Oregon State University
College of Public Health and Human Sciences
H100: Introduction to Public Health
Spring 2016

Credit Hours: 4
Room: Cascades Campus, CSB 247
Schedule: MW 0800-0950

Course Instructor: Elaine Knobbs-Seasholtz, MPH
Office Location: TBD
Office Phone: E-Mail: knobbsse@oregonstate.edu
Office Hours: TU 0930-1030; please confirm prior by email

Teaching Assistant: None
Office Location: Office Phone: E-Mail: Office Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This survey course covers the basic elements of public health and the complex ethical and political issues central to it. The class is open to undergraduate students of all majors who want to know more about the field of public health, what it is, how it's organized, and how it works.

Prerequisites: None Co-requisites: None

LEARNING RESOURCES:

Text chapters will be assigned that correspond to the relevant class sessions. Other brief readings may be assigned for specific sessions. Any additional readings will be made available to the class Canvas site at least one week prior to the session in which the topic is covered, and will be clearly identified in the weekly outline as either required or optional.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
At the completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Explain the historical development of public health and its current scope
2. Understand the multiple causes underlying the health status of populations
   a. Identify environmental, social, behavioral, and biological bases for health and disease
   b. Explain how health and disease status results from the combination of causal factors
3. Understand the methods by which public health identifies potential causes of population health status, and identifies potential targets for intervention
   a. Describe sources of data and the role of data analysis in identifying public health challenges and potential solutions
   b. Describe the roles of surveillance and monitoring in identifying public health challenges and potential solutions
4. Describe the fundamental roles of public health and how those roles are operationalized in public health organization, funding, workforce, and regulations
   a. List the disciplines and professional positions involved in public health
   b. Describe the sources of funding for public health activities
   c. Explain how public health activities are organized and staffed
   d. Understand the regulatory, legal, and societal underpinnings for public health activities
5. Describe how public health and public policy interact
6. Describe how public health interacts with emergency services, healthcare organizations and facilities, and other healthcare providers
7. Describe the role of public health in natural disasters, civil disturbances, and emergency preparedness
8. Explain how public health programs are proposed, conducted, and evaluated
9. Identify (discuss) the roles of public health in addressing health disparities and the needs of vulnerable populations
10. Place public health in the context of other human sciences
   a. Explain how public health can inform other human sciences
   b. Explain how human sciences can inform public health priorities, action, and practice
11. Identify areas of ethical tension in public health, and how they are addressed in practice

COMPETENCIES:
Academic Program Competencies can be viewed at:
http://health.oregonstate.edu/degrees/competencies

COURSE CONTENT:
The course provides a basic overview of current local, national, and global trends in both communicable and non-communicable disease; the behavioral, social, and environmental determinants of population health, with a focus on causes of disparities in population health status; the organization of public health activities and their relation to other health-related activities (e.g., clinical care, emergency preparedness); analytical methods and the science of public health; the ethical challenges facing public health action; and emerging challenges for the field of public health. The course uses a mix of didactic material, case studies, group discussion and assignments to help students understand the role of public health and the wide array of public health career opportunities as well as its relation to human science fields.

Topics covered in the course include:

- Public health history, organization and scope
- Environmental influences on health
- Social & behavioral influences on health
- Infectious and chronic diseases
- Public health and healthcare
- Public health methods: epidemiology, surveillance, sources of data
- Ethical challenges in public health

Specific topics and dates will be published in a separate term-specific schedule.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:
Students will be asked to demonstrate their mastery of the material in five different arenas: tests, online quizzes, community health assessment exercise, a brief paper, and participation. Each is described briefly below, and each will be detailed during class sessions with separate instructions once the term begins.
Exams. There is one mid-term and one final examination during the course of the session. The mid-term is worth 15% of the course grade, while the final is worth 20%. The exams are cumulative (i.e., cover material from the entire term up to the date of the exam) and are designed to require integrating material from all preceding sessions. The exams will use multiple choice items designed to cover important facts and concepts from each week of the course covered by that exam. Items may cover information found in both the text and class lectures.

