I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to several key concepts and methods in public health and provide the foundation for further training in the MPH program. The course provides: 1) an introduction to the field of public health; 2) basic concepts in evidence-based public health and transdisciplinary science; 3) key analytics for identifying health disparities; 4) the role of ethics in public health; and 5) an overview of public health practice and policy. The course emphasizes knowledge of the organization of public health systems, priority populations, and interventions approaches and how these issues impact population health. Current issues will illustrate the evolving nature of public health.

II. MPH FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE:

A. Foundational Knowledge

- Explain public health history, philosophy and values.
- Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services.
- List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the US or other community relevant to the school or program.
- Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge.
- Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population’s health.
- Explain the social, political, economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities.
- Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease.
• Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health (e.g., One Health).

B. Foundational Competencies
• Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health.
• Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice.
• Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings.
• Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels.
• Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.
• Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.
• Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.

III. BROWN SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity: If a faculty member or student suspects that academic or professional integrity has been violated, they are required to submit an Academic Integrity or Professional Integrity Violation form found on Inside Brown for review by the Assistant Dean of the program. The Assistant Dean or designated representative will aid in the investigation of the violation, which includes but is not limited to gathering relevant evidence; conversations with the instructor, student(s) involved, witnesses, and others as necessary. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the Assistant Dean may choose to refer the matter directly to the University Student Conduct Board. This referral procedure will generally be followed if it is believed that the penalty is likely to involve suspension or expulsion from the University. The Assistant Dean for the program or designated representative will offer to meet privately with the student(s) against whom the complaint has been made. It is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the behaviors that constitute an academic integrity violation requiring referral.

Student Handbook 2019

Accommodations: If you have a learning, sensory, or physical disability or any other diagnosis that requires accommodations and/or assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please work with the Disability Resource Center, a University-wide resource that provides academic accommodations support and referrals. After requesting academic accommodations by providing appropriate documentation, students approved for accommodations will provide an Accommodation Letter to the instructor and are encouraged to work directly with the instructor to discuss specific course needs. The student’s Academic Advisor and/or the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs can support a student through this process.
Pronouns: The Brown School embraces and promotes gender expansiveness as reflective of the lived experiences of many students, staff, faculty and members of our expanded community. The correct use of an individual’s pronouns is a critical part of an individual’s identity and of building an inclusive community. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to use pronouns during introductions, are expected to use expressed pronouns of all Brown School community members, and are encouraged to apologize when mistakes are made. Educational resources are available at: https://campuslife.wustl.edu/lgbtqia/lgbt-resources/gender-pronouns/

English Language Proficiency: If your English language proficiency is such that you may need special assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please communicate these needs to your instructor who may refer you to the Brown Communications Lab. If you would like help seeking additional English language resources, please visit the Global Programs Suite in Brown 309. You may also find the Academic Assistance resources available through the Office for International Students and Scholars to be helpful.

Professional Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Computers or other electronic devices, including “smart pens” (devices with an embedded computer and digital audio recorder that records the classroom lecture/discussion and links that recording to the notes taken by the student), may be used by students at the discretion of the faculty member to support the learning activities in the classroom. These activities include taking notes and accessing course readings under discussion. If a student wishes to use a smart-pen or other electronic device to audio record lectures or class discussions, they must notify the instructor in advance of doing so. Permission to use recording devices is at the discretion of the instructor, unless this use is an accommodation approved by Disability Resources.

Nonacademic use of laptops and other devices and use of laptops or other devices for other coursework is distracting and seriously disrupts the learning process for other people in the classroom. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom during class for nonacademic reasons or for work on other coursework. Nonacademic use includes emailing, texting, social networking, playing games, instant messaging, and use of the Internet. Work on other coursework may include, but is not limited to, use of the Internet, writing papers, using statistical software, analyzing data, and working on quizzes or exams. The nonacademic use of cell phones during class time is prohibited, and they should be set on silent before class begins. In the case of an emergency, please step out of the room to take the call. The instructor has the right to hold students accountable for meeting these expectations, and failure to do so may result in a loss of participation or attendance points, a loss of the privilege of device use in the classroom, or being asked to leave the classroom.

