

Saint Louis University  
School of Public Health  
Department of Community Health  
Division of Behavioral Science



**CMHC- C 544**

**Eliminating Health Disparities**

**Spring Semester 2005**

**Syllabus**

Thursdays, 12:30 – 4:15 pm, Salus Center, Gonzaga (Room 468)

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**Office Hours:**

Mondays, 2-3 pm, Wednesdays, 1-2 pm, or Thursdays, 9:30-10:30 pm, or by appointment

**Course Overview**

This course is designed to provide theoretical and intervention tools that encourage and permit students to conduct research and develop interventions to reduce health disparities. Our investigation and discussion of health disparities will examine the empirical evidence on disparities, healthcare delivery systems, research issues, policy and policy formation concerns, and intervention practices. While racial/ethnic disparities in health and health outcomes will be an important focus of this course, disparities among other subgroups (e.g., the poor, women, uninsured, disabled, and non-English speaking populations) will also be included and discussed. By the end of this course it is expected that students will have an understanding of sources of disparities in healthcare, intervention strategies to reduce these, data collection issues, and needed research. Students successfully completing the course will be able to:

- Describe and analyze the patterns of health disparity affecting various racial/ethnic, gender, income and sexual orientation groups, including health indicators, rates of disease, and health-related behaviors.
- Evaluate the status of literature with respect to evidenced based prevention/intervention, culturally appropriate modifications, and service delivery strategies.
- Develop research and evaluation strategies that are both culturally appropriate and sensitive to community needs.

## **Course Description**

**Course Format:** This course will follow a 10-week course structure. The course will consist of readings, lectures, activities, and discussions. Guest lectures, by faculty expert in intervention strategies relevant to health disparity, will supplement classroom instruction.

### ***Course Elements and Requirements***

#### **Required Text:**

*Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care.* 2003. (Committee on Understanding and Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, Board on Health Sciences Policy, Institute of Medicine). Smedley, Brian D., Adrienne Y. Stith, and Alan R. Nelson, editors. Washington, D.C: The National Academies Press.

Assigned readings.

#### **Course Requirements:**

**1. Attendance and participation in weekly seminars. (10%)**

Students are expected to attend each class session and participate in all discussions, class activities and assignments. For each session with assigned readings, students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) that session meets. All students will also be graded on their discussion participation

**2. Health Disparities Presentations (40%)**

Each student will participate in two group presentations. Using the data from Cancer Control Planet (as well as other useful sources) groups will analyze and present on cancer disparities in an assigned state (Presentation 1) and review an intervention strategy to address cancer disparity in that state (Presentation 2). Each session will last 25 minutes (with an additional 5 minutes for questions).

Presentation 1 should answer: (1) In what populations do cancer disparities exist (who is affected, any geographic or location factors, time frame or age factors) and for which cancers? and (2) What do we know about risk behaviors and factors in these populations and how these might affect disparities? (15%)

Presentation 2 should provide an overview of a selected state's comprehensive cancer control plan, an overview of the prevention/intervention literature relevant to that state's cancer control program, and a summary of prevention/intervention strategies that are evidenced-based (make use of the Comprehensive Cancer Control Planning steps found on the Cancer Control Planet website). (25%)

#### **Presentation Dates:**

Presentation 1: **February 3, 2005**

Presentation 2: **April 7, 2005**

**3. 12 to 15 page paper (50%)**

This paper is an individual, written presentation that should:

- Determine critical areas of burden and high-risk populations for a particular cancer.
- Provide an overview of the prevention/intervention literature related to a particular cancer.
- Identify an evidence-based intervention strategy, providing evidence that justifies the selection.
- Assess gaps in similar strategies already in place.
- Recommend modifications, providing evidence and justifications for these.
- Create measurable goals and objectives for the intervention strategy.
- Prioritize goals, objectives and strategies for the prevention/intervention project.
- Identify implementing organizations for plan strategies.

Papers will be graded on content, organization, clarity, and grammar. Papers should be double spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides).

**Papers are due on April 20, 2004.**

### ***Grading Determination and Policy***

According to The Graduate School, the only final grades allowed are: A ( $\geq 93$  to 100 points), B+ ( $\geq 90$  to 93 points), B ( $\geq 83$  to 90 points), B- ( $\geq 80$  to 83 points), C ( $\geq 73$  to 80 points) and F ( $< 73$  points).

### *Miscellaneous*

- Submitted work should be typed and double-spaced or submitted on disk, electronically, etc.
- Written work will be evaluated for composition and grammar.
- Turn off beepers and cell phones during class.
- Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on behalf of the student and the instructor. The instructor, as well as the fellow students, should not be subjected to any student's behavior that is in any way disruptive, rude, or challenging to the instructor's authority in the classroom. A student should not feel intimidated or demeaned by his/her instructor and students must remember that the instructor has primary responsibility for control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity.

*Feedback on Assignments:* Timely feedback on assignments is important to the learning process. It assures that you are aware of your progress. For routine assignments, quizzes, presentations, and exams feedback will be provided within two weeks after the due date. For longer assignments such as term papers, feedback will be provided within three weeks after the due date of the assignment. In the rare event that these deadlines cannot be met, you will be informed of the delay and the extra time needed in providing feedback.

