

EPID 600 - on-line Introduction to Public Health

Course Administrative Notes

[Course Bookmarks](#)

[Admin Video](#) **[VIDEO]** for those not able to attend the May 18 group meeting. If the video does not load promptly you may need to click on the refresh or reload button once.

Also, for those who could not make it into the first group meeting, look at this video [Introducing me to you](#). **[VIDEO]**

Before you do anything else: Be sure you know your ACTIVE VCU Email address. When you registered for the course an email address was assigned to you. I must use this email address for scoring your progress in Blackboard. Before the class starts on May 18, 2009, If you do not know your active VCU Email account go to the VCU [Technology Site](#) and activate the email used for your Blackboard account. If you have any problem with this call the Student help desk. The number is 804-828-2227

The first week will start with a face to face meeting on Monday May 18 at 5 p.m. in the 3rd floor conference of the Leigh House. It should last about 1 hour to introduce you to the Blackboard system and computerized tools we will use, and the various textbooks required and recommended.

If you want me to use a different email address from the required VCU email address, used to access Blackboard, for routine contact with you please [email me](#) with your full name and preferred email contact address.

List of students (will be posted by May 22) enrolled in Blackboard on May 19.

MPH Program - Mission Statement - On-Line Course

The Mission of the MPH Program at Virginia Commonwealth University is to promote health and well-being through commitment to public health education, excellence in research, and dedication to community service.

The MPH Program emphasizes community service for under served populations by working closely with local counties, municipalities, and state agencies, as well as with service organizations, to identify community needs and educational and service opportunities for program students and graduates. The Program directly advances the University Mission and the School of Public Health Mission.

Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires Virginia Commonwealth University to provide reasonable accommodation for any individual who advises us of a physical or mental disability. If you have a physical or mental limitation that requires an accommodation, or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with me at your earliest convenience.

"Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require Virginia Commonwealth University to provide an 'academic adjustment' or a 'reasonable accommodation' for students with documented disabilities. Students seeking academic adjustments or accommodations must self-identify with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities on the appropriate Campus. After meeting with the Coordinator, students are encouraged to meet with their instructors to discuss their needs, and if applicable, any lab safety concerns related to their disabilities

If you have not identified yourself to the Coordinator of services for Students with disabilities please do so immediately at VCU Services for Students with Disabilities
Coordinator: Cheryl Chesney-Walker (clchesneywal@vcu.edu)

Campus location: VMI Building, 1000 E. Marshall Street, Room 301
Mailing address: PO Box 980124, Richmond, Virginia 23298-0214
Voice: 804-828-9782 | TTY: 804-828-4608 | FAX: 804-828-4609
Web: www.vcuhealth.org/vp/sassdss

COURSE Overview:

This course, consistent with the above Mission Statement, is designed to provide students with an overview of the broad field of public health with an emphasis on its application at the community level focusing on under served populations.

Students are expected to read current journals on public health issues and be conversant with relevant public health matters currently under discussion in local, state and national media as well as scholarly publications. All recommended journals are available on-line through the Thompson McCaw Library system using the journal search tool and your EID.

This on-line course is taught in 12 weekly sessions developed by experienced public health and clinical faculty, with direction, coordination and supervision of the course director.

The various faculty, teaching this course, have many years of experience. Some have experience since the end of the second world war, the time at which the recommended reference, by Rosen finishes. During the course we will update you on important policies and activities that have occurred in the last 50 years.

COURSE Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students should be able to describe the skills necessary for the various public health specialists to practice their craft in the community. They should be able to describe the organization of community health services and their relation to, and interdependency with, national and state public health agencies. They should be able to describe the major tracks within public health in which the various public health specialists apply their skills and how these skills are melded together to improve community health status. This includes the organization of public health within various levels of government, and the components of health care as it relates to under served populations. The course objectives are derived from the 2003 studies by the Institute of Medicine: 1. ' [Who will keep the Public Healthy](#)' (see appendix F-Competencies, in this book to review the skills you need to acquire during the MPH course) and 2. ' [Future of PH in the 21st Century](#)'. Also included in the objectives are those recommended by the [Association of Schools of Public Health](#) and those approved by the faculty as part of our [current accreditation](#). Each course session will include several of these competencies as part of the session presentation.

