

Department of Health Promotion & Community Health
Faculty of Health
Sciences American
University of Beirut

Faculty of Health Sciences

Department of Health Promotion and Community Health

Introduction to Public Health

HPCH 205 (3 credits)

Course syllabus

Fall Semester, Academic
Year 2023-24

Course instructors and contact details

Diana Maddah, PhD, MPH: dm71@aub.edu.lb

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Class time and venue

Monday and Wednesday 4:30pm -5:45pm

Venue: Room 101

Course description

This course is intended to introduce undergraduate students in the Health Communication Program to basic concepts, disciplines, and principles of Public Health. Students learn how biological, environmental, social, economic, and political factors are intimately related to health, health care, illness and social inequalities. The course incorporates a critical perspective on contemporary health challenges, and most sessions include a common lecture and Moodle forums on case studies from the world, particularly the Arab region.

Course Learning Objectives (LOs)

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

LO1.2 Describe the core functions, disciplines, concepts, history, levels of prevention and core values of Public Health

LO1.1 Explain the social, economic, environmental, and political determinants of health and health disparities

LO2.1 Discuss the social determinants of health and their impact on populations

LO7.1 Analyze ethical considerations that arise in responding to public health issues

Course requirements

Students should read the relevant course material prior to class to enable informed discussion and to participate in class learning activities. Students are strongly encouraged to participate both in class activities and in Moodle forums, by expressing their views and sharing their educated opinions, informed by the course reading material. Participation in classwork and in Moodle forums are essential components of the learning process and will also help the course instructor assess class learning. Participation is part of the course grade. Moodle is an on-line course management system. To access the course, students login through Moodle [<http://moodle.aub.edu.lb>] and need to check Moodle regularly for updates on class sessions. The students will also be required to complete a field visit analysis report and a written case discussion.

Student evaluation

Students will be evaluated on the following:

1. Participation and contribution to online class activities and Moodle forums (15%). As previously mentioned, it is expected that students actively participate in class activities and on Moodle forums. Each week, a student will be requested to post one article related to a public health issue (the source may be an academic journal, a newspaper, a blog, or any other trusted social media or mass media platform) along with a few discussion questions. The article and questions should reflect the content of the course, and all students are invited to participate by interacting with their peers' posts and responding to the discussion questions online. Each new Moodle forum will remain active for two weeks, and it is required that students participate to a minimum of 80 per cent of these (see appendix 1).

2. Field visit analysis report (group assignment – in pairs) (35%): Students will visit an underserved area, accompanied by the course lecturers. They will observe the area, talk to a gatekeeper from a local non-governmental organization working in that community, and select one public health issue to focus on. In groups of two, students will develop an analysis report describing the public health issue, its impact on the lives of the community members, and analyze the social, environmental, economic, and political determinants of the issue based on their empirical observations and on references from the literature.

3. Case discussion (50%): Individual written assessment, with open-ended questions, that students should complete individually in class.

Assessment	Percent	Learning Objectives (LOs)
Participation and contribution to class and Moodle (individual)	15	All
Field visit analysis report (pairs)	35	LO2.1 – LO 1.1
Written case discussion (individual)	50	LO1.1 – LO 2.1 – LO7.1 – LO1.2

AUB/FHS Policies

Attendance

The instructors will take attendance regularly. The Rules and Regulations of the University stipulate that students cannot miss more than 1/5 of the sessions in the first ten weeks of any one course as stipulated in the University Catalogue. Otherwise, he/she can be dropped from the course by the instructor without warning and will receive a grade of W.

Academic integrity

Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards, practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship (European Network for Academic Integrity, 2023)

Education is demanding and time management to complete the assigned course requirements is essential. Do not hesitate to use the resources available to students in the University [Libraries, Writing Center, and Academic Computing]. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the Student Code of Conduct [AUB Student Handbook]. Read the definitions and penalties. If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask your instructor. AUB has a strict anti-cheating and anti-plagiarism policy. Penalties include: a zero on the assignment in question, which may lead to failing the course, suspension or expulsion from University and a record of the disciplinary action in the student's file.