Quizzes (8 of 9). There are 9 quizzes, the top 8 of which are used for grade calculation. For each week of the course, students will be asked to answer 5 questions regarding the topics presented during the assigned readings. Each is worth 5 points (i.e. 5% of the final course grade). These quizzes are open note and open book. You may take the quiz up to three times, and your best score will be kept. Quizzes will be open only for the week of that topic. For instance, the week 2 quiz will be open by 8 am Saturday before week 2, and will close Friday of week 2 at 11:59 pm. At the end of the course, your top 8 of 9 quizzes will be retained for your final grade—so, you can miss one quiz entirely and still get full credit for quizzes. Because you have a “freebie” quiz, there are no make-up quizzes; if you miss a week, treat that as your one week off.

Regional Health Assessment exercise. Each student will complete a description of two health issues from the Central Oregon Regional Health Assessment (http://cohealthcouncil.org/regional-assessments/), describing the data source(s), prevalence, incidence rates, mortality and surveillance methodologies for each issue. This exercise is 7 points.

Public health “one-pager.” Each student will complete a one page, four paragraph summary and commentary on an issue of public health importance that is of interest to the student. In four paragraphs, students will identify a public health challenge from a current online news source, summarize the nature of the challenge and its burden to population health, list current and proposed ways to address the challenge, and indicate the most attractive approach and the reasoning behind it. The report is 8 points.

Participation Participation in our class sessions is essential. We will be spending much of our time in class discussing different components of public health and also opinions on public health issues. Every student is encouraged to engage in the class discussions and group work. Participation will be assessed through class attendance and engagement opportunities and each class will be worth up to 0.5 points. Participation will count for a total of 10 points.

The course grade will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Effort</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (8 @ 5% each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Health Assessment exercise</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One pager</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra credit. Extra credit assignments may be offered during the term and will be detailed during class sessions.
H100 has 100 available points, excluding any potential extra credit. Typically, the course follows this metric for assigning letter grades:

- 93-100 = A
- 90-92 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 83-86 = B
- 80-82 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 73-76 = C
- 70-72 = C-
- 65-69 = D+
- 56-64 = D
- 50-55 = D-

**DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

The College of Public Health and Human Sciences strives to create an affirming climate for all students including underrepresented and marginalized individuals and groups. Diversity encompasses differences in age, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socioeconomic background, veteran status, sexual orientation, and marginalized groups. We believe diversity is the synergy, connection, acceptance, and mutual learning fostered by the interaction of different human characteristics.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Student Conduct Code establishes community standards and procedures necessary to maintain and protect an environment conducive to learning, in keeping with the educational objectives of Oregon State University. This code is based on the assumption that all persons must treat one another with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive. For the full Student Conduct Code see [http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/)

Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is prohibited and considered a serious violation of the Student Conduct Code. It is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another. For specifics related to offenses proscribed by the University see: [http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0)

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY STATEMENT**

Oregon State University strives to respect all religious practices. If you have religious holidays that are in conflict with any of the requirements of this class, please see me immediately so that we can make alternative arrangements.

**STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES**

"Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services (DAS). Student with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098."
OSU-CASCADES ETHOS STATEMENT
The guiding vision of OSU-Cascades is to contribute significantly to intellectual, cultural, ecological, social and economic vitality. To achieve that goal, the OSU-Cascades community will strive to model principles and practices of a thriving, equitable and sustainable society. A culture of learning and exploration provides significant rewards to its members; those rewards are best achieved when all community members (faculty, staff, administrators, students and Board of Advisors) strive to honor the following principles:

1. Respect the dignity and uniqueness of individuals. This principle applies to a diversity of cultures, belief systems, academic ranks and academic/ professional disciplines.
2. Aspire to excellence and integrity in every endeavor.
3. Consider current and future generations in every deliberation.
4. Demonstrate leadership in service to community.