C&ES 533: Public Health in Rural and Urban Communities
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:00-5:15 pm
Chamberlin 2104

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Office hours: Mondays 9:00-10:30 am; Wednesdays 3:00-4:00 pm; or by appointment

"I am standing by the shore of a swiftly flowing river and hear the cry of a drowning man. I jump into the cold waters. I fight against the strong current and force my way to the struggling man. I hold on hard and gradually pull him to shore. I lay him out on the bank and revive him with artificial respiration. Just when he begins to breathe, I hear another cry for help. I jump into the cold waters. I fight against the strong current, and swim forcefully to the struggling woman. I grab hold and gradually pull her to shore. I lift her out onto the bank beside the man and work to revive her with artificial respiration. Just when she begins to breathe, I hear another cry for help. I jump into the cold waters. Fighting again against the strong current, I force my way to the struggling man. I am getting tired, so with great effort I eventually pull him to shore. I lay him out on the bank and try to revive him with artificial respiration. Just when he begins to breathe, I hear another cry for help. Near exhaustion, it occurs to me that I'm so busy jumping in, pulling them to shore, and applying artificial respiration that I have no time to see who is upstream pushing them all in."


This course is a sociological overview of public health services and institutions in rural and urban communities. The course includes a conceptual and theoretical overview of the social production of health and illness and an overview of health care delivery in different organizational settings, including public health and community health services. Special topics will examine the epidemiological evidence and sociological analyses of health conditions that impact both rural and urban communities, such as environmental and occupational health, substance abuse, maternal and child health, and aging and caregiving. The course includes a focus on community organizing and building community capacity to support public health and social justice.

Course Objectives

Successfully completing this course will mean that you have or are able to:

1. Analyze publicly available data on health outcomes and health behaviors in urban and rural communities and summarize them for a lay audience.
2. Scrutinize the social, environmental, and biological pathways that produce health and illness, especially how these causes intersect.
3. Explain how health and illness are shaped by social determinants of health (e.g., race, class, gender).
4. Examine the organizational and institutional partnerships in healthcare delivery, including formal health institutions, health professionals, and lay community audiences.
5. Explain how community organizing and academic-community partnerships can improve public health outcomes.
6. Analyze in depth a particular public health problem, evaluate the interventions that have been undertaken to ameliorate it, and explain why those interventions have or have not been successful.

Evaluation

Your grade in this course will be based on the following assignments:

1. A short county-level analysis of public health data (100 points) of a county of your choice. Details to follow, but your report should briefly describe the health behaviors, clinical care, and social, economic, and physical environment in that county (3-4 pages). Due in Week 4.

2. A news analysis and class presentation (50 points): Once during the semester, you will work with a classmate to lead a short discussion of health-related news from the mainstream media. Details to follow, but in brief:
   - You should prepare for this review by reading 2-3 days worth of current news coverage on health-related topics; and analyze their importance for community, rural, or public health.
   - Working together, you should prepare a 10-minute presentation that (a) condenses and thematically organizes the key issues from the news that pertain to community health; and (b) makes at least one connection to the issues or themes covered in the course readings and discussions.
   - You should pose 1-2 questions to launch class discussion.

3. Class preparation and participation, as demonstrated in a series of weekly blog postings (300 points). Once per week, for 13 weeks (excluding the first and last weeks of the semester and spring break). A few notes about this:
   - I drop the three lowest scores on these, so you’ll end up with 10 graded blog posts, at 30 points each. This means that you can take three weeks off, at your discretion, during the semester. It also means you may accrue more than 300 points on this assignment, if you write every week.
   - If your last name starts with the letters A-M, you will blog on Tuesdays, and if your last name starts with the letters N-Z, you will blog on Thursdays.
   - Blog entries are due by noon on Tuesdays or Thursdays (whichever day you’re posting on). Blog entries posted after noon will not be graded (consider that one of your “off” weeks).
   - You need to comment on the blog entries of your classmates, as often as you like, but at least twice during the week (before 5:00 pm on Friday). If you don’t comment on anyone else’s posts, I’ll dock your blog grade for that week.
   - Blog entries should be about 300 words. They do not have to be polished critiques of the readings, but they also shouldn’t just be free-associating riffs on the article titles and abstracts. We’ll use these to initiate and shape class discussion. Good blog posts will be grounded in the text (meaning that they’ll include references to page numbers or passages that you want to discuss). Really good blog posts will make connections between readings, connect back to readings we’ve already covered, or discussions we’ve had earlier in class.
   - Feel free to be creative with this assignment. If you’re confused about a reading, try writing a letter to the author, asking him or her to explain a point, or explain
to you how what they are saying is different from what another author is arguing. Include links to multimedia resources or web pages that connect to the week’s readings.

