Course Syllabus
Introduction to public health
PBH 205

Fall 2017
Section 1005
TuTh 10:00AM—11:15PM
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Welcome!

Welcome to PBH 205, Introduction to Public Health. As a discipline, public health is concerned with protecting health at the population level; our “patient” is the community.

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic principles and practice of public health. We will cover population-based approaches to studying, controlling and preventing disease in the core areas of epidemiology and biostatistics, environmental health, social and behavioral health, and healthcare administration and policy. We will use real-world, practical examples of public health problems and solutions, including those that we are currently facing in the world.

Office Hours (BHS 356)
- Tuesday 11:30am-3:30pm
- Thursday 9am-10am

Brian Labus, PhD, MPH
Instructor
brian.labus@unlv.edu

The easiest way to reach me is through email. I will do my best to reply to you by the next working day. Include the course in your email, as I teach multiple courses. Do not contact me through Webcampus, as I do not regularly check messages there.
About the course

Catalog description
Epidemics, chronic disease, workplace hazards, bioterrorism, pollution, second hand smoke, violence – are all public health problems. This course will introduce students to the growing field of public health with a focused look at the core areas of environmental health, epidemiology, population health, and health promotion.

Prerequisites
ENG 101, ENG 102, First Year Seminar

Second Year Seminar courses
All Second Year Seminar - Sophomore Intensive Seminar courses are designed to expose students to world cultures throughout history and help students to develop critical thinking skills. Second Year Seminars are reading and writing intensive with reading and writing requirements set by the university. For more information, see the UNLV website at https://www.unlv.edu/provost/gen-ed/

Course objectives
1. Explain the impact of pivotal historic events in public health (UULO 1)
2. Describe social determinants of health and the impact they have on individual and population health (UULO 1)
3. Assess community health status using the basic tools of public health inquiry (UULO 2)
4. Analyze community health problems for their determinants and contributing factors (UULO 2)
5. Effectively communicate (oral presentation and written report) the key concepts of one current event in public health (UULO 3)
6. Summarize the influence of culture and place (locally and globally) on patterns of health and health disparities (UULO 4)
7. Discuss the role of government and public policy in promoting and protecting public health (UULO 5)
8. Communicate (in writing and orally) his/her own thoughts, feelings and assumptions by reflecting on the experiences of others (UULO 3, 4, 5)

University Undergraduate Learning Objectives (UULO) can be found on the UNLV website at https://www.unlv.edu/provost/gen-ed/uulo
What to expect

Course structure
Each class will begin with a brief discussion of a current event in public health. There will then be a short lecture (approximately 30 minutes depending on the topic), followed by a group exercise. While you will be expected to work with other students on the exercise, you will electronically submit individual answers before you leave.

The midterm and final exam will both be completed online. The exam will be available during the time of the regular course meeting, and you may access it from your personal devices or university computers at that time. You will not need to attend class on scheduled exam days.

Over the course of the semester, you will also view three movies. These will take the place of regularly scheduled course meetings and you will submit an assignment related to the movie before the next class.

Finally, the last two weeks of the course (after Thanksgiving break) will consist of student presentations. You are expected to attend all other student presentations and are required to do so in order to receive credit for your presentation. The presentation will cover the same topic as your course paper.

Reading and writing requirements
All Second Year Seminar courses require that you write 20 pages over the course of the semester as well as read 600 pages of primary source material other than the textbook. The writing requirement is divided over class assignments, reviews of the two books you will read for the course, and a paper on a public health topic of your choosing.

The reading for the course will consist of two nonfiction novels: *The Ghost Map*, the story of John Snow investigating a Cholera outbreak in London and creating the field of epidemiology, and *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, the story of how cancer cells taken from a poor African American woman without her consent became one of the building blocks of modern medical research and the effect it has on her family today.
Course materials

The required materials for this course consist of a textbook and two novels.

**Introduction To Public Health 5th Edition**
Mary-Jane Schneider
ISBN: 978-1284089233

**The Ghost Map**
Steven Johnson
ISBN: 978-1594482694

**The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks**
Rebecca Slott
ISBN: 978-1594134326

A few notes on the textbook:
- The Navigate2 portion of the textbook (online content) is not required for this course.
- While the previous textbook edition is undoubtedly cheaper and will cover the majority of material in the course, it is missing information on current issues in public health (for example the Ebola outbreak or the implementation of the Affordable Care Act). I do not recommend using the older version of the textbook for this course. I will be teaching from the fifth edition of the textbook.
- The readings for the August 31 class can be found as sample chapters on the publisher’s website. The links can be found on the course schedule. This gives you a little time to find the best price for the book.
Papers (210 points total)
Three assignments, 30 points each
Two book reviews, 30 points each
Issue paper, 60 points

In a Second Year Seminar course, you are expected to write 20 pages during the semester. These writings are divided over class assignments, reviews of the two books you will read for the course and a paper on a public health issue of your choosing. The topic of your paper will also serve as the topic for your class presentation and must be approved in advance.

Presentation (50 points total)
One presentation
50 points

You will give a presentation to the class on the topic of your paper. In order to receive credit for your presentation, you must attend all the student presentations.

Class exercises (210 points total)
Twenty-three exercises, 10 points each
Lowest two scores dropped

Each class will include a brief group exercise related to the lecture or movie and your answers will be submitted before the end of class. Your lowest two scores for the semester will be dropped (unless keeping them improves your final grade). You must be present for the full class to submit the class exercise.

