

PubH 6102

Issues in Environmental and Occupational Health Course Syllabus Summer 2009

Credits:	2
Meeting Days:	<u>Internet option only</u>
Instructor:	Paul Allwood, PhD, MPH
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Office Hours:	By appointment only

I. Course Description

This course is an introduction to current environmental health issues and the methods used to address them. The course will assist the student in becoming aware of the scope of the field of environmental health and the ideas on which environmental health interventions are based. Students will review online course materials, press articles, and the scientific literature to learn about environmental health problems and their impact on human health.

The course is intended for students who are not environmental health majors and requires 120 hours of student effort for an average student to achieve an average grade. Student effort will be spent reading online content and completing online activities (30 hours), reading the course textbook, reviewing online resources, and completing assignments (90 hours). Students who successfully complete this course will have met the MPH Environmental Health Sciences requirements for non-majors.

This course is taught entirely online via a password protected website and students are expected to complete all online modules with additional learning time spent reading the course textbook, participating in online discussions, and working on community assessments. The exact due dates for assignments will be marked on the online course calendar and it is the student's responsibility to check the calendar and stay on schedule. **No individual notices will be sent to students regarding assignment due dates.**

II. Course Prerequisites

None

III. Course Goals and Objectives

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

1. Understand how environmental health problems affects individuals and communities
2. Identify major sources of environmental pollution and the ways in which humans are exposed to them
3. Examine and evaluate community environmental health problems and the programs designed to address them

4. Suggest options and recommendations for addressing community environmental health problems that demonstrates an understanding of economic, societal and political issues that relate to a specific environmental health problem
5. Discuss local history, community demographics and cultural and political issues and their impact on environmental health problems and solutions
6. Identify the formal legislative/administrative system within which environmental health regulations are developed and enforced
7. Identify key persons, organizations, and agencies in their community that impact the implementation of environmental health interventions
8. Understand the role of engineering, education and enforcement interventions in preventing and/or reducing human risk of exposure to environmental agents
9. Articulate basic concepts in environmental health and public health and convey an understanding of their value and importance to the public, policy makers, and other interested parties

IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

Much of the learning in this course will be student initiated. Students are required to make thoughtful and timely contributions to online discussions based on their knowledge of environmental health problems in their communities. In addition, students are expected to complete reading and writing assignments, and to ask questions and seek clarifications from the teaching staff when topics or concepts are unclear.

V. Course Text and Readings

The required text which is available for purchase at the University of Minnesota Coffman Bookstore is:

Nadakavukaren, A. **Our Global Environment: A Health Perspective, Sixth Edition.** Waveland Press, Inc. PO Box 400, Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070. 2000. ISBN 1-57766-402-7. Chapters 1,2,4,5, 7-9, 12, 15-16 are required. All other chapters are encouraged in order for students to understand the full scope of environmental health issues.

Supplemental Readings

In addition to the assigned text, the following references are recommended for study and are major resources for class outlines and discussion.

Sullivan, Thomas ed *Environmental Law Handbook*, 17th ed, Governmental Institute, Inc., Rockville. MD. June 2003. ISBN 0865879559

Benarde, M.A. *Our Precarious Habitat, Fifteen Years Later.* John Wiley & Sons. New York. 1989. (ISBN 0-471-61750-4)

Heymann, D.L. ed. *Control of Communicable Diseases*, 18th ed. American Public Health Association: Washington DC. 2004. ISBN 0-87553-035-4.

Moeller, D.W. *Environmental Health.* Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. December 2004. ISBN 0-674-014944

Institute of Medicine. *Nursing, Health and the Environment.* National Academy Press: Washington DC. 1995. ISBN 0-309-05298-X.

Salvato, J.A., N.L. Nemerow, and F.J. Agardy. Eds. *Environmental Engineering*, 5th ed. John Wiley & Sons. Hoboken, New Jersey.2003.

All registered students will automatically receive access to the online course through their University Student Internet Account. **Access notification will be made by email to student's University of Minnesota X500 email address only!** However, do not expect access the same day you register because it can take up to 48 hours for registration information to be updated on the WebCT server.

Note: All email correspondence between students and instructor about the course must be through the X500 email system.

Students will be assigned to an online discussion group during the first week of the semester and a portion of the course grade will be based on student's contribution to online group discussions and activities. Go to the home page and click on the "**DISCUSSION GROUP ASSIGNMENT**" link to see which group you are in. If you can't find your name in a group, contact the teaching assistants (TAs) by sending an email to the course email box PubH6102@umn.edu.

VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

You can work on your own time 24-7; however, you **MUST** follow the schedule laid out in the **online course calendar** to ensure that all coursework is completed and submitted on time. Check the online calendar for the due dates of online discussions and activities, written. My TAs will participate in the online discussions during the week that the discussion is due and will provide helpful feedback on your contributions. To be part of your group discussion and receive appropriate and timely feedback, you **MUST** contribute to the discussion during the assigned week. I will monitor online activities and student participation and offer comments/clarifications when necessary.

The approximate weekly course schedule is:

1. Take **pretest**, read course information, read syllabus and take optional quiz, post to class album (week 1)
2. Complete **Introduction** content module, readings and activities (week 1)
3. Complete **Risk** assessment module, readings and activities (week 2)
4. Complete **Ethics** module, readings and activities (including values case study) (week 2)
5. Complete **Water** content module, readings and activities (week 3)
6. Complete **Air** content module, readings and activities (week 3)
7. Complete **Land** content module, readings and activities (week 4)
8. Complete **Assignment I** (week 6)
9. Complete **Housing** content module, readings and activities (week 7)
10. Complete **Pests** content module, readings and activities (week 7)
11. Complete **Workplace** content module, readings and activities (week 8)
12. Complete **Food** content module, readings and activities (week 8)
13. Start work on **Assignment II** (post outline, give feedback on group members outlines) (Week 8)
14. Complete and submit **Assignment II** (Week 9)

- **I must receive a hard copy of your paper by 3:30 PM on the due date**
- **The paper can be mailed or delivered but I must get it by the due date**

Mailing Address:

Dr. Paul Allwood
Division of Environmental Health Sciences
School of Public Health
University of Minnesota (MMC807)
420 Delaware Street S.E., Minneapolis, MN
55455

Delivery address:

You can also drop off your paper in the box marked "PubH6102" that will be placed in main office of the Division of Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, which is located on the 12th floor of the Mayo building. The box will be placed in the office approximately a week before the assignment is due and will **be picked up at 3:30 PM CST** on the day the assignment is due (**Check the online course calendar for the due date!!**).

15. Complete **posttest**

VII. Evaluation and Grading

- Pretest and Posttest (3 points if students do both)
- Class album exercise (2 points)
- Syllabus quiz (2 bonus points)
- Assignment I (10 points)
- Online class discussion of learning modules (20 points; 2 points each)
- Thoughtful responses to at least 5 discussion posts from your group members (5 points)
- Assignment II (60 points)

In order to receive a passing grade (A, B, C, or P) all work must be completed and turned in no later than the **due date** assigned. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING THE COURSE CALENDAR FOR EXACT DUE DATES AND TIMES.** For Assignment I, one point will be deducted each day the assignment is late, and for Assignment II, 2 points will be deducted for each day past the due date. **WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE LAST DAY OF THE SEMESTER EXCEPT IN EXTRAORDINARY SITUATIONS, AND ONLY WITH A PRIOR WRITTEN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INSTRUCTOR AND THE STUDENT FOR THE WORK TO BE SUBMITTED AFTER THE END OF THE SEMESTER!** Academic dishonesty shall be grounds for receiving an N or F and a letter grade will be determined based on total effort as follows:

A:	95 -100	C+:	77-79
A-:	90-94	C:	73-76
B+:	87-89	C-:	70-72
B:	83-86	D:	60-69
B-:	80-82		

S: Achievement that is satisfactory will be expected to complete all assignments and receive a minimum of 70% to receive a passing score.

F (or N): Failure (or no credit) signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2), not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an “incomplete” grade.

I - (Incomplete): An incomplete grade is permitted only in **extraordinary circumstances and requires a specific written agreement between the instructor and the student** specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements. Extensions for completion of the work will not exceed one year, after which time the “I” converts to an “F” or “N”. For more information consult the University of Minnesota uniform grading and transcript policy. A link to the policy can be found at onestop.umn.edu.

