School of Allied Health and Life Sciences
Master of Public Health Program

PHC 4109/ 5123: Scientific Basis of Public Health
Course Syllabus

Course Credits: 3
Instructor: Justice Mbizo, Dr. PH       jmbizo@uwf.edu
Adjunct Instructor: Erica Holland       eholland1@uwf.edu
Contact Information: Building 63, Room 134    Telephone: 850-474-2650

1  ALL E-MAILS AND DISCUSSION POSTINGS WILL BE ANSWERED WITHIN 48 HOURS BUT USUALLY LESS, EXCEPT DURING WEEKENDS IN WHICH CASE SUCH POSTINGS OR EMAILS WILL BE RESPONDED TO WITHIN 72 HOURS
2  THE SUBJECT LINE OF ALL EMAILS SHOULD INCLUDE THE COURSE PREFIX AND NUMBER
3  ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS ARE DUE ON THE DATE INDICATED FOR THAT ASSIGNMENT
4  PLEASE INCLUDE BOTH THE INSTRUCTOR AND THE ADJUNCT IN ALL E-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Course Overview: An understanding of the scientific basis of public health is critical to the professional development of graduates of public health programs. Public health addresses biological, physical, chemical, behavioral, social and cultural factors associated with individual and population health, and in recent years health disparities over the life course. It is important that students of public health have a solid understanding of the scientific foundation of public health which is critical for developing effective public health interventions to eliminate health disparities and the threats of emerging or re-emerging infectious diseases. The course has adapted the competencies from the Association of Schools of Public Health.

Course Description: This course provides students with an overview of scientific principles of public health and their application to public health problems of significant state, national and international impact.

Prerequisite: None. However, it is assumed that the typical student will have at least one semester of a college science, such as, biology or a comparable course before enrolling in this course.
**Student Learning Objectives:** The ability to incorporate public health science into public health practice is critical to the success of public health interventions. At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Specify the role of the immune system in population health
- Describe how behavior alters the biological, chemical and physical status of humans
- Identify the ethical, social and legal issues implied by public health science
- Explain the scientific basis of public health
- Explain the role of science in the ecological model of population-based health
- Explain how genetics and genomics affect disease processes and public health policy and practice
- Articulate how biological, chemical and physical agents affect human health
- Apply relevant scientific principles to development and implementation of disease prevention, control, or management programs
- Apply evidence-based scientific concepts to inform public health laws, policies, and regulations
- Integrate general scientific concepts into public health research and practice
- Describe the role and limitations of genetic variations in health disparities

**Required Texts:** Please purchase the ONE text that applies to your classification.


Other resources from external sources will be provided as necessary.

**References:**
Grading/Evaluation: Grades will be assigned based upon performance on quizzes, midterm exam and a final exam. The grades will be computed using the following weights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Category</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (4)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Quizzes (10) <strong>Undergraduate only</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (Graduate Students only)</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Discussion Forum</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (cumulative)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following grading scale will be used to determine final grades:

**Undergraduate Grade Scheme:**

\[
\begin{align*}
A &= 95-100 \\
A^{-} &= 90-94 \\
B+ &= 85-89 \\
B &= 80-84 \\
B^{-} &= 75-79 \\
C+ &= 70-74 \\
C &= 65-69 \\
C^{-} &= 60-64 \\
D &= 55-59 \\
F &< 55
\end{align*}
\]

**Graduate Grade Scheme:**

\[
\begin{align*}
A &= 95-100 \\
A^{-} &= 91-94 \\
B+ &= 85-90 \\
B &= 81-84 \\
C+ &= 75-80 \\
C &= 70-74 \\
F &= <70
\end{align*}
\]

Participation in discussion forums is required in this course and will be graded. Each week you will receive **10 points towards participation**. Participation in discussion forums is mandatory. Discussion questions for each week close on **Sunday at 11:59pm**. Postings made after the closing date will not be accepted. A grading rubric for the discussion will be provided to guide you in what we will be looking for in the discussions. **You are also encouraged to check the Penny Jar and News Items for any updates or announcements in the class.**

**EXPECTATIONS FOR ACADEMIC CONDUCT/PLAGIARISM POLICY:**

Due to the distance learning nature of this course, all requirements must be completed within the time scheduled, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Online facilities will be provided so students can monitor their own progress.

- Academic Conduct Policy [Web]
- Plagiarism Policy [PDF]
- Student Handbook [PDF]
It is the philosophy of The University of West Florida that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

In addition, any behavior that interferes with the conduct of a class is classified as disruptive behavior and will not be tolerated. Although not exhaustive, examples of disruptive behavior would include: inappropriate or threatening online postings or e-mails, etc.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:

This course is reviewed during the semester and in an ongoing basis for quality by assessment personnel within the School of Allied Health and Life Sciences (SAHLS) to meet national standards established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Council on Education for Public Health, and/or to address quality enhancement initiatives of SAHLS. Student feedback is also vital to this process. When reviewing our programs, our accrediting partners expect to see 100% participation in the State-of-Florida mandated SUSSAI (State University System Student Assessment of Instruction) evaluations. Thus, at the end of the semester, we need to hear from the folks that enjoyed the class and from the folks that have suggestions for improvement (ok, and from the folks that want to fill out the survey as quickly as possible with no comments to share!). BUT, we do need to hear from each and every student in this class, and we value your input.

When SUSSAI evaluations are ready for you to complete, you will see a News posting in the course. Please take a few minutes to complete this anonymous, brief web-based evaluation on this course.

If you need help, contact Connie Works at (850) 474-3080 or cworks@uwf.edu for assistance!

Please be assured that all evaluations that are completed online are of a confidential matter. Your name, student number, and e-mail address will not be revealed to your instructor, department, or college. Only one evaluation per course per student can be submitted. Please do not delay completing the evaluation when the time approaches. Due to the significance of this information, I will not be able to pre-release grades in eLearning if we are not close to the 100% participation goal before finals week. Thank you!

ONLINE TEST TAKING GUIDELINES:

Please do not begin any timed, online exam in the course that may overlap with the eLearning maintenance window. The eLearning maintenance window runs 3:00-6:00 am CST (Central Standard Time) each day. If you initiate an exam that overlaps with this time and experience any technical errors, your recorded score is likely to be close to 0 for such an attempt. There are no exceptions to this policy.
If you experience any other technical problems or errors during any timed exam that does not overlap with the eLearning maintenance window, you are required to notify the Helpdesk immediately at helpdesk@uwf.edu or (850) 474-2075. Failure to contact the HelpDesk to report the problem will result in a grade of 0 automatically being assigned. If you are unable to get immediate assistance from the HelpDesk during the exam, but have documented the problem in an email or voice mail, you may attempt to restart the exam using the same browser, or attempt to re-enter the exam with another browser. If you are still unable to restart the exam and continue with saving, please note that for your final submitted score to be recorded, you MUST still prove that you documented the original technical problem with the HelpDesk via helpdesk@uwf.edu or (850) 474-2075. Failure to do so will result in an automatic grade of 0 being assigned.

ASSISTANCE:

Students with special needs who require specific examination-related or other course-related accommodations should contact Disabled Student Services (DSS), dss@uwf.edu, (850) 474-2387. DSS will provide the student with a letter for the instructor that will specify any recommended accommodations.

Every effort will be made to accommodate the special needs of disabled students. Please inform the instructor privately during the first week of class to indicate your particular needs. All such accommodations are officially arranged through the Office for Disabled Student Services and a letter from this office must accompany your request.