning environments that value human dignity and equity. Every member of our community is expected to be respectful of the individual perspectives, experiences, behaviors, worldviews, and backgrounds of

others. While intellectual disagreement may be constructive, no derogatory statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will be permitted.

If you feel uncomfortable or would like to discuss a situation, please contact any of the following:

- the course director or course instructor;
- the Pitt Public Health Associate Dean for responsible for diversity and inclusion;
- the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 412-648-7860 or <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/report-form>(anonymous reporting form

### **Course Policies**

#### **Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX:**

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 somehow made aware. There are two important exceptions to this requirement about which you should be aware: A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting

responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/confidentiality-and-retaliation>An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. 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)If you have a safety concern, please contact the University of Pittsburgh Police, 412-624-2121.Other reporting information is available

here:<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report>Statement from the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies [This statement was developed by Katie Pope, Title IX Associate Vice Chancellor for Civil Rights and Title IX, in conjunction with GSWS instructors.]



#### **Academic Integrity:**

*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](http://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.*

### **Disabilities:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term.



### **Cell Phones:**

Please be courteous to the instructor and your fellow classmates and refrain from cell phone use during class. If you are expecting an emergency call, please ensure that your phone is set to vibrate and mute yourself if you receive a call that you must answer.



### **Recording:**

Course sessions will be recorded and posted on Canvas as a resource for students. Under no circumstances are

recordings to be shared with people not registered for this course.



### **Email:**

I have a strict email policy. When initiating an email conversation with the instructor, you should always begin with "Dear/Hello/Hi/ Good Afternoon" and conclude by signing your full name. ***Do not rely on your email address to indicate who you are.***

The subject line of the email should indicate what the email is about (e.g. Question about the Exam). Informal language (e.g. hey can you tell me my grade, thx, btw,) is unacceptable and emails containing it will not be answered. People make judgments about you based on how you communicate - it is important to write emails in a professional manner.

I will make a good-faith effort to respond to your email within 48 hours. **Please note: I take at least one weekend day off from email.**

### **Grading:**

Grades will be assigned on the basis of participation/attendance, weekly papers, two quizzes, and a group poster presentation/peer rating. The total number of points available in the course is 175; your grade will be computed based on the percentage of total number of points you earn.

**Participation** will be gauged in part by your contributions to class discussion and your use of office hours. Also taken into consideration are emails asking about course content. Of course you

have to be in class to participate (see Attendance below).

**Weekly papers** (10 and 20 pts) are due by 2 pm on the day noted in the course outline; late assignments will be assessed a 5% deduction for every late day.

Assignments are submitted through Canvas (if you have issues submitting work, please let me know).

Each student will choose a public health issue, related behavior for a culture/country of interest to use throughout the semester for weekly assignments. For example, you might choose HIV/AIDS (health issue) and increased condom use (behavior) in Ghana or oral health (health issue) in rural PA and focus on children's tooth brushing activity (behavior). Through the weekly assignments you will apply course content to your issue; e.g., apply the social ecological framework, identify behavioral/psychological factors, discuss structural determinants, and so forth. Sample papers are available on Canvas.

**Assignment Expectations:** Written assignments must include *your name* and are limited to *one page except where noted, minimum of 1.5-spaced and 1-inch margins*; may be bulleted lists if appropriate. Minimum 11-point font must be used (*serif* fonts preferred). Points will be taken off if these requirements are not met. Please check for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and number agreement between nouns/verbs.

All references will be cited correctly. Citations must follow an accepted format, e.g., APA: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05>. Failure to use correct citations is a breach of academic integrity and you can be reported for this infraction. **Please note: MLA and Chicago styles are not acceptable.**

**THOUGH not required**, it is highly recommended that you review Writing Expectations, posted on Canvas under 'Course Materials.' In addition to the formatting guidelines noted above, points will be deducted for use of first person, contractions, the abbreviation etc., among others.

**The quizzes** (10 pts each) will be administered



You will be assigned to a group for the **poster presentation**, on a topic of the group's choice but *not* addressed by anyone in the group in the weekly assignments. Guidelines are provided on Canvas. Fifteen points of the final project's 45 points will come from peer ratings, completed by all group members and indicating the extent to which each member met responsibilities and made contributions to the final product. We will share our group projects on the last day of class.





### **Attendance:**

Attendance (20 pts) in class is an absolute necessity for this course. Though power point presentations will be used, they are for talking points only. A great deal of the learning in this course will be through class discussion, which occurs spontaneously and cannot possibly be scripted. If you have to miss a class, please inform me prior to the absence (if possible); up to two excused absences (that is, those that you inform me about) will not be counted against you. You are responsible for getting notes from another student for any class you miss.

