

HHD 2268: Physical Activity and Health—Fall 2024 (3 credits)

Format: Online course
Instructor: Christopher E. Kline, PhD
Office: 210 Oak Hill
Phone: 412-383-4027
Email: chriskline@pitt.edu
Office Hours: Friday 10:00 – 11:00 am or by appointment
Please contact instructor to schedule a meeting (in-person, phone, Zoom)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course exposes students to key components of physical activity epidemiology, including approaches for measuring physical activity, the evolution of physical activity guidelines, and surveillance systems to monitor physical activity patterns. This knowledge is then applied to critically examine the evidence regarding the role of physical activity in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases and additional health-related outcomes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

PREREQUISITES: None. Prior coursework in undergraduate-level Anatomy, Physiology, and Exercise Physiology is expected; if a student does not have prior experience in these courses, it is the student's responsibility to engage in supplemental readings and study as needed.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: This course will use the Canvas learning management system for the delivery of all content. Due to the online format of this course, certain technology is required to adequately complete the course. In general, Canvas users will have the best experience with either [Firefox](#) or [Chrome](#) (for Windows or Mac), or [Safari](#) for the Macintosh. Please make sure that you have access to a secure, cable internet hookup for assignments. Wireless connections are sometimes unreliable for these crucial tasks.

- Support for Students: There is a [Canvas Help Guide](#) available.
- Problems should be directed to the Technology Help Desk. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call 412-624-HELP, [submit a help ticket online](#), or have a [live online chat](#).

REQUIRED TEXT: There are no required textbooks for this course. For supplemental reading, the following textbooks are recommended:

- *Physical Activity and Health: The Evidence Explained (3rd edition)*. Editors: DJ Stensel, AE Hardman, JMR Gill. New York: Routledge, 2021. [Link to rent/purchase](#)
- *Physical Activity Epidemiology (3rd edition)*. Editors: RK Dishman, GW Heath, MD Schmidt, IM Lee. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2022. [Link to rent/purchase](#)

COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The course lectures, readings, assignments, and quizzes are intended to provide opportunities for students to accomplish specific competencies related to measuring physical activity, the prevalence of physical inactivity, and the role of physical activity in chronic disease prevention and/or management. After completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify surveillance systems that monitor physical activity patterns in the U.S.;

2. Describe the evolution of U.S. physical activity guidelines over time;
3. Analyze different methods to measure physical activity and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each;
4. Understand issues related to the statistical analysis of physical activity data;
5. Critically evaluate the evidence supporting the role of physical activity in primary and secondary prevention of various health conditions;
6. Examine the risks and benefits associated with physical activity.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Due to online-based nature of this course, attendance will be documented by the completion of required modules and assignments. The course is structured in a Wednesday-to-Wednesday format: **A new module will 'open' on Wednesday at 8:00 AM each week, as outlined in the syllabus. You will have the entire week to complete each module. Assignments, quizzes, and discussion posts in each module will be due the following Wednesday by 8:00 AM.**

****Failure to complete an assignment (e.g., quiz, discussion board post) within the time allotted will result in a 0 for that assignment.****

****The course is structured in a Wednesday to Wednesday format so that I can respond to questions, concerns, and technology issues as quickly as possible during the work week two days prior to an assignment being due and two days after a new module opening, when I have full access to my computer, internet, and files.****

There will be no make-ups for quizzes or assignments unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Missed quizzes or assignments can only be made up if accompanied by written documentation justifying the absence. Decisions regarding the justification of the absence will be made by the instructor. These must be made up within one week at a time and date approved by the instructor. In rare cases where unexpected (emergency) circumstances arise, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately (i.e., within 48 hours) in order to ensure the possibility of a make-up date.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

This course will utilize an asynchronous online format that incorporates online narrated lectures, assigned readings, and guided exploration of content through weekly assignments. Topics are organized by week/module. Quizzes are used to ensure that content within the module has been reviewed and comprehended. Other assignments are used to guide learning in a more flexible and interactive format. Discussion boards are used to facilitate engagement with the topic being covered that week.

