

PH548: Community Organization

Online Spring 2022

Contact Information

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Email is the best way to contact me; my turnaround time for responding is 24 hours.

Required Text/Materials

All readings for this course will be directly provided or linked on Blackboard. You do not need to purchase a textbook or any materials for this course.

Course Description

This course explores the social, political and economic forces that exacerbate health inequities in different communities and various organizational strategies for effective solution. Review and analysis of community organization and mobilization processes, legislative advocacy, cultural competency, and the role of mass media in conceptualization of public health issues. Transportation requirements for field trips will be provided.

(Note: for Spring 2022 this course is fully online; there will be no field trips)

Course Objectives

1. Compare the policymaking process at local, state, and national levels.
2. Integrate evidence into the analysis of public health policymaking.
3. Analyze ethical issues in public health policy options.
4. Compare and contrast the roles of stakeholders from multiple sectors in public health policymaking.
5. Prepare a fact sheet and an elevator speech for a policymaker on a current public health issue.
6. Compare and contrast intended and unintended public health consequences of proposed or enacted policy on specific populations.
7. Create a plan to identify strategic community health issues, including drafting a vision statement and establishing community partnerships.
8. Integrate feedback from a community stakeholder sector outside of public health into a community health assessment.
9. Implement techniques for mediation among community partners with divergent needs and goals to improve community outcomes.

Course Assessments

Weekly activities: Discussion board posts (count as attendance/participation) and short written assignments. Address LO 1-9

Exams: Midterm and final. Address LO 1-9

Policy Project: You will select a public health issue that has been, or can be, addressed through policy. You will research the topic; identify all stakeholders involved; identify multiple policy options; analyze the consequences of each option on impacted communities; recommend one option; and prepare a fact sheet on the issue and record an elevator pitch to educate a legislator on the issue and advocate for action. (Students will apply this assignment to Kentucky or their state/local context.) Addresses LO 2-6.

Community Organizing Project: You will create an abbreviated community health assessment/community health improvement plan for your local community. Following the phases of the MAPP process, you will develop a plan for organizing and developing partnerships; creating a vision; planning a community assessment; identifying strategic issues; and formulating goals and strategies to address the issue. Addresses LO 7-9.

Grading

This course uses weighted grading. Each type of assessment described above is weighted differently.

Weekly activities: 20%

Exams: 30% (15% each)

Policy Project: 25%

Community Organizing Project: 25%

Grading scale:

Grades are based on university standards.

A = 90% and higher

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 59% and lower

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 Title IX Coordinator, Deborah Wilkins, 270-745-5398 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.



MPH Competencies

This course contributes to the development of the following competencies:

MPH COMPETENCY	Obj.
Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health	
1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice	
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context	
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate	
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice	
Public Health & Health Care Systems	
5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health systems across national and international settings	
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity.	
Planning & Management to Promote Health	
7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health	
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design, implementation, or critique of public health policies or programs	
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention	
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management, specifically after funding for a project is secured	
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs	
Policy in Public Health	
12. Discuss the policy-making process.	1, 2, 3
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes	4
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations	5
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity	6
Leadership	
16. Apply leadership and/or management principles to address a relevant issue; such principles may include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration, and guiding decision making	7
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges	9
Communication	
18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors	
19. Communicate audience-appropriate (i.e., non-academic, non-peer audience) public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation	5
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content	
Interprofessional and/or Intersectoral Practice	
21. Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health	8
Systems Thinking	
22. Apply a systems thinking tool to visually represent a public health issue in a format other than standard narrative	
WKU MPH Program Competencies	
23. Apply health behavior theories and models to address public health problems.	
24. Locate, cite, and integrate credible and/or peer-reviewed literature into professionally written products.	
25. Apply methods of field epidemiology.	
26. Describe the impact and importance of social determinants of health.	

MPH COMPETENCY	Obj.
27. Identify the direct and indirect population health effects of environmental hazards (biological, chemical and physical) on humans, animals and the ecology.	

Course Topics/Schedule

Complete course topics and schedule will be made available on Blackboard

List of topics:

- Public health law
- Public health policy: evidence
- Public health policy: ethics
- Public health policy analysis
- Advocacy in public health
- Community organizing
- Community health assessment process
- Leadership
- Working with stakeholders, working across sectors, and coalition building