PREREQUISITES:

The prerequisite courses include completion of an undergraduate degree, which contained courses basic to public health such as history, biology, chemistry, statistics, psychology & behavioral science.

Blackboard

All students must use the Blackboard to obtain credit for this course. you will find this at

<http://blackboard.vcu.edu>

Use your VCU logon and password (see above-assigned when enrolled into this course, unless you already had an active VCU email account) to logon to the course. If more than one of your courses is available on the blackboard system choose EPID-600 (Introduction to Public Health, Summer 2009). When you get to the Blackboard you will find the course discussion web. Answers to one or more discussion questions will be required each week, after reviewing the data/readings in the syllabus for the week. . The tests (quizzes) are available for each weekly session, and found in the assignment section. Use of 'Blackboard' discussion fora and tests will be covered in the introductory session to be held during the first week of the Summer Semester. I want to meet with all students enrolled in this course at 5.00 pm in the 3rd floor conference room in the Leigh House, Monday May 19th to be sure we all understand how this course will be conducted. This should NOT take more than 1 hour.

For those of you unable to come to the initial meeting review [this Video](#) **[VIDEO]**

After logging on to Blackboard the first time visit the help tab in case you do not have all the media readers recommended.

Course [Web Pages](#)

It is the intention of the lecturers that the students prepare for each weekly session by reviewing the material on the web pages in this course, plus the readings, and by using the web to search for current topical information using the web links provided within the weekly web pages, plus other links they find for themselves and share with the class. Each weekly on-line lecture session is intended to be give and take, using the discussion board, to be sure that you understand the principles identified for each session. This survey course will provide you with examples of more than 30 different areas of public health practice.

Note on course Material: As some of you may not be comfortable working from a computer screen. I have provided pdf. files for all the slides shows and for the text material for each session. These should be downloaded with Adobe Acrobat, unless you have some other valid '.pdf' page viewer, from which you can print the pages.

If any of you are from outside the US or have little familiarity with the US health care system I have prepared a non credit resource to introduce students to the US Health Care System at <http://www.commed.vcu.edu/IntroPH/essentialsushcs/>

On-Line Course Times

The weekly sessions will start each Monday, starting Monday May 18th, AD 2009 and finishing August 7th. These presentations should take about 4-hours to review each week

Course Objectives

Before doing anything else, bookmark this URL <http://www.commed.vcu.edu/IntroPH/Lectures.htm>

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe the breadth of Public Health & Preventive Medicine Practice in the U.S. specifically, and the world in general
- Describe the content and technology of public health practice, with an emphasis on its application to under served populations in a community.
- Differentiate between the public health professions contributing to improvement of the public's health
- Articulate the functions of national, state and local public health providers/agencies
- Describe the major categorical functions of public health in relation to the year 2010 national health goals.
- Better understand the forces of change impacting the public health profession by health care reorganization.
- Describe the links between public health & medical care.
- Be able to describe how public health activities strengthen the community's health status and interrelate to public and private human service agencies.,

This course addresses the following [MPH competencies](#):

1A (1,3,9), 1B (1,2,5,8), 1C(1,2,3,4,5,8,10), 1D(1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9), 1E(1,2,5,8,10), 1F(1,2,3)
IIA (1,2,3,4,5,6), IIB(1,4,5,6,9,19,), IIC (2, 7,9)

Key Words

Public Health, Goals, Objectives, Health Care System, Content of Public Health, Core Content, Expanded Content, Resources. Public Health Law, Public Health Ethics.

READINGS.