It is expected that all work students submit for this course will be their own. The field visit report needs to list all team members who participated in the collaborative work.

Note on the use of Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) software for course assignments:

While AI can provide a wealth of information, it is important to remember that it is a machine and not a human expert. It is not capable of independent thinking or making judgments based on personal experiences, cultural contexts, or ethical considerations. Please note that the material generated by AI programs e.g. ChatGPT programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Work created by AI tools may not be considered original work and instead, considered automated plagiarism. **Unless otherwise specified by the course instructor, all use of generative AI to create all or part of an**

assignment for this course and submit the work as their own is a violation of academic integrity and will be subject to the same penalties as for plagiarism.

Accessible Education Office

The Accessible Education Office (AEO) coordinates academic accommodations and services for all eligible AUB students with disabilities (such as ADHD, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, chronic or temporary medical conditions, and others). If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations at the department, faculty or university level, please contact AEO as soon as possible. Once you register with our office, we will assist you in receiving appropriate accommodations and will liaise with your instructors and any related entity to best support your needs. AEO is located in West Hall room 314, and can be reached by phone at 1-350000 ext. 3246 or by email: accessibility@aub.edu.lb. More information about our services can be found at: <https://www.aub.edu.lb/SAO/Pages/Accessible-Education.aspx>

Non-Discrimination – Title IX – AUB

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at www.aub.edu.lb/titleix. To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator Ms. Mitra Tauk at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or titleix@aub.edu.lb. An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at www.aub.ethicspoint.com.

General Education Requirements:

In this course, social inequalities theme will be addressed and students will be able to:

- Identify various forms of social inequalities such as gender, nationality, race, and class and understand the systemic nature of these inequalities, their causes, and consequences.
- Reflect on the global and local manifestations of social inequalities and one's own positionality, including any vulnerabilities or privileges

- Apply conceptual knowledge to propose strategies with the explicit goal of effecting change and reducing social inequality.

Proposed course outline

Date	Topic	Instructors	Readings	Learning objectives
Module 1: Introduction to public health: history, concepts, and values				
Aug 28	Session 1: Introduction to the course	DM & GK	None	
Aug 30	Session 2: Introduction and history to Public Health	DM	Schneider, MJ. (2013). <i>Introduction to Public Health</i> (4 th ed.). Gaithersburg, MD: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc.	LO 1.1 LO 1.2
Sep 04	Session 3: Introduction to the determinants of health	GK	Press clippings	
Sep 06	Session 4: Introduction and history to Public Health application	DM	Public Health and the burden of disease, John Walley https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxBEdjKddvU	LO 1.1 LO 1.2
Sep 11	Session 5: Public Health and its Disciplines	DM	Gidey, G., Taju, S., & Hagos, A.S. (2005). <i>Introduction to Public Health</i> . Retrieved from Mekelle University: Ethiopia Public Health Training Initiative. Fineberg, H.V. (2011). Public health and medicine: where the twain shall meet. <i>American Journal of Preventive Medicine</i> , 41 (4), 141-143	LO 1.2 LO 1.1

