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**HPA 2320 PSYCHOSOCIAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH**

**Section 1030**

**Department of Health and Human Development**

**Spring 2021**

**Class Days/Time:** Mondays 5:30pm – 8:10pm (Synchronous Zoom meeting)

**Class Meeting:** WEB Based course (Canvas & Zoom)

**Instructor:** Dr. Sharon Ross

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**Office Hours**: By Appointment

***The syllabus is a required text. Please read it carefully!***

**Mission/Vision of the School of Education**

We ignite learning. We strive for well-being for all. We teach. We commit to student, family, and community success. We commit to educational equity. We advocate. We work for justice. We cultivate relationships. We forge engaged partnerships. We collaborate. We learn with and from communities. We innovate and agitate. We pursue and produce knowledge. We research. We disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures. We approach learning as intertwined with health, wellness, and human development. We address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning. We shape practice and policy. We teach with and for dignity. We think. We dream. We lead with integrity. We are the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Course Description**

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. 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 health, physical

activity and healthy eating in diverse populations.

**Course Objectives**

By the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify of how various individual, interpersonal, institutional, and socio-cultural factors influence health and health behaviors in diverse populations
2. Apply prominent theoretical models of health behavior change across levels of the socioecological model to improve health in diverse populations
3. To demonstrate how knowledge of the social determinants of health, health disparities, and theory can impact health in diverse populations through research and/or practice

**Course Readings**

There is no required textbook for this course. All assigned readings will be posted on Canvas.

**Methods of Instruction**

The instructor uses Canvas, the University of Pittsburgh's learning management system, to teach this online course. You will interact and engage with the instructional content and learning activities provided on the Canvas course. This online course follows a**15-week schedule** with weekly assignments. The course is self-paced in that you have one week to complete the graded activities (discussion forums, reflective practices, and other assignments), which are due at the end of each weekly module. **Weekly modules will begin Tuesdays at 8 am and will end on Mondays at 5:30 pm.** Discussion is a critical aspect of this course, so it is essential that you actively participate in the forums. You **must** post your initial response to all discussion forums by **Friday at 11:59 pm.** You must respond to at least two of your peers' threads by **Monday at 5:30 pm.**

**Student Responsibilities**

**Attendance**

**While the weekly modules are self-paced, we will have a synchronous class meeting on Mondays at 5:30pm**. The following actions on your part will demonstrate consistent attendance in the course:

1. Logging into the Canvas course environment regularly and participating in all activities including the introductory activities.
2. Frequently and regularly accessing course instructional materials and assignments posted on the Canvas course environment during the entire semester.
3. Read and respond to the course e-mails.
4. Read course announcements (NOTE: I encourage you to change the Notification settings of your Canvas account profile to send you emails automatically when a new course announcement is posted).
5. Attend the course synchronous Zoom meetings. This class time will not consist of lectures, but rather community building and checking-in, learning activities, face-time with the instructor and classmates, and guest speakers. **Please let the instructor know in advance if you will be unable to attend a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Participation**

Students will actively engage and participate in the online Canvas course environment. Active participation consists of the following actions and activities:

1. Engage actively in the online course by reading, reviewing, and watching pertinent instructional materials provided in the Canvas course environment throughout the semester.
2. Read all assignments, discussion forums, and project guidelines thoroughly.
3. Submit all assignments **electronically by the due dates and times** as specified in the guidelines provided.
4. All assignments will be included in the specific Weekly Modules.
5. Participate in Discussion Forums by creating threads and posting comments by the due dates and times as specified in the guidelines provided.
6. **Characteristics of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below**. Your instructor/facilitator will consider these characteristics along with the associated rubric when assessing the quality and level of your participation.
   1. Each week you will commonly be required to submit your initial post by Friday. Subsequent responses to the posts of other learners should be posted at timely intervals throughout the week. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that expands upon the provided materials.
   2. Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Make substantive contributions to discussion forums. Simply stating **“Yes, I agree”** is not a substantive response to your peers and will not be considered adequate and will result in **zero points** being awarded. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references.
   3. You are encouraged to be concise — keep each post and response to three to four short paragraphs. Keep in mind that like you, your fellow learners will be reading and responding to many threads.
   4. Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
   5. Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create active discussion topics. Make sure you revisit the Discussion Forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial response.
   6. When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
7. Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.
8. All written assignments must follow **APA format.** Pitt’s library has information about this citation style and other resources/tools available at: <https://pitt.libguides.com/researchhelpuls/writing-reviewing-citing>
9. Complete all assignments and projects by the due date and time specified.

