

University of Florida
College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus
PHC3603/PHC6607: Critical Issues in Public Health (3 hours)
Semester: FALL 2016
Delivery Format: On-Campus/Canvas/Top-Hat

Instructor Name:	Jamie L. Pomeranz, Ph.D.
Course Day and Time	Mondays Periods 2-3, 8:30 am – 10:25 am
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Office Hours:	By Appointment
Teaching Assistant:	Katherine Pizarro katypiz@ufl.edu
Preferred Course Communication	Email

Prerequisites

Students must be enrolled in the Bachelor of Health Science Program

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to provide students the opportunity to learn multiple ways to view current controversial topics in public health. The course covers current public health topics encompassing biomedical issues, social and behavioral factors related to health, and the environment.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

During this class, students will:

- Compare and contrast the complex public health issues and challenges that need to be faced in the 21st century.
- Evaluate peer-reviewed publications addressing controversial public health issues
- Integrate, compare, and articulate multiple peer perspectives into a presentation of public health issues from both a proponent view and an oppositional view.
- Detect the influence of personal bias on how public health issues are presented. (Analysis)
- Present research in both a written and oral format that incorporates factual information found in the literature and advocates for a specific position or a synthesis of multiple viewpoints of the topic.

Blended Learning

What is blended learning and why is it important?

A Blended Learning class uses a mixture of technology and face-to-face instruction to help you maximize your learning. Knowledge content that, as the instructor, I would have traditionally presented during a live class lecture is instead provided online before the live class takes place. This lets me focus my face-to-face teaching on course activities designed to help you strengthen higher order thinking skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. Competency in these skills is critical for today's health professional.

What is expected of you?

You are expected to actively engage in the course throughout the semester. You must come to class prepared by completing all out-of-class assignments. This preparation gives you the knowledge or practice needed to engage in higher levels of learning during the live class sessions. If you are not prepared for the face-to-face sessions, you may struggle to keep pace with the activities occurring in the live sessions, and it is unlikely that you will reach the higher learning goals of the course. Similarly, you are expected to actively participate in the live class. Your participation fosters a rich course experience for you and your peers that facilitates overall mastery of the course objectives.

Required Textbook

There is no text for this class. You will be using the website ProCon.org to complete assignments. ProCon.org is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. The purpose of this website is to provide resources for critical thinking and to educate without bias. It promotes informed citizenship by presenting research on controversial issues in a straightforward, nonpartisan format.

Required Equipment

Computer, tablet, or smart phone with high speed internet access.
For technical support for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk at: Learning-support@ufl.edu, (352) 392-HELP (option 2), or <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Top Hat

We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

You can visit the Top Hat Overview (<https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide>) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

An email invitation will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: <https://app.tophat.com/e/636375>

Note: Our Course Join Code is: 636375 and the Password is: tophat

Top Hat will require a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: www.tophat.com/pricing.

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

Instructional Methods

1. **Quizzes:** Following each online lecture, students will complete a 5-question quiz through canvas (12 quizzes total). You will have two chances to take each quiz and the highest quiz points will count.
2. **Weekly Readings:** Each week you will have assigned readings directly related to the current week's controversial public health topic. All readings can be found on the ProCon.org website.
3. **Group Participation/Discussion Activities:** We will meet one day per week as outlined below. Every Monday will involve a discussion of the controversial issues and the class will engage in a "reasoned discourse" (like a debate, but without the contentious connotations) about a controversial public health issue. You are responsible for reading the assigned material prior to the discussion. You will be assigned into one of four groups. Each group will be assigned a position to argue: two groups on the pro side, two groups on the con side.

Full participation within these discussions will count towards your participation grade. Points will be deducted from your group participation grade for the following (but not limited to): not involved in the group discussion, performing activities other than the course discussion such as texting, studying for other exams, etc., frequent absences, and unprofessional behavior.

4. **Exams:** There will be two exams in the course. Each exam will consist of 50 questions (multiple choice). The exams will not be cumulative and will cover the main ideas from the reading as well information communicated during class discussions. Please note all exams will be taken during class using Canvas. This means that you must bring a device that will allow you to take the exam.

A note about make-up exams: Make-up examinations are not normally given in this course. The only circumstances in which a makeup exam will be given are: 1) an official, University sponsored event requires you to be off campus during the exam; 2) a medical emergency prevents you from attending class; 3) a family emergency prevents you from attending class; 4) jury duty; and 5) military service, a religious observance, or a similar obligation prevents you from attending class. If you miss an examination for any reason, you must contact us before the exam and you must provide written documentation of the event of emergency in order to schedule a make-up exam.

5. **Main Points Paper:** Undergraduates will be required to complete two Main Points Paper for selected issues by reading about the topics on ProCon.org. The goal of this assignment is for students to review important points relevant to both sides of the issue. Pick out the points that you feel are the most important and relevant to the topic. You must state and analyze the main points of each section on ProCon.org: Background, Pro, Con and Videos. Assignments to be submitted in Canvas by 5:00 pm on the day noted in the syllabus. Five points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late (no exceptions).
6. **Policy Papers:** Graduate students must complete two Policy Papers based on two different topics. You are to pretend you are working for a legislative lobbying organization. In each Policy Paper you will attempt to persuade a Congress person to vote for your side or fund your assigned side of the topic. One goal of this assignment is to have you summarize information in a concise manner. Students sometimes assume that more information is better. Concise summary is an important skill, especially when attempting to convince someone of a particular point-of-view. Assignments to be submitted in Canvas by 5:00 pm on the day noted in the syllabus. Five points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late (no exceptions).