Religious Holidays: The Brown School recognizes the individual student’s choice in observing religious holidays that occur during periods when classes are scheduled. Students are encouraged to arrange with their instructors to make up work missed as a result of religious observance, and instructors are asked to make every reasonable effort to accommodate such requests.

IV. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC SUPPORT POLICIES

Accommodations based upon sexual assault: The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a
no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb, Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, or Jen Durham Austin, Support Services Counselor. Both Kim Webb and Jen Durham Austin are confidential resources; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Director. If you would like to speak with directly Ms. Kennedy directly, she can be reached at (314) 935-3118, jw kennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting the Title IX office in Umrath Hall. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement agency. See: Title IX

You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-3445 for an appointment or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall. See: RSVP Center

Bias Reporting: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu.

Mental Health: Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See Mental Health Resources.

Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI): The Center of Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, creates collaborative partnerships with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change. One of the CDI’s strategic priorities is to cultivate and foster a supportive campus climate for students of all backgrounds, cultures and identities. See: diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/

Additional Issues or Concerns: If you feel that you need additional supports in order to be successful in your time at Brown, beyond the mentioned accommodations, please contact your Academic Advisor or Danielle Bristow, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. They can assist you in navigating a myriad of concerns.

V. READINGS

See Course outline (section X) below. All readings will be posted on Canvas.
VI. ORGANIZATION OF COURSE

During class sessions students will listen to lectures on core concepts in public health and application of these core concepts to public health practice and will engage in small group activities related to each topic. Lectures will be given by the instructor or by other Brown School faculty. Over the course of the semester, students will also complete an assessment of health disparities issue of their choice and present their findings in the form of a written report at the end of the semester (see below).

VII. ROLE OF FACULTY AND STUDENT

Course Expectations. The instructors will: 1) prepare and deliver course material; 2) be available to students during office hours, after class, and by appointment for consultation; and, 3) provide timely and clearly explained feedback on student performance.

The instructors expect students to: 1) attend each class on time; 2) complete all assignments in a timely manner; come to class prepared, having read all assignments prior to the session for which they are assigned; 3) participate in class discussions; 4) seek any necessary clarification regarding course expectations from the instructor; and, 5) provide the instructor with feedback about the effectiveness of the course. Any problems with attendance, meeting deadlines, or completing assignments should be discussed promptly with the instructor.

Office hours: Dr. Duncan will have office hours 10 am – 12 noon in Brown 208 each Tuesday, and Emily Evers, teaching assistant, will have office hours 2 pm – 3 pm on Wednesdays in Brown B06. The instructor and teaching assistant are also available by appointment as needed.

Special Needs: Students who have a learning disability, sensory or physical disability or impairment, or English as a second language and need special assistance in lecture, reading assignments, and/or testing should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Student evaluation will be based on the following:

1. Professionalism (20%). The professionalism component of the grade is comprised of behaviors and activities likely expected in future public health careers. It includes attendance, informed commentary during plenary discussions, active engagement in small group work (see below), meeting deadlines, respectful communication, and completion of competency baseline exam and course evaluations. Students will receive their professionalism grades, at mid-term and final, scored out of 100 each and weighted 20% of course grade.

   Small group work: The instructor will randomly assign students to small groups for discussion and practice activities at the beginning of the semester and to new groups mid-semester. Students will rate their own participation in small groups and that of their fellow group members mid-semester and at the end of the semester. These ratings will account for a quarter of the professionalism grade (5% of the final grade).

2. Practice Activities (40%). Cross Cutting Themes is an introductory course intended to prepare MPH
students for future coursework as well as practicum placements and later career responsibilities. For various topics covered in the course, a theoretical basis and key concepts are first presented in readings and by lecture. This will be followed by exercises in application to be completed by students and submitted on Canvas or per instructions provided in class. One practice activity will be related to the Health Disparities Project (draft project idea) with scores on this activity weighted to 10% of the final grade. The remaining practice activities will be scored on a five point scale and weighted in total 30% of final course grade.