Sep 13	Session 6: Public Health and its Disciplines- Application	DM	<p>Markenson, D., DiMaggio, C., & Redlener, I. (2005). Preparing health professions students for terrorism, disaster, and public health emergencies: core competencies. <i>Academic Medicine</i>, 80(6), 517-526.</p> <p>China, W. H. O. Multidisciplinary teams and integrated service delivery across levels of care. Country case studies on primary health care. 1978-09-12][2018-11-08]. http://www.who.int/docs/default-source/primary-health/case-studies/china.pdf.</p>	LO1.2 LO1.1
Sep 18	Session 7: Determinants of health	DM	<p>Gidey, G., Taju, S., & Hagos, A.S. (2005). <i>Introduction to Public Health</i>. Retrieved from Mekelle University: Ethiopia Public Health Training Initiative.</p> <p>The World Health Organization (WHO). (2014). Health impact assessment (HIA). Retrieved from http://www.who.int/hia/evidence/doh/en/.</p>	LO 2.1
Sep 20	Session 8: Determinants of health- Application on commercial determinants of health	DM	<p>McCarthy, S., Pitt, H., Hennessy, M., Njiro, B. J., & Thomas, S. (2023). Women and the commercial determinants of health. <i>Health Promotion International</i>, 38(4), daad076.</p> <p>de Lacy-Vawdon, C., & Livingstone, C. (2020). Defining the commercial determinants of health: a systematic review. <i>BMC Public Health</i>, 20, 1-16.</p>	LO 2.1
Sep 25	Session 9: Ethics in public health	DM	<p>Thomas, J. C., Sage, M., Dillenberg, J., & Guillory, V. J. (2002). A code of ethics for public health. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 92(7), 1057-1059.</p>	LO 7.1
Oct 02	Session 10: Ethics in Public Health- Application / preparation for fieldwork	DM	<p>Introduction to the sites of the field visits</p> <p>Instructions and questions preparation</p> <p>What are the ethical considerations related to the field visit?</p>	LO 7.1

Oct 04	Session 11: COVID-19 and Public Health	DM	Khanna, R. C., Cicinelli, M. V., Gilbert, S. S., Honavar, S. G., & Murthy, G. V. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons learned and future directions. <i>Indian journal of ophthalmology</i> , 68(5), 703.	LO1.1 LO2.1 LO7.1
			Gonah, L. (2020). Key considerations for successful risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) programmes during COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies. <i>Annals of Global Health</i> , 86(1).	

Oct 09	Session 12: COVID-19 and Public Health- Application	DM	Case discussion	LO1.1 LO2.1 LO7.1
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Module 2: Social, economic, environmental & political determinants of health and health disparities

Oct 11	Session 13: Field visit	DM & GK	UN Habitat Neighborhood Profiles	LO1.1 LO2.1
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Oct 16	Session 14: Field visit debriefing/roundtable	GK	UN Habitat Neighborhood Profiles	LO1.1 LO2.1
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Oct 18	Session 15: Health inequities and poverty	GK	Marmot, M. (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities. <i>The lancet</i> , 365(9464), 1099-1104.	LO1.1 LO2.1 LO7.1
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Farmer, P. (2015) Who lives and who dies: Paul Farmer on the iniquities of healthcare funding. *London Review of Books*, 37 (3), 17-20.

Oct 23	Session 16: Global health in humanitarian settings	DM	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7sHWICw3lg	LO 1.1 2.1 7.1
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<https://www.news-medical.net/health/The-Impacts-of-Humanitarian-Crises-on-Global-Health.aspx>

Brennan, R. J., & Nandy, R. (2001). Complex humanitarian emergencies: a

major global health challenge.
Emergency medicine, 13(2), 147-156.

Schmid, B., & Raju, E. (2021).
 Humanitarian Crisis and Complex
 Emergencies: Burden of Disease,
 Response, and Opportunities for Global
 Health. In *Handbook of global health*
 (pp. 2437-2472). Cham: Springer
 International Publishing.