Exams (160 points total)
Two exams, 80 points each

There are two exams, each covering approximately half the material from course lectures, readings and activities. While the second exam is not specifically a comprehensive final examination, it will build upon some concepts and learning from the first half of the course and will include questions from the student presentations. The second exam will be taken during the time scheduled for the final exam. Both exams will be taken online.

Extra credit (5 points total)
Five article submissions, 1 point each

Students may earn extra credit by submitting up to five public health news articles to the instructor to share with the class. Each article must be submitted through WebCampus and include a link to the article, a brief summary and an explanation as to why you think it would be a good article to share. Only one article per week will count toward extra credit. The final date for submission of extra credit is Monday, November 20 (Noon).

Grading scale
Grades are based on the percentages listed below. All grades are rounded to the nearest whole number (i.e. a grade ending in .5 or above is rounded up).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attendance and participation
It is important that you attend each class in order to get the most out of this course. You are expected to arrive on time and actively participate, having read all assigned readings in advance. While I do not take attendance, group exercises must be submitted each class, and you will not be allowed to make up missed in-class exercises (with the exception of university-sanctioned or excused absences and religious holidays). Please contact me in advance for known conflicts, and as soon as possible in the case of unplanned emergencies. University policy requires students to notify the instructor of religious observances within the first 14 calendar days of the semester.

Student illness
This is a course in public health, and an important part of public health is preventing disease. If you are contagious, stay home rather than make everyone else (including me) ill. This is part of the reason you are allowed to drop the two lowest in-class exercise scores; staying home because of an illness and missing an exercise should not lower your grade.

Late work
While exceptions can be made for university-sanctioned absences and religious holidays, I generally do not accept late work.

Classroom decorum
Although you may disagree with me or other students (healthy debate is encouraged), I expect you to be respectful in your comments and questions and in your interaction with me and with other students. If you are acting in a disruptive manner during class, I may ask you to leave the classroom.

If you arrive late or need to leave the room for any reason during lecture, please do so with a minimum of disruption. All phones must be placed on vibrate during class.

If you plan to use your laptop for class, you are welcome to do so. If you plan to use your laptop, tablet, or cellphone to avoid having to pay attention to the lecture, please put it away.

Finally, public health professionals are called upon to make decisions about what is best for the community and not just what is best for themselves or based on personal preferences. Keep this in mind as we discuss things in class. I expect your comments to be grounded in logic and rational thinking, and not based simply on personal opinion, your political leanings, or conspiracy theories.

Academic misconduct
It is the student’s responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic misconduct, as well as the course and university consequences for such actions. Please review the university’s academic misconduct policy for additional information and definitions and your rights of appeal as a student at https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy.

I have zero tolerance for academic misconduct and any occurrence will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct (OSC). Students committing academic misconduct will, at a minimum, receive a zero for the assignment, and depending on the seriousness of the offense, may be subject to additional disciplinary action at the discretion of the instructor.
# Course schedule (Aug-Oct)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1. Course introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2. What is public health?</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Labor Day — UNLV holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3. Politics and government in public health</td>
<td>2, 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4. Epidemiology 1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>5. Epidemiology 2</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6. Statistics</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>7. Data and public health</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8. Population and aging</td>
<td>18, 25, 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>9. Infectious diseases</td>
<td>Prologue*, 9, 10</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10. Movie: Vaccines: Calling the shots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>11. Injuries</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>12. Mental health</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>13. Chronic diseases</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ghost Map Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>14. Risk factors</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Exam One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>16. Social and behavioral health I</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Final paper topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 24</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>17. Social and behavioral health II</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>18. Movie: Unnatural causes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Nevada Day — UNLV holiday</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>19. Environmental health</td>
<td>20*</td>
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</tbody>
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*Readings for this class can be found as sample chapters on the publisher’s website:
  Chapter 1: http://samples.jbpub.com/9781284089233/Chapter1.pdf
# Course schedule (Nov-Dec)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>20. Clean air, water, and land</td>
<td>21, 22, 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 7</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>21. Safe food and drugs</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>22. Movie: Tapped</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Veterans Day – UNLV holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>23. The medical care system</td>
<td>26, 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>24. Public health preparedness</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Lacks Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 21</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>25. Movie: Mosquito</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 23-</td>
<td>Thursday-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thanksgiving – UNLV holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 28</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>26. Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Issue Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>27. Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>28. Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>29. Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11-</td>
<td>Monday-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam 2 - Final Exam Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
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## Important university dates

Important dates, such as the last days to add or drop courses or apply for graduation can be found on the fall 2017 calendar at [https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Registrar-TermCalendarFall2017.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Registrar-TermCalendarFall2017.pdf)
University policies

Academic misconduct
Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Academic Misconduct Policy (approved December 9, 2005) located at: https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct.

Copyright
The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)
The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, http://drc.unlv.edu/, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Final examinations
The University requires that final exams be given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars.

Incomplete grades
The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Library resources
Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. Subject librarians for various classes can be found here: https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject. UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students’ access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at https://www.library.unlv.edu/.

Relief mail
By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.

Religious holidays policy
Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excluding modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531.

Transparency in teaching and learning
The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information: https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning and https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency.

Tutoring and coaching
The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit http://www.unlv.edu/asc or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TBE second floor.

UNLV writing center
One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/.

Syllabus changes (instructor policy)
While I will do my best to keep changes to a minimum, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, schedule and course policies as needed. Any changes will be announced during class. I also reserve the right to make reasonable exceptions to course policies on a case-by-case basis.