Assignment 1

In assignment 1 you will examine how information is presented by the mass media for a better understanding of the ways in which environmental health risk is presented in the media and the potential effect of the mass media on the consumers of public health information. ***Click on the Assignment I link on the course home page for detailed information and instructions.***

Assignment II

This assignment is to be completed after you have finished all readings, activities, and course modules. The assignment is not a "normal" observation report of environmental health issues; rather, it is an assessment and evaluation of the issues as well as the agencies and programs that are in place to address them. ***Click on the Assignment II link on the course home page for detailed information and instructions.***

Evaluation criteria for written assignments

1. Assignments 1 & 2

a. Content

- i. Does the paper respond to ALL questions in the assignment?

- ii. Does the author indicate any areas of further work or missing information?
- iii. Is the purpose, problem or question clearly stated in the introduction?
- iv. Are statements in the paper adequately supported with data and citations?
- v. Does the background information familiarize a reader without overwhelming them?
- vi. Is the body of the paper organized and easy to follow?
- vii. Are the findings summarized?
- viii. Do the conclusions directly relate to the purpose, question or problem stated in the introduction?

b. Form

- i. Are spelling and grammar correct?
- ii. Is word usage appropriate for the subject?
- iii. Is the report or paper written in paragraphs, with ideas in a coherent order?
- iv. Are footnotes and references (if appropriate) present and correctly cited?
- v. Has the paper been proofread?

2. Online discussion

Online discussion postings will be graded as “completed”, “incomplete” or “no posting”. “Complete” means that the posting is satisfactory. “Incomplete” means that you need to provide more information and “no posting” means that you have not posted by the due date on the course calendar. Look in the “**My Grades**” section of the course site for your grades. You will also get periodic feedback on the discussion board regarding your postings. If you added or revised a post after an initial grade of “incomplete” or “no posting” the grade may not be changed until near the end of the semester.

VIII. Other Course Information and Policies

Grade Option Change

For full-semester courses, students may change their grade option, if applicable, through the second week of the semester. Grade option change deadlines for other terms (i.e. summer and half-semester) can be found at onestop.umn.edu.

Course Withdrawal

Students should refer to the Refund and Drop/Add Deadlines for the particular term at onestop.umn.edu for information and deadlines for withdrawing from a course. As a courtesy, students should notify their instructor and, if applicable, advisor of their intent to withdraw.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course after the noted final deadline for a particular term must contact the School of Public Health Student Services Center at sph-ssc@umn.edu for further information.

Student Conduct, Scholastic Dishonesty and Sexual Harassment Policies

Students are responsible for knowing the University of Minnesota, Board of Regents' policy on Student Conduct and Sexual Harassment found at www.umn.edu/regents/polindex.html.

Students are responsible for maintaining scholastic honesty in their work at all times. Students engaged in scholastic dishonesty will be penalized, and offenses will be reported to the Office of Student Academic Integrity (OSAI, www.osai.umn.edu).

The University’s Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as “plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.”

Plagiarism is an important element of this policy. It is defined as the presentation of another's writing or ideas as your own. Serious, intentional plagiarism will result in a grade of "F" or "N" for the entire course. For more

information on this policy and for a helpful discussion of preventing plagiarism, please consult University policies and procedures regarding academic integrity: <http://writing.umn.edu/tww/plagiarism/>.

Students are urged to be careful that they properly attribute and cite others' work in their own writing. For guidelines for correctly citing sources, go to <http://tutorial.lib.umn.edu/> and click on "Citing Sources".

In addition, original work is expected in this course. It is unacceptable to hand in assignments for this course for which you receive credit in another course unless by prior agreement with the instructor. Building on a line of work begun in another course or leading to a thesis, dissertation, or final project is acceptable. If you have any questions, consult the instructor.

Classroom Diversity. You are by definition a very diverse group of students, even if on the surface you all may seem more or less homogeneous. Diversity is a strength in our society at large and here at the University of Minnesota. Please maintain an open mind to the differences around you, place a positive value on those differences. Points-of-view may be actively argued but be respectful to all contributors. Check the Netiquette page within the online orientation for guidelines for a web based environment.

All of us learn in different ways and with varying degrees of success. If you know of any factors in your life which hinder your abilities to learn up to your potential in this course, please notify your academic advisor at once. Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. All discussions will remain confidential. For further information contact the University of Minnesota Disability Services website at <http://ds.umn.edu/> or call 612/626-1333 (V/TTY).

Disability Statement. It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services to have a confidential discussion of their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located in Suite 180 McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak Street. Staff can be reached by calling 612/626-1333 (voice or TTY).