

**PubH 3955/6955**  
**Using Policy to Address Child and Adolescent Obesity Prevention**  
**Spring 2016**

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<b>Credits:</b>	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>Meeting Days/Time:</b>	<b>Spring Semester 2016, 7-week session</b>
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	<b>Completely online</b>
<b>Instructor:</b>	<b>Nicole Larson, PhD, MPH, RDN</b>
<b>Office Address:</b>	<b>Suite 300 WBOB</b>
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	<b>Scheduled by request</b>

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**I. Course Description**

This course assumes the perspective that pediatric obesity is an important public health issue and interventions addressing nutrition and physical activity behaviors are needed to protect the health of children and adolescents. Students are provided with an overview of federal, state, and local policy approaches and national initiatives for the prevention of pediatric obesity. Specific examples of relevant policies directed at individuals, organizations, and communities will be discussed. There will also be extensive discussion of evidence for the impact of policies on child and adolescent overweight, including racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities. The use of evidence in the policy decision making process will further be explored.

This course has been developed with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA Grant 2012-70003-19985, PI: Melissa Laska), as well as matching funds from the University of Minnesota. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

*Please note: This course is available at either the graduate or undergraduate level. Students seeking graduate credit should enroll in PubH 6955, and those seeking undergraduate credit should enroll in PubH 3955. Undergraduate students will not be able to later use earned course credits for this class toward a graduate MPH degree, should they choose to pursue such a degree in the future.*

**II. Course Prerequisites**

Students must have completed one of the following: (a) a basic, introductory nutrition course, (b) PubH 3950/6950 (*From Kid to Community: Personal, Social and Environmental Influences on Youth Obesity*), (c) PubH 6094 (*Obesity and Eating Disorder Interventions*), or (d) 1 year of work experience in the field of obesity and/or public health. Permission may also be given by the instructor.

### III. Course Goals and Objectives

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe what policy is and the rationale for using policy to address obesity prevention among children and adolescents.
- Identify and describe current policy-related efforts addressing obesity prevention among youth, including local, state, and federal programs as well as national initiatives directed at individuals, organizations, neighborhoods, and communities and their impact.
- Demonstrate one basic skill necessary to contribute to the policy-making discussion through communication with advocacy members and decision makers on topics related to obesity prevention and health.
- Describe one way to evaluate policy impacts.

### IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

The course will consist of online lectures, supplementary readings, online discussion, quizzes, a written project, and a field experience. Students are expected to fully participate in online lectures and discussions, as well as to spend additional time on supplemental readings, quizzes, the written project, and the field experience. **It is imperative for success in the course for students to review lectures and required reading assignments before participating in online discussions or completing the quiz contained within a module.**

Any questions regarding expectations for the assignments, which are described in greater detail below, or the course material should be directed to the instructor by email or phone using the contact information listed at the top of the syllabus. Also, please notify the instructor regarding any technical problems you experience in reviewing lectures or completing an assignment so the problem can be addressed promptly. A reply to your message can be expected within approximately 24 hours Monday through Friday.

### V. Course Text and Readings

Required readings listed below in the course outline will be available through the University of Minnesota Libraries E-reserves. A link to the E-reserves website is provided on the Moodle site associated with this course. Required readings can also be accessed directly through PubMed or the University Libraries. Students are responsible for downloading all course materials and required readings for each module.

### VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

<p>Module 1 (January 19<sup>th</sup> - January 25<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u> Introduction to course content and expectations Divisions of authority between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government Rationale for using policy to address obesity prevention Policy development at local, state, and federal levels</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u> 1. Gortmaker SL, Story M. Nutrition policy research that can lead to reduced childhood obesity in the U.S. <i>Am J Prev Med.</i> 2012;43(3S2):S149-S151. 2. Eyler A, Nguyen L, Kong J, Yan Y, Brownson R. Patterns and predictors of enactment of state childhood obesity legislation in the United States: 2006-2009. <i>Am J Public Health.</i> 2012;102(12):2294-2302.</p> <p><u>Additional Reading Required for PubH 6955:</u> 3. Gortmaker SL, Wang YC, Long MW, Giles CM, Ward ZJ, Barrett JL, Kenney EL, Sonneville KR, Afzal AS, Resch SC, Cradock AL. Three interventions that reduce childhood obesity are projected to save more than they cost to implement. <i>Health Aff (Millwood).</i> 2015;34(11):1932-1939.</p>
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	<p><u>Optional Reading:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graff SK, Kappagoda M, Wooten HM, McGowan AK, Ashe M. Policies for healthier communities: historical, legal, and practical elements of the obesity prevention movement. <i>Annu Rev Public Health</i>. 2012;33:307-324.</li> <li>United States Senate. Legislative process: How a senate bill becomes a law – flowchart. Available at: <a href="http://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/legprocessflowchart.pdf">http://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/legprocessflowchart.pdf</a>.</li> </ol> <p><u>Activities:</u></p> <p>Quiz (due January 25<sup>th</sup>) Discussion post (original post due January 22<sup>nd</sup> and responses to other student posts due January 25<sup>th</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 2 (January 26<sup>th</sup> – February 1<sup>st</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u></p> <p>Including diverse stakeholders in the development of policies National initiatives that have brought together diverse stakeholders</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Porter CM, Pelletier DL. Finding common ground: perspectives on community-based childhood obesity prevention. <i>Health Promot Pract</i>. 2012;13:826.</li> <li>Bumpus K, Tagtow A, Haven J. Let's Move! Celebrates 5 years. <i>J Acad Nutr Diet</i>. 2015;115(3):338-341.</li> <li>McKinnon RA, Wiedt T, Hofnagle E, Shrimplin S, Let's Move! Cities, Towns, and Counties Team. Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties: Working with local elected officials to improve community food and physical activity environments. <i>Public Health Rep</i>. 2015;130:426-430.</li> <li>Brownell K. Thinking forward: the quicksand of appeasing the food industry. <i>PLoS Medicine</i>. 2012; 9(7):e1001254.</li> </ol> <p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roberto CA, Pomeranz JL. Public health and legal arguments in favor of a policy to cap the portion sizes of sugar-sweetened beverages. <i>Am J Public Health</i>. 2015;105(11):2183-2190.</li> </ol> <p><u>Optional Readings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Office of the Director, Office of Strategy and Innovation. Introduction to program evaluation for public health programs: a self-study guide. Atlanta, GA. 2011. Available at: <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/eval/guide/index.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/eval/guide/index.htm</a>.</li> <li>Preskill H, Jones N. A practical guide for engaging stakeholders in developing evaluation questions. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Princeton, NJ. 2009. Available at: <a href="http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/web-assets/2009/01/a-practical-guide-for-engaging-stakeholders-in-developing-evalua">http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/web-assets/2009/01/a-practical-guide-for-engaging-stakeholders-in-developing-evalua</a>.</li> </ol> <p><u>Activities:</u></p> <p>Quiz (due February 1<sup>st</sup>) Discussion post (original post due January 29<sup>th</sup> and responses to other student posts due February 1<sup>st</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 3 (February 2<sup>nd</sup> – February 8<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u></p> <p>Roles of public opinion, advocacy, industry and stakeholder involvement in the progression of policy development Top-down and bottom-up approaches to policy adoption The role of scientific evidence in policy development</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ulmer VM, Rathert AR, Rose D. Understanding policy enactment: the New Orleans Fresh Food Retailer Initiative. <i>Am J Prev Med</i>. 2012;43(3S2):S116-S122.</li> <li>Ludwig DS, Brownell KD. Public health action amid scientific uncertainty: the case of restaurant calorie labeling regulations. <i>JAMA</i>. 2009;302(4):434-435.</li> </ol>