3. **Health Disparities Project (40%)**. Students will select a population defined by legal borders (e.g. city, state, country) and conduct a health disparities assessment of one or more health conditions. The assessment will include both quantitative and qualitative analyses drawing on publicly available data sets (e.g. America’s County Health Rankings, Demographic and Health Surveys, etc.) and literature reviews. Systems thinking will be a required element to analyze determinants of the health disparity (e.g. causal loop diagram or stock and flow diagram). Finally, programs, policies, and research gaps relative to the core functions of public health ad 10 Essential Services are examined. The project will be scored out of 100 points and weighted 40% of course grade. A rubric will be provided approximately 4 weeks in advance of the due date.

4. **Grading scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(100-95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(90-94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>(88-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(85-87)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>(80-84)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>(78-79)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(75-77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>(70-74)</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(≤69)</td>
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</table>

IX. MPH COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT TO ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPH Competency(ies)</th>
<th>Assessment Opportunity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health.</td>
<td>The <em>Health Disparities Project</em> will include a descriptive analysis of epidemiologic data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice.</td>
<td>In the <em>Health Disparities Project</em> students will use the results of their descriptive analysis of epidemiologic data to argue for the importance of their chosen health disparity issue and make recommendations for policy and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels.</td>
<td>Exercise: In small groups, answer questions regarding how various structural factors (e.g., transportation) and related policies contribute to health disparities and might be leveraged for achieving health equity. In the <em>Health Disparities Project</em> students will identify the key</td>
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determinants and systems underlying their chosen health disparity issue.

Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.

& In class small-group discussions on ethical issues, health policies, and evidence-based public health.

Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.

In the Health Disparities Project culminates in a written report on a health disparities issue.

Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings.

Exercise: Compare organization, structure, and function of public health system in two representative settings: US and Haiti. Evaluated as part of the Practice Activities component of the grade.

Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.

Health Disparities Project will include a systems thinking analysis assessment (e.g. causal loop diagram, or stocks and flow diagram).

X. COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using the Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lori Siegel Reference/Subject Librarian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPH Foundational Knowledge &amp; Competencies – Baseline Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9/12 | **PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS: ORGANIZATION & FUNCTIONS**  
   Core functions of public health and 10 Essential Services  
   Angela Hobson, PhD  
   Assistant Dean for Public Health | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Public Health System & the 10 Essential Services.  
   Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ten Essential Public Health Services and How They Can Include Addressing Social Determinants of Health Inequities.  
   Nour NM. Global Women’s Health – A global perspective. Scand J Clinical Lab Invest. 2014;74(Suppl 244):8-12  
| 9/26 | **BIOLOGY OF PUBLIC HEALTH: Infectious disease**  
   Genomics  
   Kim Johnson, PhD  
   Associate Professor | Health Disparities Project IDEA draft due  
   Burlington, Mass: Jones & Bartlett Learning. Chapter 13 (Emerging and New Infectious Diseases)  
   Brief news article: https://www.healthnewsreview.org/2018/05/ni h-all-of-us-pr/ |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Faculty and Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>CLIMATE CHANGE &amp; PUBLIC HEALTH</td>
<td>Joe Steensma, EdD, Professor of Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYSTEMS SCIENCE &amp; PUBLIC HEALTH</td>
<td>Peter Hovmand, PhD, Professor of Practice, Director, Social System Design Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Additional reading(s) TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Role of Policy in Public Health</td>
<td>Eddie Lawlor, PhD William E. Gordon Distinguished Professor Emeritus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**XI. EXTRA READING**

Optional – For your future public health library!


**Systems Dynamics (extra reading, optional)**

*Achieving Lasting Impact at Scale*  
Part Two: Assessing System Readiness for Delivery of Family Health Innovations at Scale  