*Attendance:* Regular class attendance is an important part of one's graduate education in public health. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. In rare circumstances (e.g., illness, accident, death in one's family), absences will be excused. However, if a student misses more than seven (7) hours of a three-credit course, they may be asked to withdraw from the course and re-take the course at a later time.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

All students enrolled in MPH Program courses are also expected to abide by and uphold Saint Louis University's Policy on Academic Integrity and Ethics. This policy is reprinted below:

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the validity of the University's evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.

Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student's work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty; and making unauthorized use of technological devices in the completion of assignments or exams.

Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

### **Policy on Style for Citation and Plagiarism**

The two key purposes of citation are to 1) give appropriate credit to the authors of information, research findings, and/or ideas (and avoid plagiarism) and 2) facilitate access by your readers to the sources you use in your research.

**Quotations:** When directly quoting an outside source, the borrowed text, regardless of the amount, must be surrounded by quotation marks or block quoted. Quoted text over two lines in length should be single-spaced and indented beyond the normal margins. Every quote must include a source—the author, title, volume, page numbers, etc.—whether an internal reference, footnote, or endnote is used in conjunction with a bibliography page.

**Paraphrasing or Citing an Idea:** When summarizing an outside source in your own words or citing another person's ideas, quotation marks are not necessary, but the source must be included.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the academic honesty policy of the School of Public Health. If a student plagiarizes others' material or ideas, he or she may receive an "F" in the course. The faculty member may also recommend further sanctions to the Dean, per School disciplinary action policy.

Generally speaking, the three keys of acceptable citation practice are: 1) thoroughness, 2) accuracy, and 3) consistency. In other words, be sure to fully cite all sources used (thoroughness), be accurate in the

citation information provided, and be consistent in the citation style you adopt. All references should include the following elements: 1) last names along with first and middle initials; 2) full title of reference; 3) name of journal or book; 4) publication city, publisher, volume, and date; and 5) page numbers referenced. When citing information from the Internet, include the WWW address at the end, with the "access date" (*i.e.*, when you obtained the information), just as you would list the document number and date for all public documents. When citing ideas or words from an individual that are not published, you can write "personal communication" along with the person's name and date of communication. Typical formats for citing references and books can be found in *the American Journal of Public Health*.

Additional Reading:

Lathrop A, Foss K. *Student Cheating and Plagiarism in the Internet Age*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.; 2000.  
(available to check out from Brenda McDaniel)

**Access and Accommodation Policy**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disabilities Services at 314-977-2930 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Course Calendar**

**Week 1. Course Overview**

January 13, 2005

Introductions and overview of course/review of syllabus

Overview of Disparities in Health Status and Healthcare: The Importance of Research

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment* : Chapter 1  
Kawachi, Kennedy, & Wilkinson\_(1999) *The Society and Population Health Reader*, Vol. 1 pp. 38-46.

**Week 2. The Healthcare Environment and Health Disparities**

January 20, 2005– Thompson

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 2*  
*Missing Persons: Minorities in the Health Professions*. A report of the Sullivan Commission on Diversity in the Healthcare Workforce

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

**Week 3. Potential Sources of Disparity in Care: Patient level and system level factors.**

January 27, 2005

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 3*

Cooper, Roter, Johnson, Ford, Steinwachs, & Powe (2003). Patient Centered Communication, Ratings of Care, and Concordance of Patient and Physician Race. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 139, 907-915.

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

#### **Week 4. Disparity**

February 3, 2005

Activity: Group presentations on cancer disparities and discussion.

#### **Week 5. Socio Cultural Issues**

February 10, 2005

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 5*

Adler, Nancy (2003). Community Preventive Services: Do we know what we need to know to improve health and reduce disparities? *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 24, 10-11.

Schulz, Parker, Israel, Allen, Decarlo, Lockett (2002). Addressing social determinants of health through community-based participatory research: The East Side village health work partnership. *Health Education & Behavior*, 29, 326-341.

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

#### **Week 6. Intervention Strategies**

February 17, 2005

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 4*

Pavalko, Mossakowski, & Hamilton (2003). Does perceived discrimination affect health? Longitudinal relationships between work discrimination and women's physical and emotional health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 43, 18-33.

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

#### **Week 7. Intervention Strategies**

February 24, 2005

**Guest Lecture:** Dr. Debra Haire-Joshu, Health Education and Prevention Research

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 6*

Pasick, D'Onofrio, Otero-Sabagol (1996). Similarities and differences across cultures: Questions to inform a third generation for health promotion research, *Health Education Quarterly*, 23, 142-161.

Brach & Frasier (2000). Can cultural competency reduce racial and ethnic health disparities: A review and conceptual model. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 57, 181-217.

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

### **Week 8. Research Issues**

March 3, 2005

**Guest Lecture:** Dr. Dan Gentry, Community Capacity Building and HIV.  
Dr. Matthew Kreuter, Health Communication Strategies

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 7*

Fagan, King, Lawrence, Petrucci, Robinson, Banks, Marable, Grana (2004). Eliminating tobacco-related health disparities: Directions for future research. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94, 211-217.

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

### **Week 9. Research Directions**

March 17, 2005

**Guest Lecture:** Dr. Ross Brownson, Evidenced Based Prevention Research

**Readings:** *Unequal Treatment: Chapter 8*

*National Institutes of Health Strategic Research Plan to Reduce and Ultimately Eliminate Health Disparities*

Students will submit 3 questions--based on the required readings for that session--by 1:00 PM on the day before (Wednesday) this session meets.

### **Week 10. Groups Presentations**

April 7, 2005

Activity: Group presentations on state cancer control programs and intervention strategies.

**Final Papers are due on April 20, 2004.**