- If you’re new to blogging, and have questions about this assignment, come and talk to me. The Blogger.com environment can be a little confusing at first, but once you get the hang of it, it’s not too bad.

4. A term paper (450 points total). Details to follow, but projects will be developed in consultation with me. Your project will be completed in three phases:
   - prospectus (2-3 pages, 50 points). Due in Week 6.
   - part 1 (8-10 pages, 200 points): you will describe a specific health problem and analyze its causes and consequences. Due in Week 10.
   - part 2 (5-8 pages, 200 points): you will review policies and interventions that have been proposed to mitigate the problem, and evaluate their merits and drawbacks. Due during exam week.

5. A poster (100 points) that describes your research project to share with the class in the last week of the semester. **Attendance at the last two class sessions is mandatory.** Details to follow.

### Assignment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>County level analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Prospectus for research paper</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Paper draft due</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Poster session</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>Final paper due</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every week</td>
<td>Blog entries</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Media presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>1000</td>
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### Grading

I do not grade on a curve, which means that you will earn the grade you receive based on your scores on individual assignments, and that you will be able to assess your progress in the course at any time during the semester. You will earn the grade for this course that corresponds with the following point distribution:

- A 940 points +
- AB 890-939 points
- B 830-889 points
- BC 770-829 points
- C 700-769 points
- D 600-699 points
- F 599 points or less

### Academic Honesty

I expect all students in this course to be familiar with the University's policies on academic honesty and integrity. For more information about the University’s policies, please visit the Dean of Students’ website at: http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html. Lack of familiarity
with the policies will not excuse failure to comply with them. Cheating or plagiarism will result in an automatic failing grade for that assignment, and written reports to dean of your school or college and the Dean of Students. They may (at their discretion) take further disciplinary action.

I expect that all work you hand in during the course will reflect your own original ideas and independent analyses, and I expect you to appropriately cite any supporting data or reference materials. In this course, you will be producing papers that draw on a variety of sources, including scholarly books and articles, government reports, and Internet resources. It can sometimes be enormously difficult to figure out how to cite such materials. The UW Library has a webpage with helpful links to a variety of citation guides: http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/content.php?pid=55110&sid=403476. If you still have questions about how to cite materials appropriately, please come and see me. I am happy to help you learn about appropriate ways to credit the work referenced in your papers.

Accommodations

Please let me know (the earlier the better) if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction or evaluation procedures in order to enable you to participate fully. The McBurney Resource Center will provide useful assistance and documentation.

If you have difficulty obtaining course materials, such as books or readings, please come and talk with me. Books are on reserve at Steenbock library, and other required readings are available on the library’s course reserves page. I know books are expensive, and I’ve done as much as I can to hold your out-of-pocket expenses for this course down, but if you encounter any barriers, please come and see me as early as possible in the semester.

Expectations

What I expect of you:

1. **Workload.** This course assumes the UW’s standard “3 to 1” rule, meaning that you should expect to spend, on average, three hours per week working on course requirements outside of class for every course credit hour spent inside the classroom.
   a. **A note about the reading:** I expect advanced undergraduates to be reading 70-100 pages per week, in addition to the research and reading you’ll need to undertake for the final term paper. The readings early in the course will introduce critically important concepts and frameworks that we’ll be using throughout the semester. If you look at the syllabus, you’ll see that the blog entries are the single biggest part of your grade, so keeping up with the reading is critical to your overall success in this course. Also notice that I’ve assigned a book called *Heat Wave* for weeks 12 and 13. If you’re planning on taking this course, you should plan to read the whole thing over spring break.