The required readings for the Introduction to Public Health practice are found in:
Introduction to Public Health by Mary Jane Schneider, 2nd edition. Published by Jones and Bartlett in 2006 and
Essentials of Public Health. Bernard J Turnock, Jones & Bartlett. 2007

Strongly recommended: The Future of Public Health (available on-line - [see below](#)), published by Institute of Medicine in 1988, and '[The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century](#)', these should be scanned before each class.

Two useful books, not required for this course but which will help if you have not decided on which path to use for your future career are

Public Health in Action by Jan K. Carney ISBN13 - 978-0-7637-3447-3, 2006 AD and
Public Health - Career Choices that make a Difference Bernard J Turnock. ISBN 13-978-0-7637-3790-0. 2006 AD
The first book focuses on PH philosophy with recent examples from local health departments in the North East. while the second focuses more on job content in the major avenues of PH careers and the administrative & policy challenges associated with them.

Much of the material provided in the EPID-600 course will be found in Dr. Buttery's essays which are updated annually. The original ones were the basis for his 'Handbook for Health Directors' published by Oxford University Press in 1990. That material is now out of date. When you get to the index page for these essays you will note that some of the essays will be of use for both EPID 600 and 602 (the recommendation is shown in brackets after each essay). [Click Here for these essays](#)

A book that I recommend for EPID 602 may also be worth purchasing and reviewing during this course. It is Public Health Management by Fallon LF jr. and Zgodzinski ER, also Published by Jones and Bartlett in 2005.

Other supplementary readings may be recommended by special guest lecturers, or experts on specific topics, designed to augment sessions presented by the course director. Students are also advised to use VCU's [E Journal Search Page](#) to become familiar with:

The American Journal of Public Health (On Line)
The Journal of the American Medical Association (On-Line)
British Medical Journal (On-Line)

Two useful books to look at if you have time are:

Epidemiology in Medicine. Charles H. Hennekens, Julie E. Buring, editor Cheri Mayrent; Publisher, Little, Brown & Co.

Public Health & Human Ecology: Last J. M. Appleton & Lange. 1997 2nd Ed.

The following references may be consulted frequently during the course:

US Preventive Service Task Force: [Guide to Clinical Preventive Medicine](#) 3rd edition

Reading & understanding Applied Statistics, A Self Learning Approach, Stahl & Hennes (CV Mosby)

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Medical Practice. AMA [Center for Health Policy](#) Research.

Control of Communicable Disease in Man. Ed: David L. Heymann, 18th Ed. 2005, APHA ISBN: 0-87553-034-6

Students are expected to become familiar with current public health issues, such as:

- new medications for AIDS/HIV and TB
- prevention of violence
- emerging infections of public health interest such as SARS, and monkeypox
- aging
- chronic diseases
- Bioterrorism

SPECIAL REFERENCES:

Students should visit the [MMWR Weekly Report](#) and click on the FREE MMWR subscription. This will bring you the MMWR each week as an email attachment. Provided you have set your computer up as recommended in the administration section of the introduction, you will be able to read the MMWR in adobe format. You should read this each week and be prepared to use the material in class, in quizzes, discussions and examination answers, and

to enhance class material.

Prior to each class visit [Healthy People 2010](#) and review the criteria related to the evening's topics by clicking on the [Leading Indicators](#). You may want to visit [HP 2000](#) and see how the criteria have changed since 1990. Think about why they have changed. What data has been used to develop indicators?

You should also visit the National Academy of Sciences publication list to look at [The Future of Public Health](#) and consider whether the Recommendations of this 1988 are currently being implemented, or why they are not yet implemented. What differences can you find in the above reference to the "[PH in the 21st century](#)". Be prepared to discuss these issues with your lecturers.

