HPM620 Health Disparities and Community Health
Course number: 8650

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Class Meeting: Tuesday 4:00-6:50

Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4, or by appointment

Course Prerequisites: None

Required Reading Material: Course readings will be provided either in class or electronically. Readings will be multidisciplinary from the fields of public health, sociology, psychology, disability and the humanities.

***It is highly recommended that students purchase or review on-line resources for the American Psychological Association Style or American Medical Association (Numeric) Style. Do this during the first two weeks of the course.

Course Description:
The goal of this course is to understand what contributes to health disparities in the United States. The course will discuss underlying assumptions of group definitions, why particular groups may experience disparities and individual versus ecological approaches to health in our current health system. This course will also cover theoretical frameworks for understanding and addressing health disparities in health promotion. The course is geared for students to critically think about and discuss health disparities and use the knowledge gained through the class in their work as public health professionals and researchers. Readings will be multidisciplinary; from the fields of public health, sociology, psychology, disability, and the humanities. Assignments include critiquing media’s portrayal of various groups in our society, a critique of a journal issue, and a term paper to be presented during the final class.

Course Competencies:
1. Critique the underlying assumptions of group labeling in policy and research.
2. Learn about various groups who experience disparities
3. Understand multiple determinants of health disparities
4. Explore theoretical frameworks for researching and addressing health disparities
5. Critique existing conceptual frameworks in health disparities
6. Explore community based and ecological approaches to health promotion and research
Class participation- (20 points total) Participation is important for the success of this class. Students will get together in pairs, select a session, and lead a discussion or present a group activity based on the readings and, if desired, addition readings or research done by the pair. (10 points)

The class participation grade is also based on active participation and critical discussion of the readings each week. In order for this class to be interesting and a full learning experience, students need to complete the class readings prior to the class session and be prepared to participate in class discussion. Missing more than two classes in the semester without coming to me with a valid and documented reason will result losing 10 points. Missing more than three classes may result in failure. Please see instructor for special circumstances. (10 points)

Late Assignments- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Two percentage points will be taken off the assignment if it is handed in the following day and two more points for every day after that.

Incomplete Assignments- They must be requested prior to the assignment due date. They will only be granted for special circumstances. Please see the professor for details on the process and timeline for completing an incomplete. The process will include regular meetings with the professor until the assignment is handed in. If the incomplete is not handed in by the timeline granted by the professor, the result will be a failure grade for the course. Please refer to the current University at Albany Graduate Bulletin for policies on course withdrawal.

Academic Dishonesty:
Please refer to the current University at Albany Graduate Bulletin for policies on academic dishonesty. Please be aware that academic dishonesty, in any of its forms, will result in an E for the course.

In accordance with University policy, any instance of academic dishonesty (please see the Community Rights and Responsibilities booklet for definitions) will result in an automatic failing grade for the course and potential sanctions by the school and university. Students will be told at the time the incident occurs of this penalty, and it will be applied immediately. Students are strongly advised to avoid placing themselves in any situation for which an instance of academic dishonesty is suspected by the professor.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism in any form will be considered an instance of academic dishonesty. I will check your papers for each assignment to identify any potential forms of plagiarism. Please familiarize yourself with what plagiarism entails and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the professor. As per University policy, the burden on avoiding plagiarism falls solely upon the student. Student’s who are caught plagiarizing on any assignment will receive an E for the course. There will be no exceptions.

According to University policy, you must correctly cite outside material in your papers. Directly coping published material without appropriately indicating it is copied and adequately citing the author(s) and source are examples of plagiarism. Use APA or AMA style to ensure that you are properly citing articles in your paper and in the bibliography. Once plagiarism is identified no excuses will be tolerated.
What is Plagiarism and Why is it Important?

Students are continually reading other people’s ideas when writing papers for graduate courses. Ideas from texts, lecture, the Web, and class discussions are often incorporated into students’ writing. As a result, it is very important that to give credit where it is due. Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.

How Can Students Avoid Plagiarism?

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use

- another person’s idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or
- paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words.

These guidelines are from CETL and the Student Code of Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, SUNY Albany.

Please read the Graduate Bulletin, and go on-line to the UAlbany Library Website, which has much more detail about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. For any assignment, feel free to consult with the professor to get clarification about potential plagiarism issues, PRIOR to handing in your assignment.

Specific issues from previous courses:

i. References- If you use any source, reference it. I do not want to see statistics or discussion of research findings without a citation at the end of the sentence. If it is not your own idea than it should be cited.

ii. Bibliography- Provide a complete bibliography; include all your cited sources.

iii. Use your own words. Avoid excessive quoting from the literature you read. If you do quote literature, indicate that it is a quotation, cite it and provide the source in your bibliography.
August 28th

Introduction

http://www.kaisernetwork.org/health_cast/heast_index.cfm?create=high_windows&linkid=1&display=detail&hc=1103

Review syllabus and watch video.