2. **Class attendance.** This class is a mix of lecture and discussion. I do not lecture on the assigned readings, and so it is important that you both attend lecture and keep up with the reading. I do not make lecture materials available on the website, so if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate. If you know in advance that you will have to miss class (e.g., religious observances, athletic events), please tell me at the beginning of the semester.

3. **Class participation.** The blog is designed to give you a space to explore key themes and issues from the week’s readings. Please come to class prepared to discuss the themes and
issues. Regular and thoughtful participation in the blog and in class discussions is an important element of participation in this class.

4. **Cell phones and other distractions.** If it rings, beeps, chirps, squeaks, sings, or whistles, turn it off or leave it at home. No laptops are allowed in the classroom.

5. **Assignments and late work.** All assignments should be handed in via the Dropbox on Learn@UW. Assignments handed in late without prior permission from me will be marked down half a grade for each day they are late.

6. **Grammar, spelling, and mechanics.** All assignments should be typed, double-spaced, with an 11- or 12-point font, and with one-inch margins and page numbers. I hand papers back in class, so please make sure your name appears on the first page of the paper. Please proofread all of your written assignments carefully. Papers with frequent misspellings and grammatical errors will be marked down by a half grade.

7. **Writing.** Your success in this course will depend heavily on the quality of your written assignments. Although grammar and mechanics are important, it is even more important that you strive to develop a clear and convincing argument and support that argument with compelling evidence and examples. I urge you to make use of the University's writing center at 6171 Helen C. White Hall. Graduate students and professional staff are available to help you develop your writing. For best results, it is recommended that you make an appointment for an individual consultation well in advance of the due date of the assignment.

What you may expect of me:

1. **Office hours.** My office is in Agricultural Hall (Room 346B), and my regularly scheduled office hours are Monday mornings from 9:00 am to 10:30 am, Wednesday afternoons from 3:00-4:00 pm, or by appointment. I understand that everyone is busy, and if my regular office hours conflict with your class, work, or athletic schedules, I am more than happy to arrange an alternative, mutually convenient meeting time. I encourage you to come to office hours to discuss any questions you may have about the course content, navigating the literature on your research topic, helping you locate research materials on the Internet, or discussing your paper topics.

2. **E-mail and telephone communication.** The best way to contact me outside of class is via e-mail (senier@wisc.edu). Generally speaking, you may expect a reply within 24 hours. I am not available by IM or chat.

**Required Readings**

There are two required texts for this course, available at Rainbow Cooperative, 426 West Gilman Street. Copies of the books are also available on reserve at Steenbock Library.

Additional required articles will be made available via the library course web page, which is also linked to Learn@UW.


*So that you may participate fully in class discussions, you are expected to bring copies of the books to class.*
Nighttime Safety

The University has several transportation and walking services to help you stay safe while getting around campus and the nearby areas after dark. To help take responsibility for your own safety and that of your friends, make use of services such as UWMadison SAFEwalk and SAFEride programs: http://www2.fpm.wisc.edu/trans/Safe/.

Reading Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule, if needed to accommodate the schedules of guest speakers or our progress through the material. Any changes will be announced in class, broadcast via the class email list, and posted on the blog.

1/24 Classes Begin: Structure, Class Procedures, and Outcomes
   ▪ A Day in the Life of Public Health. Available at: http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/opp/intro/PDF%5CDay_in_Life.pdf

1/26 What is Public Health? (~50 pages)

Week 2—Public Health vs. Medicine and Health Inequalities

1/31 Health Inequalities (~65 pages)
     ○ Everyone should read the first three sections: "Foreword,” “Rationale for regular reporting on health disparities and inequalities—United States,” and “Social Determinants of Health” (pp. 1-18).
     ○ If your last name starts with the letters A-M, read “Environmental Hazards” (pp. 19-32) and “Health Outcomes—Mortality” (pp. 47-70).
     ○ If your last name starts with the letters N-Z, read “Health care access and preventive health services” (pp. 33-47) and “Health outcomes—morbidity” (p. 71-98).

2/2 Public health and biomedical paradigms (~35 pages)

**Week 3—Urban and Rural Environments**

2/7 Urban design and community health and wellbeing (~20 pages)
- Watch Majora Carter’s lecture, “Greening the Ghetto,” on Youtube. (Actually, watch it twice. She talks pretty fast.) Available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQcZRmHfs4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQcZRmHfs4).