For those student who have never had to deal with the US Health care system I have provided a non credit [introduction](#) which should help you with both this Course and Dr Lanier's Health Policy Course

Students are expected to read a daily regional newspaper of general circulation (e.g. Richmond Times Dispatch, Washington Post, New York Times) and at least one weekly news magazine such as US News & World Report or Newsweek. Students will also find useful information for the course by accessing the Internet either through the school's intranet or their personal computers. The course director will provide Web addresses (URLs) for the CDC, the NIH, the AMA the IOM of NAS and the APHA.

Students are expected to supplement class materials with readings of their choice from the medical school library.

Use the BLACKBOARD Discussion web to discuss readings from the MMWR and Healthy People 2010, to comment on faculty presentations, and to answer questions posed during each week's presentations. Student discussions on the web will be monitored by faculty to suggest additional sources to clarify ideas presented on the discussion web. A link to the discussion web will be found on the introductory page for each evening's presentations as well as on the course contents page.

EVALUATION

This course is designed to provide the student with general knowledge of the scope and content of public health, and its relation to health care services. Note: each week you have 7 days in which to answer the quiz and discussion board issues for the associated weekly topic.

Discussion Board: (12.5 points per half semester - 25% for semester score)

The discussion board review for each covers: period 1, the first six weeks, and period 2, the last 6 weeks. Each period will be allocated 12.5 points. There are 3 questions for each week. Cutting and pasting an answer from an encyclopedia or newspaper is not acceptable. Each question on the Discussion Board (3 most weeks) requires a minimum of 100 words for an acceptable answer. The quality of answers may result in an award of extra points for each period. The extra points are awarded for exceptional use of the internet in finding answers to questions, or useful new URLs or a combination of these..

Quizzes:(12.5 points per half semester - 25 points for semester)

Each evening is associated with a quiz found on the course Blackboard. Grades will be assigned based on the first attempt. *You may attempt the quiz again* to show that you know where your first attempt was incorrect, but the grade is based on your first attempt!

Mid term and Final examinations will assess the student's ability to describe the scope and content of public health practice in written form. The final Summary Grade will be a standard letter grade summing the results of mid term, and final written exams, plus the quizzes. [Note about grading. Although the each question is assessed a letter grade, the letter is determined by first grading each answer on a 100 point scale [92-100=A, 81-91=B, 71-80=C, <71 =D-/Fail] The Department will also provide forms for you to evaluate the course at the end of the course

Mid Term Examination: (15 points) You will have 7 days to prepare and submit (email) your answer.

The examination will consist of an open book examination, for which the student will be required to complete one approximately 700 word (minimum) essay, from 3-5 topics related to the first 6 weeks of presentations. This examination will count for 15% of the semester grade. The semester grade will be a standard letter grade. additionally students will have to have answered each of the questions on the discussion board satisfactorily and completed the blackboard quizzes

Final Examination: (35% points) You will have 7 days to prepare and submit (email) your answer.

The final exam counts for 35% on the semester grade. This examination will also be an open book examination for

which the student will be required to complete two(2) approximately 700 word (minimum) essays, from 6-8 topics that will be presented to the student at the next to last session of the course. The essays should be presented as an email attachment sent to course director at cbuttery@vcu.edu .or rokimbo1@verizon.net

Guide to answering written examination questions. Carefully review the Keywords and Concepts for the topics. Additional points are given for using material provided in the lectures, readings and from Web Research. This additional review is likely to lead to an "A" for the question answered.

Special suggestions

Because this is an on-line course I am providing additional recommendations for achieving a high score. You do not have the opportunity to question the various faculty who have contributed to the course, as you would in a classroom so it is important that you pay special attention to the quizzes and weekly discussion boards, as well as the mid-term and final examinations.

The only way I have to decide how well you understand the material provided is by your performance on the weekly assessments and questions you place either on the first discussion board or that you send me by email.

For the quizzes you are allowed three attempts to get a correct set of answers. If you get all the questions correct on the first attempt you get 100% for a quiz. If you need two attempts to get everything correct you get 90% and if you take 3 attempts you get 80%. Note that all attempts at quizzes are time stamped and recorded. I will only view the first three attempts, any further attempts will be deleted.