Guest Speaker

Oct 25	Session 17: Race, culture, and public health	GK	Farmer P. Social inequalities and emerging infectious diseases. <i>Emerg Infect Dis</i> . 1996 Oct-Dec;2(4):259-69.	LO1.1 LO2.1
Oct 30	Session 18: Migration and health	GK	Guest Speaker	LO 1.1 2.1 7.1
Nov 01	Session 19: Gender and public health	GK	Phillips, S.P. Defining and measuring gender: A social determinant of health whose time has come. <i>Int J Equity Health</i> 4, 11 (2005). van den Bergh BJ, Gatherer A, Fraser A, Moller L. Imprisonment and women's health: concerns about gender sensitivity, human rights and public health. <i>Bull World Health Organ</i> . 2011 Sep 1;89(9):689-94 Mayer, K. H., Bradford, J. B., Makadon, H. J., Stall, R., Goldhammer, H., & Landers, S. (2008). Sexual and gender minority health: what we know and what needs to be done. <i>American journal of public health</i> , 98(6), 989-995	LO1.1 LO2.1
Nov 06	Session 20: Globalization, urbanization, and climate change	GK	Labonté, R., Mohindra, K., & Schrecker, T. (2011). The growing impact of globalization for health and public health practice. <i>Annual review of public health</i> , 32(1), 263-283	LO 1.1 2.1
Nov 08	Session 21: Introduction to health systems and financing	GK	Guest Speaker	LO2.1

Nov 13	Session 22: Disability & Ageing	GK	<p>Sabatello, M., Burke, T. B., McDonald, K. E., & Appelbaum, P. S. (2020). Disability, ethics, and health care in the COVID-19 pandemic. <i>American Journal of Public Health, 110</i>(10), 1523-1527.</p> <p>Beard, J. R., & Bloom, D. E. (2015). Towards a comprehensive public health response to population ageing. <i>The Lancet, 385</i>(9968), 658-661.</p>	LO 1.1 2.1 1 7.1
Nov 15	Session 23: Environmental determinants of health	GK	Guest Speaker	LO 1.1 LO2.1 LO7.1
Nov 20	Session 24 : Human rights and SDGs	DM	<p>https://www.icrc.org/en/document/what-difference-between-ihl-and-human-rights-law</p> <p>Caputo, F., Ligorio, L., & Pizzi, S. (2021). The contribution of higher education institutions to the SDGs—An evaluation of sustainability reporting practices. <i>Administrative Sciences, 11</i>(3), 97.</p>	
Nov 27	Session 25: Wrap Up of the course	GK	Movie – Classroom exercise	
Nov 29	Session 26: Case discussion with open-ended questions (individual written assignment)	DM		

Appendix 1: Criteria for assessing individual participation

Criteria	Assessment	Percentage of contribution to the overall participation assessment
Participation in class: the student contributes to the class through sharing insights, comments and questions related to the content of the course, and through active participation in class debates.	Very good (100) Good (80) Fair (60) Poor (40) No participation (20)	50
Participation in Moodle (1): number of Moodle forums where the student participates (within two weeks) in relation to the total number of Moodle forums (the minimum required is 80 per cent).	Percentage of participation is 80% and more (100) Percentage of participation is less than 80% (0)	25
Participation in Moodle (2): the student contributes with original ideas to the online group discussions, posts materials that reflect the content of the course and add questions that allows for discussions and critical thinking. The student does not plagiarize nor repeat their peers' ideas.	Very good (100) Good (80) Fair (60) Poor (40) Participation in less than 80% of the Moodle Forums (20)	25

Instruction	Criterion
1. Describe the community context	The community context description includes information about sociodemographics, geographical location, history and socio-economic conditions.
2. Choose one public health issue	The public health issue is clearly stated, and it is an issue of true public health relevance.
3. Analyze the determinants of this public health issue.	There is a clear analysis of determinants, and a clear link to how each influences the public health issue.
	The analysis is multidimensional and covers key elements of the socio-ecological model (or any similar model).
	The analysis is supported by accurate and relevant literature (including quality of the works cited).
4. Impact of the issue on the community (members)/ consequences on their lives	Clear analysis, depth and flow in reflection.
	Clear link between the public health issue and the consequences/outcomes described.
	Statements are supported by evidence from the literature.
	At least two consequences are explained.
5. Well organized report	Statements are referenced using in-text citations, and the referencing format is complete and consistent.
	The quality of writing is good, and appropriate (public health) terminology is used.

Appendix 2: Criteria for assessing the field visit analysis report

Appendix 3: Criteria for assessing the case discussion (written assignment)

These criteria are included in the questions sheets.