As an online course, students are required to assume partial responsibility for learning material by reviewing narrated videos, reading the assigned papers, completing the various assignments, exploring relevant websites, and by engaging in the discussion boards.

Quizzes: At the end of most of the weekly modules, there will be a comprehension quiz. *These quizzes replace traditional mid-term and final exams.* Quizzes will feature a mix of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. *At the end of the course, your lowest quiz score will be dropped.*

- Module 0 quiz @ 5 points
- 13 weekly quizzes @ 10 points each
- (Lowest quiz grade dropped from inclusion in point totals)

Miscellaneous Weekly Assignments:

During weeks 1-5 of the course, assignments will accompany the content in most modules. These assignments will enable the student to engage in the module's content in a flexible and exploratory manner. The exact assignment will vary from week to week based on that week's content—details will be described in each weekly module.

- ~5 weekly assignments @ 10 points each

Discussion Boards: Most weekly modules will include online discussions to facilitate engagement and conversation about the course content. To facilitate conversation, students will be required to post twice in each discussion thread—once in response to the original post, and once in response to a fellow student's post. These posts will be due in staggered order:

- The first post on the discussion board will be due the following Monday at 8:00 AM
- The second post will be due the following Wednesday at 8:00 AM

In addition, in Weeks 6-14 of the course, you will sign up for **one week to facilitate the discussion of a recent research study that is focused on that week's topic**. Sign-ups for your particular week will begin in Week 4 of the course. You will choose one paper on your own or from options provided by the instructor, and you will need to post a well-constructed summary of the research article and pose discussion questions for the class. Then you will need to facilitate further discussion and answer questions during that week. If you are not facilitating that week, you are required to pick one of the two or three discussion threads available that week and then read the article, post a response to the discussion by answering the questions posed by the facilitator in one primary post, and then post an additional comment. Students will be able to participate in a second discussion board on up to two occasions to receive extra credit. The primary discussion board posts (i.e., in response to the facilitator's initial questions) and subsequent comments will be graded on completeness, thoughtfulness, and demonstration of knowledge and critical thinking skills. A 'discussion board grading rubric' will be available on Canvas in Week 3 for an in-depth look at how points are awarded for these posts. Discussion board participation points will be worth 10 points each week unless noted otherwise. Facilitation of the discussion board will be worth up to 50 points.

- Weekly discussion board assignments @ 10 points each
- 1 discussion board facilitation @ 50 points

Final Assignment: You will be asked to apply knowledge and critical appraisal skills that were gained during this course for a final assignment that is due by the end of the last day of the fall term (i.e., 11:59 PM on Tuesday, December 10). You will choose a specific health condition *that was not explicitly covered in this course* and critically evaluate the strength of the evidence supporting the role of physical activity in the prevention and/or management of that condition, focusing on what is known, what remains unknown, the plausible biological mechanism(s), and the critical gaps that remain. Details regarding this assignment, including a scoring rubric, will be provided in Week 8.

- 1 final paper assignment @ 50 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

*The course schedule is tentative and may change at the discretion of the instructor.
Students are responsible for any changes made to the syllabus that are posted.*