2/9 Rural health and healthcare delivery (~40 pages)

**Guest speaker: Shaun Golding, Wisconsin Office of Rural Health**

**Week 4—The Social Production of Health & Illness**

**County Health Rankings Assignment Due on Friday, 2/17, by 4:00 pm, via Learn@UW dropbox**

2/14 Fundamental Causes of Disease (~35 pages)

2/16 Alternative Paradigms: The McKeown Thesis and Ecosocial Models of Health (~20 pages)
- Health Policy & Ethics Debate: The McKeown Thesis:


**Week 5— Healthcare Providers & Careers**

**2/21** Community Health Workers (~30 pages)


- Three web essays about the Young Lords:

**2/23** Rural Physicians (~10 pages)

*Library Work Day—Class Meets in Steenbock Library Computer Lab*


**Week 6— The Health of Racial and Ethnic Minorities**

*Prospectus Due on Friday, 3/2, by 4:00 pm, via Learn@UW dropbox*

**2/28** Diversity in Rural Communities (~40 pages)

*Guest speaker: Julie Willems Van Dijk (UW-Madison Population Health Institute)*


3/1 Race and Health in Urban America (~25 pages)

Week 7—Community Assessment and Organizing for Health

3/6 Research with Communities, Not on Communities (~40 pages)
**Guest speaker: Linda Silka, University of Maine at Orono**
**Class meets in Ebling Auditorium, Microbial Sciences**
  - Everyone should read the Executive Summary, Table 1, and Introduction (~9 pages)
  - Everyone should read the Conclusions (Contributions of CBPR partnerships, Table 2, Success Factors Across Sites, and Recommendations) (~8 pages)
  - Please read at least three of the case studies. (~9 pages)

3/8 Community Health Assessment (~50 pages)
Week 8—Environmental and Occupational Health

3/13 Environmental Public Health (~35 pages)

**Guest speaker: Jeff Havlena, Wisconsin Department of Health Services**


3/15 Occupational Health (~30 pages)


Week 9—Coalition Building and Community Organizing

3/20 Coalition Building for Health (~80 pages)


3/22 Community Organizing in Diverse Communities (~45 pages)


Week 10—Community Health Centers

*Paper 1 Due on Friday, 3/30, by 4:00 pm, via Learn@UW dropbox*

3/27 Community Health Centers (~80 pages)

  o Chapter 2: Mississippi: Where it all began (pp. 29-49)
  o Chapter 3: Boston: The way democracy ought to work (pp. 50-74)

3/29 Community Health Centers (~12 pages)


Week 11—Spring Break, No Class Meetings

4/3 Spring Break
4/5 Spring Break
Week 12—Public Health Institutions and Public Health Crises

4/10 Heat Wave, Part I
  - Read the Prologue, Introduction, and Chapter 1. (pp. 1-78)

4/12 Heat Wave, Part I
  - Read Chapters 2 and 3. (pp. 79-164)

Week 13—Public Health Institutions and Public Health Crises

4/17 Heat Wave, Part II
*Guest speaker: Rick Keller (Medical History & Bioethics)*
  - Read Chapters 4 and 5. (pp. 165-224)

4/19 Heat Wave, Part II
  - Read Conclusion and Epilogue (pp. 225-242)

Week 14—Special Topics

4/24 Aging and Caregiving in America (~26 pages)
- Freydberg, Nicole, Laurel Strain, Ross T. Tsuyuki, Finlay A. McAlister, Alexander M. Clark. 2010. “If he gives in, he will be gone ... The influence of work and place on experiences, reactions, and self-care of heart failure in rural Canada.” *Social Science & Medicine*. 70: 1077-1083.

4/26 Alcohol and substance abuse (~40 pages)
Week 15—The Arts, the Media, and Public Health

5/1 The Arts and the Internet as Tools for Community Organizing (~30 pages)

5/3 Using the Arts and Media to Influence Policy (~25 pages)

Week 16—Poster Sessions

5/8 Poster Session I
   ▪ Poster session; no assigned readings; ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.

5/10 Poster Session II
   ▪ Poster session; no assigned readings; ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.

Final Papers Due by Wednesday, May 16, by 4:00 pm, via Learn@UW dropbox