September 4th  Perspectives on Health Disparities


September 11th  Rooting out disparities


3. September 18th  Categories, Data, and Agendas

- Measuring Health Disparities
Reference for students interested in Health Disparities Research:

September 25th

Theoretical Perspectives on Race
Media Critique due at beginning of class

October 2nd

Discrimination and Health and Health Care

Media Critique Due

October 9th

Culture and Health
  Researching Cultural Differences in Health (pp. 190-219).
• Brach, C., & Fraser, I. (2000). Can cultural competency reduce racial and ethnic health 
  disparities? A review and conceptual model. Medical Care Research & Review, 
  57(Suppl. 1), 181-217.

October 16th  Perspectives in Women’s Health Inequity
• Ruzek, S.B.; Clarke, A.E.; Olesen, V.L. (1997). Social, Biomedical, and Feminist 
  Models of Women’s Health. Ruzek, S.B.; Clarke, A.E.; Olesen, V.L (eds) Women’s 
  Health: Complexities and Differences. (pp 11-28) Columbus, OH: Ohio State University 
  Press.
  24(2): 265-283.
  Awareness, Perception, and Knowledge of Heart Disease Risk and Prevention Among 

October 23rd  Social Position, Economic Status, and Health
• Isaacs, SL & Schroeder, SA. (2004) Class—The Ignored Determinant of the Nation’s 
  Health. NEJM. 351:11 (1137-1142).
  269(24): 3140-3145.
• Din-Dzitetham R; Nemhbad WN; Collins R; Davis SK. (2004) Perceived stress 
  following race-based discrimination at work is associated with hypertension in African-
  Medicine. 58 (3), pp. 449-61
• Economic Costs of Cancer Health Disparities Summary of Meeting Proceedings. 

Reference article:

October 30th  Perception of Aging and Ageism
• Sharpe PA. (1995) Older women and health services: moving from ageism toward 
• Hurd, L.C. (1999). “We’re Not Old!” Older Women’s Negotiation of Aging and 


**Journal Issue Critique Due at the beginning of class**

**Choose groups for final paper**

**November 6th**  
**Class Cancelled for APHA**

**November 13th**  
**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health**


**November 20th**  
**Disability or Disabled?**

*Weirded Out and Blown Away video*


**November 27th**  
**Immigration and Health**

**Paper Due and Presentations**


**December 4th** Class Poster Presentations and final discussion
Final Papers Due

**Class Requirements:**
Students are expected to complete readings prior to class, attend all classes and actively participate in critical discussions of the readings. Class participation is 10% of your grade.

**Critique of Media (20 points):** This paper will be a critique of a mainstream publication about a particular group that may experience health disparities. This paper should critique the medium using the concepts discussed in the first three classes. Discuss the impact the portrayal may have on the public’s view of the group and the impact on the group itself. Finally, discuss how the impact may affect the health of individual’s within the group either directly or indirectly. Provide a copy of the article, picture or describe the show or movie. For example, you may critique a news article or Dateline episode talking about urban violence in African American communities and discuss stigma and identity. This paper should be written in APA or AMA style. This assignment is intended to be done individually. (Due by the beginning of class September 25th, 2007 electronically or hard copy). **Paper should be between 6-8 pages, but no more than 8 pages.**

**Critique of a journal issue (30 points):** Students will choose one issue of a peer-reviewed journal and critique the objectives of the journal and the articles in regards to understanding and addressing health disparities. Students should consider underlying assumptions and theoretical frameworks in definitions of groups, group sampling, and language used in the articles by using frameworks discussed in class. Recommend an alternative framework that could be used. This paper should be written in APA or AMA writing style. This assignment is intended to be done individually. The assignment is due by the beginning of class October 30th, 2007 electronically or hard copy. **Paper should be between 8-10 pages**

**Intervention Paper and Poster Presentation (30 points):** This is a group project—no more than 4 people. Pick a topic area related to health disparities and address a current issue in health disparities by developing an intervention using what you have learned so far in the course. Students should clearly justify the health disparities issue and critically discuss the current interventions to address that health disparities issue. Please cite the literature. Next develop an intervention to address the health disparities issue, state the goals of the intervention, and argue why this intervention may be more effective than what is currently being done. Make sure you cite references in your paper appropriately. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. The paper **should be no more than 20 pages** not including references and it should be written in a standard writing style such as APA or AMA format. Please be fair to your team members. Each member should contribute their fair share to the assignment. Develop a 15-20 minute presentation summarizing your paper. This will be presented in class on December 4th. Due electronically or in class by the beginning of class. Paper 20 points, Poster presentation 10 points **December 4th, 2007.**