| Module/Wk: | Dates: | Topic: |
|--|-------------------|---|
| 0 | Aug 26 – Aug 30 | Course Introduction |
| 1 | Aug 30 | 11:00 am Synchronous 'Meet and Greet' Zoom meeting Zoom link: https://pitt.zoom.us/j/92394776199 |
| Part 1: Physical Activity Epidemiology Concepts | | |
| 1 | Aug 28 – Sept 4 | What is Physical Activity Epidemiology? |
| 2 | Sept 4 – Sept 11 | Physical Activity Measurement #1: Self-report and Objective Tools |
| 3 | Sept 11 – Sept 18 | Physical Activity Measurement #2: Sedentary Behavior and the 24-hour Activity Cycle |
| 4 | Sept 18 – Sept 25 | Physical Activity Guidelines and Surveillance Systems |
| 5 | Sept 25 – Oct 2 | Physical Activity Research Methods; Physical Activity and Mortality |
| Part 2: Physical Activity and Health Outcomes | | |
| 6 | Oct 2 – Oct 9 | Physical Activity & Hypertension/CVD (Stroke, CHD, PAD) |
| 7 | Oct 9 – Oct 16 | Physical Activity & Diabetes |
| 8 | Oct 16 – Oct 23 | Physical Activity & Obesity/Weight Management |
| 9 | Oct 23 – Oct 30 | Physical Activity & Cancer |
| 10 | Oct 30 – Nov 6 | Physical Activity & Mental Health |
| 11 | Nov 6 – Nov 13 | Physical Activity & Sleep Health |
| 12 | Nov 13 – Nov 20 | Physical Activity & Brain Health |
| 13/14 | Nov 20 – Dec 4 | Risks & Hazards of Physical Activity <i>Note: this module spans 2 weeks due to Thanksgiving Recess occurring from Nov 25 through Dec 1</i> |
| 15 | Dec 4 – Dec 10 | Final Assignment/Course Surveys |

Once you finish reading the syllabus, email me a YouTube link of one of your favorite songs to receive 3 bonus points. To receive bonus points, you will need to email me by Aug 30, 2024.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

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

| Responsibility/Assignment: | Approximate Point Value * |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Quizzes (weekly) | 125 |
| Guided Assignments (weekly in Weeks 1-5) | 50 |
| Discussion Board Participation (weekly) | 120 |
| Discussion Board Facilitation (once) | 50 |
| Final Paper | 50 |
| * Note: Point values are approximate and subject to slight variations due to unforeseen circumstances. | |

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

| Letter grade: | Percentage: |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| A | ≥ 93.00% |
| A- | 90.00 to 92.99% |
| B+ | 87.00 to 89.99% |
| B | 83.00 to 86.99% |
| B- | 80.00 to 82.99% |
| C+ | 77.00 to 79.99% |
| C | 73.00 to 76.99% |
| C- | 70.00 to 72.99% |
| D+ | 67.00 to 69.99% |
| D | 63.00 to 66.99% |
| D- | 60.00 to 62.99% |
| E | < 60% |

Incomplete (I) or G Grades

Students must complete all course requirements to receive a grade for this course. In the event of extenuating personal circumstances, such as a medical emergency or a death in the family, an I grade (incomplete course work) or G grade (course work unfinished because of extenuating personal circumstances) may be awarded to signify unfinished course work. *G grades will not be an option for students who fall behind in the course for non-emergency reasons.* Students assigned I or G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. After the deadline has passed, the I or G grade will remain on the record, and the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

- Canvas will be the primary source for all course-related communication and materials: announcements, lectures, assignments, discussion boards, etc.
- Announcements may be supplemented by messages sent by the instructor to the students' Pitt e-mail addresses (i.e., xxxx@pitt.edu). As a result, it is the student's responsibility to check his or her Pitt e-mail address regularly.
- Dr. Kline can best be reached via e-mail. To ensure a prompt reply, please include 'HHD 2268' in the subject line. Please allow up to 1 full business day for a response.

TEACHING SURVEY

Students in this class will be asked to complete a *Student Opinion of Teaching Survey*. Surveys will be sent via Pitt e-mail and appear on your Canvas landing page during the last three weeks of class. Please take time to thoughtfully respond to these surveys; your feedback is important to me and the future offerings of this course. [Read more](#) about *Student Opinion of Teaching Surveys*.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Course Policies:

Any student caught cheating (includes any form of academic dishonesty such as copying answers, taking quizzes/exams with another students, 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.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity](#). 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. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the [Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial](#).

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.

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.

Equity, 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, visit the [Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page](#).

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](#). 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

Course 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](#).

Department of Health and Human Development Student Grievance Policy:

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 instructor of the course 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.