**Netiquette Language**

An online course requires the same level of professionalism, respect, and courtesy that you would show your instructor and classmates in a face-to-face setting. To that end, please observe the following standards in the online class:

1. Discussion Forums: The purpose of discussion forums in an academic setting is to advance the understanding of a given topic. Therefore, your threads and posts should:
   1. be substantive (more than a few words), constructive, and on-topic;
   2. advance the discussion in a meaningful way;
   3. demonstrate professional courtesy;
   4. use correct grammar and punctuation (no acronyms commonly used in texting).
2. Electronic communication: You should avoid casual language and abbreviations commonly used in texting, which are not appropriate for in-class communication. Care should be taken to use correct grammar and punctuation.
3. Websites: You should use care when sharing websites in your posts by ensuring that the website is appropriate for an academic setting, non-offensive in nature, and relevant to the topic at hand.

**Use of Technology:** This course uses a web site (Canvas) provided through the University. To access the course Web site, go to <https://canvas.pitt.edu> and log on using your Pitt user name and password. If you experience any issues using Canvas, you can click the **Help button within Canvas,** which includes 24/7 chat or telephone support. If you are having issues logging in to Canvas, call the **University Help Desk at 412-624-HELP [4357].** This help is available 24/7. The instructor cannot assist you with log-on problems.

**Course Activities Schedule**

This online course follows a **15-week schedule** with weekly assignments. Graded activities/tasks are due each week (assignments, discussion forums, etc.).

**Missing Coursework**

Any missed coursework will receive a grade of zero if an appropriate documented excuse is not provided. This includes all graded activities and tasks.

**Documentation of illness**

Students **must** notify the instructor in case of a non-life threatening emergency as soon as possible. It is your professional obligation to notify the instructor of any such emergency within a reasonable time period. A doctor's written verification of illness **must** be provided to the instructor before any make-up work will be accepted and/or rescheduled. For a non-medical emergency, securing documentation to support your explanation will increase the likelihood of being allowed the opportunity for make-up work. A doctor's note or other documentation will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. If make-up work is granted, the instructor may alter the contents of such assignments to minimize potential issues of academic integrity. The timelines for submitting make-up work will be determined by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

**COVID-19 Disclaimer:** We are living in unprecedented and highly stressful times. Many of you may have other responsibilities, serve as caregivers, or have children yourself. It is possible that at some point this semester we may be diagnosed with COVID-19. In that case, please be in communication with the instructor as soon as you are able to and provide updates on your situation and any documentation. Similar to above, timelines for submitting make-up work will be determined by the instructor on a case-by-case basis; above all, the instructor wants you to prioritize your own health and safety.

**Instructor Obligations to Students**

Just as I have expectations for your conduct and behavior in the course, you have expectations from me as your instructor. I will ensure that I maintain an active role in the course. I will log into the course regularly and I will respond to any queries/concerns posted in the Ask Your Professor discussion board. I will provide timely feedback to you on submitted assignments. You are also encouraged to communicate privately with me via email ([seross@pitt.edu](mailto:seross@pitt.edu)) or your Canvas Inbox.

You should expect a response from me within 24 hours of receiving your e-mails and course messages during the week, or 48 hours over the weekend. I will be logging in and checking the course regularly; however, like you, I have other personal and professional responsibilities that require my time and attention, so I appreciate your understanding and patience.

