**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**Department of Health and Physical Activity (Spring 2019)**

**HPA 2320: Psychosocial and Behavioral Aspects of Health**

**Class Day:** Tuesday

**Class Location:** 166 Trees Hall

**Class Time:** 5:30pm – 8:10pm

**Instructor:** Sharon Ross, Ph.D.

**Office:** 32 Oak Hill Court, Pittsburgh, PA 15260

**Phone:** 412-383-4042

**Email:** seross@pitt.edu

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**COURSE OVERVIEW:**

The major goal of this course is to increase your understanding of the diverse individual, interpersonal, institutional, and socio-cultural factors that influence health, physical activity, and nutrition-related behaviors, and ultimately intervention design and approach. The first part of the course (Module 1) examines social identities and the role of the social determinants of health in exacerbating health disparities. The second part of the course (Module 2) will highlight prominent theoretical models of health behavior change and behaviorally-oriented interventions to promote physical activity and healthy eating in diverse populations. The third part of the course (Module 3) will outline intervention/behavior change strategies and tools while highlighting concepts and approaches from Modules 1 and 2.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To identify of how various individual, interpersonal, institutional, and socio-cultural factors influence health and health behaviors
2. To review the prominent theoretical models of health behavior change
3. To summarize the key intervention strategies and tools that can be applied to promote change in physical activity and nutrition
4. To synthesize research findings from behaviorally-based interventions to promote physical activity and healthy eating in diverse populations
5. To apply health behavior change models to promote physical activity and healthy eating, while taking into account the characteristics of the specific target population

**ASSIGNED READINGS:** All required readings be posted on CourseWeb or will be distributed in class.

**GRADING POLICY:**

**Exam (30%) –** A midterm exam will be given following completion of Modules 1 and 2 in the course. This exam will cover material drawn from all previous class periods, including quizzes, class discussions, and assigned readings. The format of the exam will be varied and may include multiple choice, short-answer, true-false, etc. The midterm will be worth 90 points or 30% of your final grade.

**Journal Reflections (20%) –** Weekly journal reflections based on the assigned readings will be due by 5:30pm on Tuesdays. Your response should be equivalent to approximately 1 page, double-spaced, Arial 11 font, with normal margins. Completeness and quality of journal reflections will be evaluated based on the following criteria: Responsiveness, Communication, Critical Thinking and Analysis, and Mechanics. *You must meet all the criteria detailed below to pass on each journal reflection.*

Journal reflections account for 20% of your grade in this course, and one reflection score may be dropped in the semester. For every journal reflection you do not pass (after the one you can drop), 2% (6 points) will be deducted from your grade.

* Responsiveness to Reflection Questions: The journal reflection addresses all the discussion questions and directions in the reflection assignment.
* Communication of Ideas: Ideas are communicated clearly and completely. Some examples/resources are provided to support ideas and opinions.
* Critical Thinking and Analysis: Connects more than one level of analysis and weaves these coherently. Explores, explains and/or expands upon the issue(s) under reflection assignment and includes personal reaction/experience as well as appropriate resources.
* Mechanics: Less than two spelling or grammar errors. Writing is clear and organized.

**Final Presentation (30%) –** You are to select a theory highlighted in class and apply it to an at-risk population of interest to you (e.g., children, racial/ethnic minorities, individuals with developmental disabilities). Design an intervention, based on your selected theory, to increase physical activity and/or improve nutrition-related behaviors in your target population. Using relevant peer-reviewed literature, you should clearly explain how you are tailoring your intervention for your population of interest by discussing how the factors highlighted in Module 1 apply to your population. Describe how the selected intervention strategies are tied to specific constructs of the theory. Comment on the strengths and limitations of this theory as applied to your target population.

**In-Class Participation (20%) –** You are expected to read the assigned articles prior to class and to participate in daily class and small group discussions with your peers, and class activities and small group work. On the days when we have guest speakers, you are expected to read the assigned article(s) ahead of time and come prepared with thoughtful questions for the Q&A portion of the presentation. At the beginning of the semester, all students will receive a 100% participation grade. *Class participation will be assessed during each class session based on the criteria detailed below.* For every session you do not meet these criteria, .5% will be deducted from your overall participation grade. You will receive feedback on your participation grade midway through the semester in order to provide opportunities for improvement. However, feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at any point throughout the semester.