For the weekly discussion boards I will expect you to have researched you answers and provide reasons for them. While you can copy and insert quote from part of a web page from an agency such as the CDC or IOM you must explain why you selected the quote. I expect a section of a discussion board (there are usually 2 or three question on a discussion board each week) to be at least 150 words. You may use more if you wish but I am impressed with conciseness and relevance for an answer. In others words use the least words you need that will show me that you reviewed and understand the material provided.

Introductory session

History, goals and organization of public health.

Students should be able to describe:

- How public health issues have affected health status over more than 4000 years.
- The purpose and outline methods used to develop public health policy and goals.
- The organization of federal, state and local health departments.
- Common activities carried out at each level, as well as certain special activities restricted to a particular organizational level.
- Who, what, when, why that make up the practice of public health

The scope & expertise necessary to practice public health requires a study of the fundamentals of biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental science, toxicology, ethology, physiology and behavioral science will permeate each sessions of this course.

Federal and State organizations and their responsibilities for Public Health Services. The major players in the game. An overview of traditional public health programs, the disciplines needed to carry them out are a focus of this course.

References

A History of Public Health. George Rosen, 'Future of Public Health'. IOM.

Reading

Introduction to Public health :Schneider 2nd Ed.. Chapters 1 through 3.
Essentials of Public Health. Turnock. Chapter 1
Review the [USPHS](#) & [Virginia Department of Health](#) [VDH] Web pages
To read journals on-line use this [library access web page](#)

Class Roster

Special Reference. For students who have no experience with the US Health Care System a primer is provided [here](#). Take your time over this. It can be completed over the course of the semester and will prepare you for Dr. Lanier's class on Health Policy.

The continuing theme of this course is that epidemiologic and biostatistical expertise are the underlying skills needed for all activities, whatever the field, in public health. [Visit Healthy People 2010](#) before each week's session and review that part of the Healthy People Process which relates to the week's discussion, to prepare your thoughts for the discussion boards.

The first, and probably the only material you need to memorize from the entire course is:

- The [Ten Essential Public Health Services](#) which are further expanded in
- [The Essential Public Health Functions](#). (in the National Public Health Performance Standards Program)
- [Principles of Ethics](#) for Public Health

these functions are the basis of public health as it enters the second millennium. They are the most recent consensus among the major national public health groups, following the 1998 "Future of Public Health" book (see link to the on-line text below), produced by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. This book should be part of your own permanent library. You can view the CDC PPT Slide Show of the [10 Essentials](#) (you will need a fast link, preferably cable or the VCU Intranet)

The triumph of public health.

Until recently, the concept of prevention was most often tied to public health efforts, in particular to the prevention of infectious diseases. These preventive interventions had their roots in the 1800s.

In 1846, Ignaz Semmelweis instituted handwashing on his obstetrical ward in Vienna's teaching hospital, cutting the death rate among delivering mothers more than fivefold. Joseph Lister later credited his developments in antiseptic surgery to Semmelweis, "Without Semmelweis, my achievements would be nothing."

In 1854, John Snow, Queen Victoria's anesthesiologist, removed the handle from the Broad Street public water pump in London's Soho district, ending a cholera epidemic that had killed more than 70 people over two days. (<http://www.rethinkingwellness.com>)

The ten essentials are the culmination of over 2000 years of development of 'Hygiene' practice as identified in the web page on the [history of public health](#). Dr Ted Tweel, the health director of Hanover County Health Department, has provided a short [history of major events in Virginia's public health](#). Also review the [History of Public Health in Virginia](#), a Power Point presentation prepared by Jeff Lake, Deputy Commissioner of Health, VDH. ([.pdf version](#))

Take a look at [death rates](#) for the five leading cause of death in 1900 and see how they have changed. Also, look at the [changes in life expectancy](#) in the U.S. over the last 150 years. Look at the WHO [Global Challenges](#) for Public Health -2002. How good is health care in the US, compared to other

countries? Can you find the answer on the web and put your conclusion in the first section of the discussion board.?

