

PH 530
Independent Investigations in Public Health

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Office Hours: Virtual 8-10 a.m. M – Th; Face-to-face by appointment only.
Phone: 270-745-5864 Office Location: AC 128C

Course Catalog Description

Research problems or projects in the area of public health.

Course Overview

This course provides students with an opportunity to investigate a specific area or topic through student-directed research, as agreed upon with the instructor.

Course Goals

The primary goal of this course is to develop and refine students' research skills. The term research is used broadly and can include library research, analysis of secondary data sets, meta-analysis, and/or primary data collection.

Course Objectives

Specific course objectives will be determined on an individual basis. In general, however, students will:

- apply the highest ethical standards of research to their individual research projects;
- synthesize information from divergent sources to complete their independent research projects; and,
- communicate findings in a professional format appropriate to the target audience.

Course Products

Specific course products will be determined on an individual basis. Examples of course products that might be required include, but are not limited to:

- Annotated bibliography
- Literature review
- Research paper
- Poster presentation
- Preparation of article for submission to a journal or submission of abstract to professional meeting (must be able to attend if accepted).
- Grant Application
- Survey
- Needs Assessment

Course Evaluation

Grades will be based solely on the agreed-upon course products. Extensive feedback will be provided throughout the course.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to students' intellectual development, and is a core value of the MPH program. Thus, the work you do in this course – and all MPH courses -- is expected to reflect academic integrity through responsible behaviors, including avoiding plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, cheating, or other types of [academic dishonesty](#). Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive a failing grade on the assignment/assessment, or a failing grade in the course. [Per policy](#), students may also be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary sanctions and/or the Graduate School for dismissal from the program. A student who believes a faculty member has dealt unfairly with him/her/them in a course involving academic dishonesty may seek relief through the [Student Complaint Procedure](#).

Diversity, Inclusivity, & Equity

We promote social justice by creating a respectful, collaborative, diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment through teaching, service, and research.

The strength and success of WKU's MPH program is built on the foundation of a wide range of perspectives and experiences. We embrace diverse backgrounds, embodiments, and experiences and are committed to fostering inclusive and accessible environments. We respect physical, social, and cultural differences among us, which may include, but are not limited to: age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family status, gender identity and presentation, citizenship and immigration status, national origin, race, religious and political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Please talk with your instructor, advisor, or MPH staff member right away if you experience disrespect in this class or while part of our program. Whenever possible, we will work to address it in an educational manner. Resources on inclusive language and document accessibility are provided in the MPH Guidebook and MPH Student organizational site on Blackboard

ADA Accommodations

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX/ Discrimination & Harassment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) (#0.070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Executive Director, Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, 270-745-6867 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's [Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.

WKU's COVID Statement

All students are strongly encouraged to [get the COVID-19 vaccine](#). In accordance with WKU policy, all students must call the WKU COVID-19 Assistance Line at 270-745-2019 within 4 hours of testing positive for COVID-19 or being identified as a close contact to someone who has tested positive. The COVID Assistance Line is available to answer questions regarding any COVID-19 related issue. This guidance is subject to change based on requirements set forth by federal, state, and local public health entities. Please refer to the [Healthy on the Hill](#) website for the most current information.