The remote setting challenges all of us as we strive to create an inclusive atmosphere and encourage lively discussions. I expect that you will work as hard I to make this educational experience one we all value and learn from.

**Grading Scale: *The instructor reserves the right to assign + and – grades.***

90% + = A  
80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
Below 70% = F




### **Canvas:**

The course uses Canvas for class assignments, readings and other course materials. **NO TEXT BOOK IS REQUIRED.** All course readings, sample papers and final poster presentation examples are available. Please let me know if you have problems accessing the site.

**Need help with resources? We have a fabulous Health Sciences Librarian, Helena VonVille = [HelenaVonVille@pitt.edu](mailto:HelenaVonVille@pitt.edu).**









***Let's Begin!***



Wk	Date	Topic(s)	Readings Due	Assignment Due/Activity
1	May 17	<p>Introductions <i>Yeah, it's okay to ask the people.</i></p> <p>Social Ecological Framework</p> <p><i>Anthropologists have been using this approach forever – it's called holism</i></p>	<p>Cramer R &amp; Kapusta ND. (2017). A Social-Ecological Framework of Theory, Assessment and Prevention of Suicide. <i>Conceptual Analysis</i> <a href="https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01756">https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01756</a></p> <p>Finigan-Carr NM, et al. (2019). A Traumagenic Social Ecological Framework for Understanding and Intervening with Sex Trafficked Children and Youth. <i>Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal</i> 36:49-63.</p> <p>Page KR, Martinez O, Nieves-Lugo K et al. (2017) Promoting Pre-exposure Prophylaxis to Prevent HIV Infections Among Sexual and Gender Minority Hispanics/Latinxs. <i>AIDS Education and Prevention</i> 29(5):389-400.</p>	<p>Let's get to know each other and talk about this stuff called Social and Behavioral Sciences</p> <p>Let's review the syllabus.</p> <p>Let's apply the social ecological framework.</p> 
	MAY 20	<b>YOUR weekly topic: Please submit through Canvas</b>	<b>1) the public health issue, 2) the group of interest, and 3) the related behavior for your weekly assignments</b>	<b>DUE: YOUR weekly topic (0 points)</b>
2	May 24	<p>Behavioral and psychological factors affecting population health</p> <p><i>Some folks think it's all about the individual....</i></p>	<p>Gardiner CK &amp; Bryan AD. (2017). Monetary Incentive Interventions Can Enhance Psychological Factors Related to Fruit and Vegetable Consumption. <i>Ann Beh Med</i>. DOI 10.1007/s12160-017-9882-4.</p> <p>Smith PJ, Humiston SG, Marcuse EK, Zhao Z, Dorell CG, Howes C &amp; Hibbs B. (2011). Parental Delay or Refusal of Vaccine Doses, Childhood Vaccination Coverage at 24 Months of Age, and the Health Belief Model. <i>Public Health Reports Supplement</i> 2, 126:135-146.</p>	<p><b>Paper #1: Social ecological framework- 1 page (10 pts)</b></p> <p>Identify and explain at least two specific factors on each of the five levels of the social ecological framework relevant for your topic</p> <p>Personal inventory</p>



3	May 31	NO CLASS	 <p>MEMORIAL DAY</p>	ENJOY!
4	June 7	<p>Structural bias, social inequities and racism</p>  <p><i>This is the hard stuff....</i></p>	<p>David RJ &amp; Collins JW. (1997). Differing Birth Weight Among Infants of U.S.-Born Blacks, African-Born Blacks, and U.S.-Born Whites. <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> 337(17):1209-1214.</p> <p>Hendi AS, Mehta NK &amp; Elo IT. (2015). Health Among Black Children by Maternal and Child Nativity. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 105(4):703-710.</p> <p>Pachankas JE, Hatzenbuehler ML, Hickson F, Weatherburn P, Berg R, Marcus U &amp; Schmidt AJ. (2015). Hidden From Health: Structural Stigma, Sexual Orientation Concealment, and HIV Across 38 Countries in the European MSM Internet Survey. <i>AIDS</i> 29(10):1239</p>	<p><b>Paper #2: Behavioral and psychological factors affecting population health relevant for your weekly topic – 1 page (10 pts)</b></p>
5	June 14	<p>Social, political and economic determinants of health</p> <p><i>What's the context?</i></p>	<p>Lee Y, Meunnig P, Kawachi I &amp; Matzenbuehler ML. (2015). Effects of Racial Prejudice on the Health of Communities: A Multilevel Survival Analysis, <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 105(11):2349-2355.</p> <p>Spencer KL &amp; Grace M. (2016). Social Foundations of Health Care Inequality and Treatment Bias. <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 42:101-20.</p>	<p><b>Quiz 1 (10 points)</b></p>  <p><b>Group Topics Due — only ONE person submits</b></p>