An essential read: Elizabeth Fee's [Unfulfilled Promise](#)

Also, review [summaries of three projects](#) from the Robert Wood Johnson Fund (RWJF) identifying weaknesses in the Public Health System.

For every lecture/discussion of the MPH program you should consider how the specific session incorporates the five basic skills of public health which are:

- epidemiology
- biostatistics
- environmental health
- social and behavioral science
- health services administration

Also be aware of the [Principles of Public Health Ethics](#). Then you should consider whether they are also incorporated into the following extended skill set which the [IOM 2003 study](#) recommended as being incorporated into all public health education:

- Informatics
- Genomics
- Communication
- Cultural competence
- Community based participatory research
- Global Health
- Policy and Law
- Ethics

Also look at the [Core Competencies Project](#) of the Council of Linkages. These core competencies are the application of the ten essentials (above.) While you are visiting this site look at the CCP home page to learn about the Council on Linkages. Each session will include a continuing focus on public health policy in practice. Policy development will be discussed in the Winter Term in Dr. Lanier's course. The outline of Dr. Nelson's discussion of goals and policies in the public health arena are found in the [Goals web page](#), ([pdf](#) of Dr. Nelson's presentation) Part 2 of tonight's session

Recent literature on ethical [relationships](#) between patients and their physicians are applicable to communities and their public health agencies as [partners](#)

Also, in preparation for the remainder of the course review the [content for training in public health](#) AGAIN, recommended by the Teachers of Preventive Medicine. This outline was prepared as a supplement to the Ten Essential Functions, referred to above. This outline is pertinent to anyone planning to practice public health and should be used as a learning tool in every course you take. This will allow you to see how the various elements of each course fit into, and complement, the other courses to ensure that you will be have acquired the skills necessary to carry out the Ten Essentials. when you are awarded your MPH. Consider this [organization chart](#) as one way of displaying the major elements of health care provided in the U.S. If you want to print out this graphic use landscape mode. *[This slide is a macro enabled Power Point slide show. Once you open the slide in Slide Show mode. move your mouse over the various boxes to get explanations of the content.]*

The WHO Statistical Report of HEALTH SYSTEMS Performance [for 2003](#) indicated that the US was 43rd when measured by health outcomes such as death rates, disability rates, and survival rates. Also review the report, issued in August 2006, from the [Commonwealth Fund](#) about development of a "High Performance Health System" in the US. If you want to follow this up I will be happy to forward the complete report (some 18 pages) by email upon request, and the update in [August 2008](#).

Optional Viewing [Primer on the Federal Budget Process](#), with emphasis on the health budget

Valuable URLs:

[WHO A guide to statistical information at WHO](#)

WHO Statistics 2007 [Ten Highlights \(.pdf\)](#)

The next two documents should be scanned for this session but read through during the rest of the course as the contents will place many of the other issues into perspective in the rapidly changing field of public health policy, particularly the segments on primary care access and caring for the uninsured

[Health care Coverage](#)

[Obstacles to changing the system.](#)

[Dr. Buttery's Blog](#)

URLs for this session

Also, You may want to place the following in your Links for public health on your web browser as you start to develop a public health library.

[National Academies Webcasts](#)

Is American [health care](#) the best? (The website registration should be free)

[Bioinformatics](#) Standards

[Preventive](#) Counseling

[Prevention Database](#)

[Key Resources](#) on Health Coverage and the Uninsured

Additional Useful Readings:

[How to read an article](#)

[WHO & US Health Care](#)

[State H.D. Organization Charts](#)

[National Academy Press](#)

[The Public's opinion about Public Health](#)

[The Future of Public Health](#)