	<p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u>  3. Sinclair SE, Cooper M, Mansfield ED. The influence of menu labeling on calories selected or consumed: a systematic review and meta-analysis. <i>J Acad Nutr Diet.</i> 2014;114:1375-1388.</p> <p><u>Optional Reading:</u>  4. Bleich SN, Rutkow L. Improving obesity prevention at the local level – emerging opportunities. <i>N Engl J Med.</i> 2013;368:1761-1763.</p> <p><u>Activities:</u>  Quiz (due February 8<sup>th</sup>)  Discussion post (original post due February 5<sup>th</sup> and responses to other student posts due February 8<sup>th</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 4  (February 9<sup>th</sup> – February 15<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u>  Evidence utilization in the Institute of Medicine’s recommendations for childhood obesity prevention  Case study of evidence utilization in discourse around obesity policies in Minnesota  Barriers to the use of research evidence in efforts to develop policies in Minnesota</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u>  1. Gollust SE, Kite HA, Benning SJ, Callanan RA, Weisman SR, Nanney MS. Use of research evidence in state policymaking for childhood obesity prevention in Minnesota. <i>Am J Public Health.</i> 2014;104(10):1894-1900.  2. Jou J, Gollust SE, Nanney MS. Report on “Using Obesity Research More Effectively to Shape State Policy,” based on findings from Evidence Translation for Childhood Obesity Prevention in Minnesota, funded by the NIH (R03 5R03HD0711560-02, Co-PI’s Gollust and Nanney) and the University of Minnesota Healthy Foods Healthy Lives Institute. Available at:  <a href="http://www.healthdisparities.umn.edu/prod/groups/med/@pub/@med/@hdresearch/documents/content/med_content_474443.pdf">http://www.healthdisparities.umn.edu/prod/groups/med/@pub/@med/@hdresearch/documents/content/med_content_474443.pdf</a>.</p> <p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u>  3. Kite HA, Gollust SE, Callanan RA, Weisman SR, Benning SJ, Nanney MS. Uses of research evidence in the state legislative process to promote active environments in Minnesota. <i>Am J Health Promot.</i> 2014;28(3):S44-S46.</p> <p><u>Optional Reading:</u>  4. Oliver K, Innvar S, Lorenc T, Woodman J, Thomas J. A systematic review of barriers and facilitators of the use of evidence by policymakers. <i>BMC Health Serv Res.</i> 2014;14:2.</p> <p><u>Activities:</u>  Quiz (due February 15<sup>th</sup>)  Submit topic for independent project along with supporting materials. Undergraduate students should submit the selected media article and graduate students should provide an outline for their policy brief. (due February 15<sup>th</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 5  (February 16<sup>th</sup> – February 22<sup>nd</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u>  Case study of food and physical activity environments in Minnesota child care facilities  Current regulation of child care facilities in Minnesota and policy opportunities  Potential unintended consequences of regulatory changes for child care facilities</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u>  1. Nanney MS. Examining healthy eating and activity in child care. February 2012. Available at:  <a href="http://www.healthdisparities.umn.edu/prod/groups/med/@pub/@med/@hdresearch/documents/content/med_content_426015.pdf">http://www.healthdisparities.umn.edu/prod/groups/med/@pub/@med/@hdresearch/documents/content/med_content_426015.pdf</a>.  2. Public Health Law Center. Minnesota child care: an overview. January 2013. Available at:  <a href="http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Minnesota%20Child%20Care%20Overview.pdf">http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Minnesota%20Child%20Care%20Overview.pdf</a>.</p>

