

**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY HEALTH**

PH 384: Introduction to Epidemiology Course Syllabus

Course Information

Class Location:	Online
Class Meeting Time:	Asynchronous
Instructor:	Ms. Mary Catherine Rush, MSPH (she/her/hers)
Office Location:	Academic Complex Room 129C
Student Office Hours:	In-person, via phone, or virtually Mondays and Wednesdays 10:00 am-12:00 pm OR by appointment
Instructor Email:	mary.rush@wku.edu
Instructor Office Phone:	270-745-5129

- If you have any questions about the course content, assignments, or logistics, please contact the instructor
- Please make sure you include your **name** and which **class** you are in.
- Communications received outside of 8:00 am—5:00 pm CT will typically be responded to the following workday during the work week.
- If your message is sent over the weekend, please allow 48 hours for a response.
- If you **DO NOT** receive an email response within the time periods listed above, please follow up.
- For technical support with Blackboard or Zoom please contact [IT Services](#).

Course Description

PH 384: Introduction to Epidemiology explores the distribution and determinants of health and diseases, illnesses, injuries, disability, and death in populations. It also examines the application of epidemiologic procedures to the understanding of the occurrence and control of conditions such as infectious and chronic diseases, mental disorders, community and environmental health hazards, accidents, and geriatric problems.

Prerequisite Courses

PH 383 or MATH 183 or SOCL 300 or PSYS 313 or PSY 313 or STAT 301 or BIOL 382

Required and Optional Texts and Tools

Required Textbook	Epidemiology 101: Essential Public Health Series, Second Edition by Robert H. Friis ISBN-13: 978-1284107852
Optional Resources	Optional resources will be provided throughout the course.
Optional Tools	You may like to have a calculator, and any calculator is fine. This textbook offers online learning materials through Navigate 2. These online materials are <u>not required</u> . This course also has optional Quizlet flashcards available for each chapter.
Technology	This course uses Blackboard . Make sure your computer system requirements meet the WKU requirements for online learners .

Course Goals

The overall goals of this course include:

1. To introduce the history, philosophy, and uses of epidemiology as well as its core concepts, functions, and applications across the globe and in society
2. To develop practical skills and exposure to communication, critical thinking, problem solving, health advocacy and promotion, independent work ethic, and ethical decision making
3. To create a safe, active, and anti-oppressive learning environment where students can develop their skills and interests as adult learners

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Formulate a definition of epidemiology and identify the basic characteristics and applications of epidemiology as they relate to real-life examples
2. Discuss the philosophy, core values, concepts, and functions of epidemiology and how they relate to the 10 essential services of public health
3. Analyze the basic concepts, methods, tools, and uses of epidemiologic data and how they relate to evidence-based approaches of epidemiology and the scientific method
4. Investigate descriptive and analytical epidemiology and its applications to population health challenges
5. Compare and contrast the basic elements of descriptive and analytic epidemiologic study designs
6. Calculate measures of morbidity and mortality and measures of association and interpret how they relate to the prevention and control of health events
7. Explore the natural history of disease as it relates to descriptive epidemiology, including the development of disease in humans, health promotion, and health protection
8. Assess how prevention and control of disease and health events relate to the health equity and the determinants of health including socio-economic, behavioral, biological, environmental, and other factors that contribute to health disparities among different social-ecologic levels
9. Assess the applications of epidemiology as it relates to the policy cycle at the national and international levels
10. Explore the importance of ethical research and decision-making in epidemiology
11. Examine how epidemiology influences the prevention and control of disease through public health communication to diverse audiences

Course Grading

Point Breakdown

10 Quizzes (20 points each)	200 points
First Exam	50 points
Second Exam	50 points
Third Exam	50 points
Practice Exercises	50 points
Total	400 points

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	360-400	90-100%
B	320-359	80-89%
C	280-319	70-79%
D	240-279	60-69%
F	< 240	< 60%

Course Activity Descriptions

Quizzes

There are a total of 10 quizzes, each worth 20 points toward the final grade. These quizzes provide an opportunity to practice the concepts from class and to prepare for exams. Quizzes are open note and open book, but students are expected to respond to the questions in their own words. Quizzes will be open on Blackboard during the dates listed on the course schedule. If a student misses a quiz, they will be allowed **one** makeup during the semester, otherwise, late quizzes will not be accepted.

Exams

There will be three exams. Each exam is worth 50 points. Each exam is online and asynchronous. The exams in this course will be based on material from the text, PowerPoint notes, classroom discussions, resources, and activities. The exams are open note and open book, but your answers must be in your own words. The exams are **NOT** cumulative. The exam dates are listed in the course schedule.

We also honor and acknowledge the former residents of Jonesville. According to the Jonesville History Project, “Jonesville was a predominantly African American community in Bowling Green, Kentucky, that was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the expansion of the WKU campus. This incident echoed a pattern across the country where the power of eminent domain was utilized to seize property from minority communities for large public works projects under the guise of urban revitalization.”