6	June 21	<p>Assessing population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health</p>  <p>Cultural values and practices</p>	<p>Corona K et al. (2019). Do Cultural Values Have a Role in Health Equity? A Study of Latina Mothers and Daughters. <i>Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology</i> 25(1):65-72.</p> <p>Moshki M, Dehnoalian A &amp; Alami A. (2016). Effect of Precede-Proceed Model on Preventive Behaviors for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in High-Risk Individuals. <i>Clinical Nursing Research</i> 26(2):241-253.</p>	<p><b>Paper #3: Social, economic and political determinants of health - 1 page (10 pts)</b></p>
7	June 28	<p>Collecting data: Social and behavioral research methods – there are only two kinds</p> <p><i>Method is a strategy, not an end in itself</i></p>	<p>Felner JK, Dudley TD &amp; Ramirez-Valles J. (2018). “Anywhere but here”: Querying Spatial Stigma as a Social Determinant of Health Among Youth of Color Accessing LGBTQ Services in Chicago's Boystown. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i> 213:181-189.</p> <p>Madrigal DS, Salvatore A, Casillas G, Casillas C, Vera I, Eskenazi B &amp; Minkler M. (2014). Health in My Community: Conducting and Evaluating PhotoVoice as a Tool ...Environmental ... Leadership among Latino/ Youth. <i>Prog Comm Hlth Part: Res, Ed &amp; Action</i> 8(3):317-</p>	<p><b>Quiz 2 (10 points)</b></p> 
8	July 5	<p>More methods/analysis &amp; interpretation</p> 	<p>Baumann SE, Lhaki P &amp; Burke JG. (2020). Collaborative Film-Making: A Participatory Visual Research Method. <i>Qualitative Research Methods</i> 00(0):1-17.</p> <p>Yonas M, Burke JG, Rak K et al. (2009). A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words: Engaging Youth in CBPR Using the Creative Arts. <i>Prog Community Health Partnerships</i> 3(4):349-358.</p>	<p><b>Demonstration focus group</b></p> <p><b>Writing qualitative questions</b></p>

9	July 12	Let's bring this method thang home!	Ulin PR, Robinson ET & Tolley EE. (2005). <i>Qualitative Methods in Public Health: A Field Guide for Applied Research</i> . Chapter 6: Qualitative Data Analysis. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.	<p><b>Paper #4: Choosing appropriate methods - 2 pages (20 pts)</b></p> <p><b>Let's talk analysis</b></p>
10	July 19	<p>Planning and evaluating public health programs</p> <p>SMART OBJECTIVES <i>The best laid plans of mice and men.....</i></p>	<p>Bjerke MB &amp; Renger R. (2017). Being smart about writing SMART objectives. <i>Evaluation and Program Planning</i> 61:125-127.</p> <p>Nesbit et al. (2018). Innovative Methods for Designing Actionable Program Evaluation. <i>Journal of Public Health Management and Practice</i> 24(Suppl 1):S12-S22.</p>	<p><b>Paper #5: Analyzing data and interpreting data – 2 pages (20 pts)</b></p> 
11	July 26	<p>Identifying stakeholders and building coalitions</p> <p><i>Want to know what will work the best? Ask the PEOPLE.</i></p>	<p>Brown LD, Wells R, Jones EC &amp; Chilenski SM. (2017). Effects of Sectoral Diversity on Community Coalition Processes and Outcomes. <i>Prevention Science</i> 18:600-609.</p> <p>Lind E, Welch K &amp; Perkins RB. (2017). HPV-related cancer prevention through coalition building. <i>Human Vaccines &amp; Immunotherapeutics</i> 13:10, 2300-2306.</p>	<p><b>Paper #6: Evaluation Plan – 1 page (10 pts)</b></p> 
12	Aug 2	<p>Poster Presentations</p> <p>AND FOOD DAY! A Dr. Terry tradition continues!</p> 	<p>We'll share our final projects through Zoom today.</p> <p>Please complete the peer rating and submit it on Canvas. <b>Remember to rate yourself.</b></p>	<p><b>Paper #7: Stakeholders and coalitions</b></p> <p><b>Let's learn from each other, and share food (virtually of course)!</b></p>

				
	<b>AUG 4</b>		SUBMIT your power points and peer ratings by midnight tonight.	<p><b>THANKS</b> for a great semester!</p> <p><b>Best of luck</b> as you move forward...</p>