7. **Class Presentations:** Graduate students will select one of their position papers and present their argument to the class at the end of the semester. More information on presentations will be provided in class.
8. **Attendance/Tardiness:** Class is considered an appointment. Students taking an advanced course in a helping profession are expected to keep appointments and arrive to each class on time and to remain for the entire class. There will be 12 random attendance checks at 5 points each. 50 of those points will be counted towards your total grade for the course. This gives you 2 chances to make up two missed attendance checks.

BONUS: If you are present for all 12 attendance checks, then you will receive 5 bonus points.

THERE ARE NO MAKEUPS FOR MISSED ATTENDANCE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE

Faculty have received feedback from students and other colleagues regarding frequently arriving to class late. When a student enters the classroom late it is disruptive to the entire class. Class is considered an appointment. Students taking an advanced level course in a helping profession are expected to arrive to appointments on time and prepared to learn. Tardiness is not acceptable in public health and helping professions, and will not be tolerated in the classroom. If you are more than five minutes late three times, you will lose an attendance check worth five points.

We do realize that students may have a class directly before this course at a distant location, making it difficult to arrive to class on time. Students in this situation must provide written documentation to the instructors no later than the second week of class.

Calendar

Week	Date(s)	Topic(s)	Readings
1	8/22/16	Course Overview	Syllabus
2	8/29/16	Vaccines	http://vaccines.procon.org/ □
3	9/05/16	Labor Day No Class	
4	9/12/16	Abortion	http://abortion.procon.org/ □
5	9/19/16	Right to Health Care	http://healthcare.procon.org/ □
6	9/26/16	Gun Control	http://concealedguns.procon.org/ □
	9/30/16	Main Point Paper 1 Due (Undergrad) Policy Paper 1 Due (Graduate)	
7	10/3/16	Obesity	http://obesity.procon.org/ □
8	10/10/16	Medical Marijuana	http://medicalmarijuana.procon.org
9	10/17/16	Exam One	
10	10/24/16	Climate Change	http://climatechange.procon.org/
11	10/31/16	Marriage Equality	http://medicalmarijuana.procon.org/view.timeline.php?timelineID=000026 □
12	11/07/16	Assisted Suicide	http://euthanasia.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000126 http://euthanasia.procon.org/view.timeline.php?timelineID=000022
13	11/14/16	Social Media	http://socialnetworking.procon.org/
	11/18/16	Main Point Paper 2 Due (Undergrad) Policy Paper 2 Due (Graduate)	

14	11/21/16	Graduate Student Presentation Part 1	
15	11/28/16	Graduate Student Presentation Part 2	
16	12/05/16	Exam Two	

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING UNDERGRADUATE Grading:

1.	Two Exams @ 100 each	200 points
2.	Two Main Point Papers @ 30 each	60 points
3.	Attendance/Professionalism	50 points
4.	Group Participation	30 points
5.	Weekly Quizzes	<u>60 points</u>
TOTAL POINTS		400 points

GRADUATE Grading:

1.	Two Exams @ 100 each	200 points
2.	Two Policy Papers @25 each	50 points
3.	Attendance/Professionalism	50 points
4.	Class Presentation	10 points
5.	Group Participation	30 points
6.	Weekly Quizzes	<u>60 points</u>
TOTAL POINTS		400 points

Translating Number of Points to Letter Grades

A (93-100%)	=	372 - 400	C+ (77-79%)	=	308 - 319
A- (90-92%)	=	360 - 371	C (70-76%)	=	280 - 307
B+ (87-89%)	=	348 - 359	D+ (67-69%)	=	268 - 279
B (83-86%)	=	332 - 347	D (63-66%)	=	252 - 267
B- (80-82%)	=	320 - 331	D- (60-62%)	=	240 - 251
			E (<60%)	=	<239

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with an A. In addition, the Bachelor of Health Science Program does not use C- grades.

For greater detail on the meaning of letter grades and university policies related to them, see the Registrar's Grade Policy regulations at:

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Make Up Policy

Consistent with College policy, students are allowed to make up work only if missed as a result of illness, other unanticipated circumstances warranting a medical excuse, or with instructor permission. You must notify the instructor in advance if you will miss a quiz/exam or project deadline. Documentation from a health care provider is required upon your return to class. Project extensions requested for medical reasons must be negotiated at the time of illness.

Policy Related to Required Class Attendance

All faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For information regarding the UF Attendance Policy see the Registrar website for additional details:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Website for additional details:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

<http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you must register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu> within the first week of class. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please make sure you provide this letter to me by the end of the second week of

the course. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- The Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>. On line and in person assistance is available.
- You Matter We Care website: <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/>. If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:
Alachua County Crisis Center
(352) 264-6789
<http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.