Attendance Policy (See [University Policy](#))

It is the policy of Western Kentucky University that class attendance is an important part of a student's educational experience and is a requirement for success in courses. Registration into a course obligates the student to be regular and punctual in class attendance. **The instructor should be notified by e-mail or telephone if a student is unable to attend before class begins. All students are given FIVE free excused absences that do not need an explanation. Beyond those five days, absences will need to be formally excused.** Alternative plans are in place for students who will be in isolation, quarantine, receiving care from a health care facility or unable to attend in-person class meetings due to medical reasons. Such students will participate in class activities online. Similarly, class activities will shift online, should the instructor be unable to meet with students in-person for medical reasons. We will do our best to follow all safety protocols to ensure the smooth running of the class.

Late/Makeup Work Policy

Due dates for every assignment are provided on the course schedule and posted on Blackboard. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due on those days. However, I recognize that sometimes “life happens.” In these instances, you may use your allotted **two flex days** for the semester for any assignments other than exams and quizzes. These days allow you to submit an assignment up to two days late without penalty. You can use these days for any assignment and for any reason. You do not need to provide me with the reason: simply email me and tell me how many of your flex days you would like to use **before the assignment deadline**. Communication is key here.

Once you've exhausted your flex days, then point deductions will occur for any assignment submitted after the deadline. An assignment submitted 24 hours after the due date will only be eligible for 80% of the maximum number of points allotted. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the due date will not be accepted. If you experience extenuating circumstances (e.g., you are hospitalized) that prohibit you from submitting your assignments on time, please let me know. I will evaluate these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Make-up exams will only be allowed under circumstances that are recognized by the instructor or university such as death in the immediate family, excuse from a doctor, sickness, or emergencies. This will have to be discussed **prior to the exam date**. Conditions for the make-up will be set by the instructor. Note: plan your end of semester travel wisely.

Make-up Quizzes are allowed according to the one-strike policy listed under the course activity descriptions. If a student misses a quiz, they will be allowed **one** makeup during the semester for any reason, otherwise, late quizzes will not be accepted. This one makeup is separate from the flex days.

ADA Policy

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, 1074. 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, and Sexual Misconduct/Assault

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding [WKU's Title IX – Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#) policies. 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, Andrea Anderson, 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. Sexual Assault Resources: <https://www.wku.edu/titleix/>

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Western Kentucky University does not discriminate against any student or exclude any student from its educational programs or activities, including classes or extracurricular activities, on the basis of pregnancy and/or pregnancy-related conditions such as, but not limited to, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Students who seek pregnancy or pregnancy-related accommodations should make their requests as soon as possible via WKU’s Title IX Website at www.wku.edu/titleix/ under the heading, “Pregnancy or Pregnancy-Related Conditions.” Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, via email at ena.demir@wku.edu or by phone at (270) 745-6867 to request accommodations or seek assistance. We encourage students and faculty to work together to establish a plan that allows the student to complete the class and coursework without jeopardizing academic integrity and course standards. The Title IX Coordinator can help facilitate conversations between students and faculty regarding appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

If you are a WKU student and believe that you have experienced an incident(s) of discrimination or harassment based on pregnancy (or pregnancy related conditions or issues), please report it to the Title IX Coordinator via email at ena.demir@wku.edu or by phone at (270) 745-6867.

Additional resources for pregnant and parenting students can be found on WKU’s Title IX Website at www.wku.edu/titleix/.

WKU Policy on Plagiarism

To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one’s own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism. **Students’ work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.**

WKU Policy on Cheating

No student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment, or other project that is submitted for purposes of grade determination. Cheating will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.

Policy on ChatGPT and Generative AI Tools

In general, I expect that the work you submit in this class will be your own and you are not authorized to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Tutor.ai, etc. for completing assignments. However, there may be specific assignments or activities in which we may utilize these tools to enhance your learning experience. In these instances, I will provide you with additional information about the assignment and how AI will be employed and cited. Again, unless permission is granted, you are expected to complete assignments **without substantive assistance** from others, including AI tools. If you are unsure if you are using AI tools appropriately in this course, I encourage you to visit with me. Examples of how to cite AI tools are available at <https://libguides.wku.edu/stylewrite/ai>. Any submitted assignment/activity found to have been entirely generated through AI will result in ZERO points.

WKU Writing Center

Students are encouraged to use the services of the [Writing Center](#) for their projects/papers. Face-to-face and online reviews are available.

Policy on Regular and Substantive Interaction

The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about Regular and Substantive Interaction at WKU, please visit the [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning webpage](#).

In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Weekly announcements with information about upcoming course materials, reminders, and updates
- Timely and constructive feedback on assignments provided within one week of submission
- Weekly office hours availability
- Providing information related to course content to further student understanding

Additional Resources for Students

- Academic Integrity: <https://www.wku.edu/handbook/academic-dishonesty.php/>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.wku.edu/handbook/index.php>
- Student Resource Portal: <https://www.wku.edu/online/srp/>
- Syllabus Information: <https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>
- Student Tutoring Services: <https://www.wku.edu/startcenter/>
- Free Tutoring at the WKU Learning Center: <https://www.wku.edu/tlc/>
- Public Health and Medicine Library Guides: <https://libguides.wku.edu/publichealth>
- WKU Counseling Center: <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>
- WKU Student Accessibility Resource Center: <https://www.wku.edu/sarc/>