**Grading Policy**

The assignments for this course are designed to give you opportunities to reflect on your learning and to structure your weekly participation in the course. Assignments are also opportunities for you to receive feedback on your progress and performance. Additional details for each course assignment will be available in Canvas. Please review the grade breakdown presented in the table below. The table is intentionally broad to allow for continued tailoring and development as the semester progresses and I learn more about your areas of interest and professional goals. Additional details on these assignments will be provided in Canvas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment | % of Final Grade |
| Discussion Forums | 30% |
| Reflective Practices | 30% |
| Module 1 Project | 20% |
| Final Project | 20% |

**Grading Scale:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **%** | **Letter Grade** |
| 97-100 | A+ |
| 94-96 | A |
| 90-93 | A- |
| 87-89 | B+ |
| 84-86 | B |
| 80-83 | B- |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **%** | **Letter Grade** |
| 77-79 | C+ |
| 74-76 | C |
| 70-73 | C- |
| 60-69 | D |
| 59 or below | F |

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the [University Guidelines on Academic Integrity](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html).   
  
Provided here is the School of Education [Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.education.pitt.edu/CurrentStudents/PoliciesandForms.aspx). Please read the policy carefully. The rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are described in the [University’s Academic Integrity Guidelines](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html)

**Disability Services**

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 (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

**Health and Safety Statement**

In the midst of this pandemic, it is extremely important that you abide by public health regulations and University of Pittsburgh health standards and guidelines. These rules have been developed to protect the health and safety of all community members. For the most up-to-date information and guidance, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu> and check your Pitt email for updates.

**Accessibility**

The Canvas LMS platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines. Specific details regarding individual feature compliance are documented and updated regularly.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University’s Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University’s mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/policies-procedures-and-practices>.

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be filed online: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

**Copyright Notice**

These materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See Library of Congress Copyright Office and the University Copyright Policy.

**Statement on Classroom Recording**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use. For any synchronous Zoom meetings, the instructor will let the students know ahead of time and they will have the option to leave their video off the screen. These recordings will only be shared with other students in the class.

**Gender Inclusive Language Statement**

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women’s experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

**Food/Housing Insecurity**

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, experience housing and/or food insecurity that can impact their academic work and general health. Please know there are resources available to you that are confidential. Of course, you are welcome to speak with me if you need support in contacting the right people/offices:

Pitt Pantry: Food Pantry available to the wider University community

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittserves/sustain/pantry/>

Off-Campus Housing Office: <http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/>

**Take Care of Yourself**

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax. Despite what you might hear, using your time to take care of yourself will actually help you achieve your academic goals more than spending too much time studying. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available at Pitt. An important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Take the time to learn about all that’s available and take advantage of it. Ask for support sooner rather than later – this always helps. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or difficult feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for assistance connecting to the support that can help.

For current information on where students can seek physical and mental healthcare and what types of new support services are available to them, see the Student Affairs’ Health and Wellness website at <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/>

The University Counseling Center is here for you: call 412-648-7930 and visit their website.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, call someone immediately, day or night:

University Counseling Center (UCC): 412 648-7930

University Counseling Center Mental Health Crisis Response: 412-648-7930 x1

Resolve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226 (888-7-YOU-CAN)

If the situation is life threatening, call the Police:

On-campus: Pitt Police: 412-268-2121; Off-campus: 911

**Course Schedule (Subject to Change)**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Dates** | **Topic** |
| **Module 1: Social Determinants of Health** | | |
| 1 | 1/19 – 1/25  \*Classes begin Tuesday 1/19 | Course Introduction |
| 2 | 1/26 – 2/1 | Social Determinants of Health |
| 3 | 2/2 – 2/8 | Social Identities |
| 4 | 2/9 – 2/15 | Race & Implicit Bias |
| 5 | 2/16 – 2/22 | Ethnic & National Identity |
| 6 | 2/23 – 3/1 | SES/Neighborhood |
| 7 | 3/2 – 3/8 | Ability Status |
| 8 | 3/9 – 3/15 | Gender/Sexual Orientation |
| 9 | 3/16 – 3/22 | Module 1 Project |
| **Module 2: Health Behavior Theory** | | |
| 10 | 3/23 – 3/29 | Evidence-based Research on Health Disparities in Diverse Populations |
| 11 | 3/30 – 4/5 | Intrapersonal (individual) theories |
| 12 | 4/6 – 4/12 | Interpersonal theories |
| 13 | 4/13 – 4/19 | Community/Group Theories |
| 14 | 4/20 – 4/26 | Final Project Work |
| 15 | 4/27 – 5/1  \*Final Exam Period | Final Project Due |