



Introduction to Epidemiology (PH 384)

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Office Hours:

No formal office hours. I can be reached via email (checked AT LEAST 6 – 10 times per day) or through the General Questions discussion board in Blackboard.

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide a foundation of knowledge at the *undergraduate* level in the discipline of epidemiology. Epidemiology explores the distribution and determinants of health and diseases, illnesses, injuries, disability, and death in populations. We will examine the application of epidemiologic procedures to the understanding of the occurrence and control of conditions such as infectious and chronic diseases, mental diseases, mental disorders, community and environmental health hazards, accidents, and geriatric problems. Furthermore, we will apply basic epidemiologic methods in everyday scenarios.

Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Provide a basic definition of epidemiology and cite specific and significant events and persons in the history of epidemiology.
- List sources of epidemiologic data and define related measures of morbidity and mortality.
- Define descriptive epidemiology and describe its practical uses.
- Contrast association and causation as they apply to both research and “real world” settings.
- Define analytical epidemiology and differentiate among types of study designs.
- Describe how epidemiologic data is synthesized and transformed into public policy (*evidence-based public health*).
- Define concepts of disease screening and calculate basic measures of screening effectiveness.
- Describe applications of epidemiology to social and behavioral phenomena and special topics including work and the environment.
- Perform basic calculations of crude effect measures for cohort, cross sectional, and case-control study designs.

Text and course materials

Friis R.H. (2010). *Epidemiology 101: Essential Public Health Series*.

Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc. ISBN: 9780763754433

Companion website: <http://www.jbpub.com/catalog/9780763754433>

****In order to understand the material and fulfill all course requirements, it is absolutely CRUCIAL that you have a copy of this text. This textbook is available in soft-cover and e-book formats. E-book is much less expensive (around \$36) but is only available in a 180-day subscription.****

All other materials will be provided via Blackboard.

Course format:

Students in this course must have regular access to a computer that is connected to a reliable internet source and that has some sort of word processing capability. The course website will be updated regularly with assignments, readings, and lectures. It is crucial that you be able to access Black board at least 2-3 times per week.

Note: It is expected that you have a proper understanding of Blackboard prior to taking this course. If you are unsure of how to perform basic course actions, please contact Information Technology and inquire about the online Blackboard training modules.

All aspects of this course including lectures, discussion boards, assignments, projects, exams and any other documents will be available via Blackboard. ANYTHING that is to be turned in for a grade is to be submitted through the Blackboard system. No assignments will be accepted through email.

Assignment Submission Policy:

All assignments, quizzes, activities, and projects will be given a completion date and time.

- All assignments, quizzes, and projects are assigned to each individual. Some may be done in groups but ultimately grades are given to the individual.

Late submissions:

Late submissions have historically been an area of concern when taking a course in the online format. Each assignment will be given a due date. This date is not a suggestion. Late submissions will have 10% deducted from the grade for each day late. After 10 days, the submission will receive a zero (0) grade. Late submissions during finals week will receive a 25% deduction.

Note: This course is designed to be done at *your* pace with due dates usually falling toward the middle to end of the semester. You will be expected be able to keep up.

In the past, a considerable number of students have gotten caught up in working or various activities. If you have a tremendous amount on your plate and need help or an exception, contact me well in advance. The most common scenario I have encountered in my years of teaching online has been this: Student does very little or nothing for the class and contacts Instructor (me) begging for a last minute exception AND the grade they need to get through the course and move on to their degree. Often, these students are

seniors who are working full-time and have a family/dog/child/girlfriend or boyfriend/other responsibility and are about to graduate if they can only get an extension and do the work later.

This scenario ALWAYS results in poor work and, most often, plagiarism. To be clear, incompletes and extensions will not be given because you are overwhelmed by your workload. If a student is taking too many courses or working more than they can handle, s/he should reflect on the situation and set priorities. Incompletes are given in the case of an emergency. A lack of preparation and completion of work by a student does not constitute an emergency.

Course Grading:

Topic Summaries- 15 points – 3 pages each

Students are to write 5 topic summaries at any point in the semester. The point of this assignment is to allow the student to articulate their thoughts on any topic that is relevant to the subject at hand. You can choose anything related to the class. These are NOT meant to be summaries of chapters 1-5 of the text.

Topic summaries will be graded based on completion. You must complete 3 pages of writing. Your writing starts when whenever the subject matter begins. Please avoid long headers as they will receive a 50% deduction in your grade. An example of a well formatted summary and a poorly formatted summary (one with a long header) can be found on the course website.

** Further instruction of topic summaries will be posted within the first week of class.

Quizzes/Web Assignments – 10 points

Web assignments and/or quizzes are given at the instructor's discretion. They are to be completed within a certain time period. Please include the questions you are asked in the assignment.

Projects- 25 points

The semester project consists of a scenario and/or a research question you will be given. The project is to be completed by filling out a form that will be given. All answers and ideas are to be expressed in paragraph form.

Article Critique – 15 points

The article critique consists of answer questions pertaining to an article that will be assigned to you. The article will be posted as close to the beginning of the semester as possible. The critique will be posted shortly thereafter. Answers are to be in paragraph form unless they consist of calculations. Again, you MUST include the questions you are asked in order to get full credit.

Midterm- 15 points

Final- 20 points

TOTAL = 100 points

Expected grading scale:

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = Below 60

The grading system is designed this way so that each of you will unequivocally know your standing in the course. I will send forth documents in the coming weeks to outline all of our assignment.

E-Mail Formatting:

E-mail is the most common way for students to contact me. Since I receive numerous mails each day, I may overlook yours (I'm sorry; it happens). Please use the following format in the SUBJECT line or your mail may not be properly received.

Subject: PH 384, *YourLastName, A Brief Subject Statement*

Example: ***PH 384, Adam Sandler, A question about next week's quiz!***

Disability Statement:

“Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Disability Services, Room 101, Garrett. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD.”

“Per university policy, please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office of Student Disability Services.”