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PUBH 535.50: Health Policy

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Health Policy (PUBH 535)

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Format: Online with Blackboard. Course procedures and expectations are those normally used in the online MPH program at the University of Montana. If questions arise contact the Program Coordinator at 243-2571. For purposes of assignments and class activities, the week starts on Monday 12:01 a.m. and ends on Sunday at Midnight. Office hours will be established the first week of the semester, during which time Dr. Molgaard will be available for phone calls or immediate email responses. Outside office hours, he will respond to emailed questions within 48 hours unless prior notice has been given to the class.

Blackboard Help: UOnline has made available an interactive tutorial for using Blackboard as a student. The tutorial and other resources can be found at the following web site: <http://umonline.umt.edu/StudentInfo/>

Required texts:

Merson, M., Black, R., and Mills, A. eds. "International Public Health: Diseases, Programs, Systems and Policies, 2nd edition". Jones and Bartlett, 2006.

Soskolne, C. ed. "Sustaining Life on Earth: Environmental and Human Health through Global Governance." Lexington Books, 2008.

Whiteford, L. and Branch, L."Primary Health Care in Cuba: The Other Revolution." Rowman and Littlefield, 2008.

O'Carroll, PW and Yasnoff, WA eds "Public Health Informatics and Information Systems". Springer, 2002. (Selected chapters will be on e-reserve at the library for student review and /or printing. The chapters are 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 24, 26.)

Course Description:

This course introduces concepts of health policy at the national, state and local level, and reviews current and emerging issues in health policy. Special emphasis will be on (1) international health and (2) informatics. The international emphasis will be on the public health problems facing low- and middle-income countries today, especially those

problems relating to reproductive health, infectious diseases, nutrition, and literacy. The informatics emphasis will be on the governmental and legislative context of public health informatics, core concepts of computer networking and network infrastructure at the local and regional level, project management and organizational change, data sources for policy decisions, and the changing interface between informatics and international health policy.

Online Format:

This course will be delivered over the Internet with support from UMOOnline. Readings from the textbooks and discussion questions from the texts and the instructor will form the basis of weekly class postings on the online discussion board. Case studies will be emphasized, as well as a course project.

Discussion Questions:

During the first five weeks of the class two discussion questions will be provided by the instructor each week. These will be based on the readings. Students will be graded as to the quality of their responses to these questions, and their responses to the answers of other students. During the remaining weeks of the class questions will be posted by assigned students. Grading will occur based on the quality of the questions provided and the answers of the other students to the questions.

Weekly postings to the discussion board:

All students are required to participate in discussions every week by Sunday, midnight Mountain Standard Time. This format necessitates completion of readings and assignments as well as participation in discussion boards every week during the week. Class participation constitutes a portion of the grade.

Exams:

There will be two exams (open book essay test) approximately one-third and two-thirds of the way through the course.

Final Paper:

Each student will complete a case study paper focused on one developing country's health policy issues and solutions. The model for this paper will be the Whiteford book on Cuba. A key aspect of the paper will be linking rural health issues in the international setting to those in Montana. The country selected will be picked in consultation with the instructor. Exceptional papers will be submitted to the Online Journal of Rural Research and Policy.

Evaluation:

Class participation 40% (half for posted discussion questions, half for weekly postings to questions of others), exams 40% (20% for each exam), class paper 20%.

The following grades can be earned by achieving the minimum percentages listed: A = 90%, B = 80%, C = 70%, D = 60%. Plus/minus grading will be used. The instructor reserves the right to curve the grade.

Course Schedule

- Week 1 Introduction to the Public Health System (O'Carroll Chapters 1 and 4)
Measures of Health and Disease in Populations (Merson Chapter 1)
Preface and Introduction: Global and Local Contexts as Evidence for Concern (Soskone et al)
- Week 2 Public Health Informatics (O'Carroll Chapters 3 and 24)
Tying Governance to Ecology, Economy and Human Well-Being (Soskone et al Part 1)
- Week 3 Public Health's Technology Infrastructure (O'Carroll, Chapters 5 and 26)
The Design of Health Systems (Merson Chapter 11)
Globalization, Human Rights, and the Human Condition (Soskone et al. Part II)
- Week 4 Project Management in Public Health (O'Carroll, Chapters 8 and 9)
Management and Planning for Public Health (Merson Chapter 12)
Governance for Ecological Integrity, Sustainable Ecosystem Function, and Public Health (Soskone et al. Part III)
- Week 5 Culture, Behavior and Health (Merson Chapter 2)
Covenants and Respect for All Life, Public-Good, and Traditional Knowledge (Soskone et al. Part IV)
Social Forces at Play in Environmental and Human Catastrophes (Soskone et al. Part V (c))
Quiz 1 over readings and discussions thru week 5
- Week 6 Infectious Diseases, Reproduction and Nutrition (Merson Chapters 3, 4 and 5)
The Rights of Children: Health and the Cultural Environment (Soskone et al. Part V (d))
- Week 7 Chronic Diseases and Risks (Merson Chapter 6)
Unintentional Injuries and Violence (Merson Chapter 7)
Governance Amid Ideological Influences in a Globalizing World (Soskone et al. Part V (a))
- Week 8 Mental Health (Merson Chapter 8)
- Week 9 Environmental Health (Merson Chapter 9)

Rights to Food and Water (Soskone et al. Part V (b))
Quiz II over readings and discussions thru week 9, including the book on the Cuban Health Care System (Whiteford).

Week 10 Policy and Planning for Complex Emergencies at the local, state, national and international level-I (Merson Chapter 10 and readings to be assigned)

Week 11 Policy and Planning for Complex Emergencies at the local, state, national and international level-II (Additional readings to be assigned)

Week 12 Health and the Economy: Aspects of Utilizing and Manipulating Data
(Merson Chapter 13)

Week 13 Global Cooperation in International Public Health
(Merson Chapter 14)

Week 14 Globalization and Health-I
(Merson Chapter 15)

Week 15 Globalization and Health Policy-II
Challenging our Individual and Collective Thinking About Sustainability
(Soskone et al Conclusions)
Final paper due at end of the week

Week 16 Final points

Plagiarism: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Plagiarism is the representing of another's work as one's own. It is a particularly intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion. (See UM Student Conduct Code).

Students must always be very careful to acknowledge any kind of borrowing that is included in their work. This means not only borrowed wording but also ideas. Acknowledgment of whatever is not one's own original work is the proper and honest use of sources. Failure to acknowledge whatever is not one's own original work is plagiarism. (Source: <http://www2.umt.edu/catalog/acpolpro.htm>)

Accommodation: In accordance with University of Montana's mission to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, necessary accommodations for students with disabilities will be made whenever possible. If you require accommodations, please provide written information regarding your disability from the Disability Services as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made.