* Arrive at class on time.
* Bring power point slides and other materials relevant to the lesson.
* Arrive prepared to discuss the homework assignments and/or readings.
* Contribute effectively to class discussion or activities by commenting, asking questions, answering questions, participating in small group work or discussions and/or completing in-class activities. Contributions should advance the academic conversation in-class.

**GRADING SCALE:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | =  | 90-100% |
| B | = | 80-89.9% |
| C  | = | 70-79.9% |
| D | = | 60-69.9% |
| F | = | ≤ 59.9% |

Your grade will be determined by dividing your actual points by the total number of points attainable (300 points).

**FINAL COURSE GRADE:**

Midterm Exam 90 points

Journal Reflections (10 @ 6 points) 60 points

Final Presentation 90 points

In-class participation 60 points

**Total 300 points**

* There will be no extra credit for this course

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Attendance will be mandatory due to the nature of the class. Please notify me if you are absent in order to determine if the absence will be excused (e.g., member of an athletic team). *Unexcused absences will result in a 5-point deduction from the total points accumulated for the semester for each class missed.* Students who miss a lecture will be responsible for obtaining lecture notes and handouts.

**MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES:** Any student caught cheating (includes any form of academic dishonesty such as cheat sheets, copying answers, plagiarism, etc.) will result in an automatic “F” in this course. Additionally, the student will be reported to the appropriate university officials, and it will go on file in the student’s academic record.

**Late assignments will be given an “F.”**  Assignments, quizzes, or exams which are unreadable and/or not professional in appearance and/or content will not receive credit.

**Cell phones are to be turned off or on silent (not vibrate) during class. Surfing the web, checking email, and sending text messages during class are not permitted, except when requested by the instructor. Students not complying with these rules will be asked to leave the classroom.**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-1890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for the course.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:**

If a student feels that they have been treated unfairly by the instructor with regard to their grade or other aspects of their course participation, there are a series of steps that should be taken in an attempt to resolve this matter. These include the following:

1*.*The student should first inform the course instructor of the issue in an attempt to resolve this matter. If the course is taught by a Teaching Assistant, Graduate Student, or Part-Time instructor, their faculty supervisor should also be informed of this matter. The student should bring this issue to the attention of the instructor in a timely matter and should maintain a record of interactions that occurred with the instructor regarding the matter in question. The course instructor should take necessary steps to address the concern raised by the student in a timely matter and should maintain a record of the interactions that occurred with the student regarding this matter.

2*.*If, after reasonable attempts to resolve the matter, the matter is not resolved in a manner that is deemed to be acceptable to the student, the student retains the right to file a grievance. This grievance is to be filed with the Department Chair in the form of a written document that can be submitted via email or campus mail. This document should include the following:

a. Student’s name

b. Student contact information (email, address, telephone number)

c. Information on the course for which the grievance applies (course title, course number, instructor name).

d. A copy of the course syllabus that was provided to the student by the instructor

e. Detailed description of the grievance and additional information the student feels is pertinent to this matter.

After receiving this information, the Department Chair will inform the student if additional information is needed, as appropriate will discuss this matter with the student and the instructor, and will issue a decision in a timely manner.

3.If the student is not willing to accept the decision of the Department Chair, the student will be informed that they can request an additional review of this matter through the Office of the Dean of the School of Education.  If the student decides to pursue this, the student should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs & Certification in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

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| **SESSION** | **DATE** | **TOPIC** |
|  | **Module 1 – Social Determinants of Health** |
| **1** | **January 8** | Health Disparities, Social Determinants of Health |
| **2** | **January 15** | SES/Neighborhood  |
| **3** | **January 22** | Race and Immigration |
| **4** | **January 29** | Age/Marital Status/Disability  |
| **5** | **February 5** | Gender/Sexual Orientation |
|  | **Module 2 – Health Behavior Theory** |
| **6** | **February 12** | Intrapersonal (individual) theories |
| **7** | **February 19** | Interpersonal theories |
| **8** | **February 26** | Community/Group Theories |
| **9** | **March 5** | **MIDTERM** |
|  | **March 12** | **No Class – Spring Recess** |
|  | **Module 3 – Intervention Design & Tailoring** |
| **10** | **March 19** | Behavior Change Strategies |
| **10** | **March 26** | Behavior Change Strategies |
| **11** | **April 2** | Evidence-based Intervention Design |
| **12** | **April 9** | Intervention Tailoring |
| **13** | **April 16** | FINAL PRESENTATIONS |