	<p>3. Public Health Law Center. Nutrition, active play, and screen time laws in Minnesota. January 2013. Available at: <a href="http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/MN%20Nutrition,%20Active%20Play%20&amp;%20Screen%20Time%20Laws%20in%20MN.pdf">http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/MN%20Nutrition,%20Active%20Play%20&amp;%20Screen%20Time%20Laws%20in%20MN.pdf</a>.</p> <p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u></p> <p>4. Byrd-Williams CE, Camp EJ, Mullen PD, Briley ME, Hoelscher DM. How local and state regulations affect the child care food environment: a qualitative study of child care center directors' perspectives. <i>Infant Child Adolesc Nutr.</i> 2015;7(2):99-106.</p> <p>5. Duffey KJ, Slining MM, Benjamin Neelon SE. States lack physical activity policies in child care that are consistent with national recommendations. <i>Child Obes.</i> 2014;10(6):491-500.</p> <p><u>Activities:</u>  Quiz (due February 22<sup>nd</sup>)  Submit draft policy brief to assigned peer and instructor (required only for graduate students; due February 22<sup>nd</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 6 (February 23<sup>rd</sup> – February 29<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u>  Approaches to evaluating the distribution and impact of policies  Disparities in the distribution, adoption, and impact of policies</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u></p> <p>1. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Declining childhood obesity rates- where are we seeing signs of progress. Issue Brief. February 2015. Available at:<a href="http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2015/02/declining-childhood-obesity-rates.html">http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2015/02/declining-childhood-obesity-rates.html</a>.</p> <p>2. Caspi CE, Davey C, Nelson TF, Larson N, Kubik MY, Coombes B, Nanney MS. Disparities persist in nutrition policies and practices in Minnesota secondary schools. <i>J Acad Nutr Diet.</i> 2015;115(3):419-425.e3.</p> <p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u></p> <p>3. Nanney MS, Nelson TF, Kubik MY, Coulter S, Davey CS, MacLehose R, Rode PA. Evaluating school obesity-related policies using surveillance tools: lessons from the SCOPE study. <i>Health Promot Pract.</i> 2014;15(5):622-628.</p> <p><u>Optional Reading:</u></p> <p>4. Kumanyika S. INFORMAS (International Network for Food and Obesity/non-communicable Diseases Research, Monitoring, and Action Support). <i>Obes Rev.</i> 2014;14(Suppl 1):157-164. Also see: <a href="https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/soph/global-health/projects/informas.html">https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/soph/global-health/projects/informas.html</a></p> <p><u>Activities:</u>  Quiz (due February 29<sup>th</sup>)  Independent project (reflection or policy brief and peer feedback checklist due February 29<sup>th</sup>)</p>
<p>Module 7 (March 1<sup>st</sup> – March 7<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<p><u>Topics:</u>  Essential elements for effective communication with decision makers  Framing and formatting ideas for communication</p> <p><u>Readings Required for PubH 3955 and PubH 6955:</u></p> <p>1. Robinson TN. Save the world, prevent obesity: piggybacking on existing social and ideological movements. <i>Obesity.</i> 2010;18(Supplement 1):S17-S22.</p> <p>2. Stamatakis KA, McBride TD, Brownson RC. Communicating prevention messages to policy makers: the role of stories in promoting physical activity. <i>J Phys Act Health.</i> 2010(Supplement 1):S99-S107.</p> <p><u>Additional Readings Required for PubH 6955:</u></p> <p>3. Otten JJ, Cheng K, Drewnoski A. Infographics and public policy: using data visualization to convey complex information. <i>Health Aff (Millwood).</i> 2015 Nov 1;34(11):1901-1907</p>

	<u>Activities:</u> Quiz (due March 7 <sup>th</sup> ) Field activity (one-page reflection statement due March 7 <sup>th</sup> )
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## VII. Evaluation and Grading

**Course activities should be submitted no later than 11:59 pm Central Time on the due date noted in the course outline.** Final grades will be based upon the following criteria:

<u>Course Activity</u>	<u>% of final grade</u>
Discussion posts (2 graded posts)	20%
Quizzes (6 graded quizzes)	10%
Independent project	40%
Policy brief and peer feedback (graduate students)	
News media reflection (undergraduate students)	
Field activity	30%

### Discussion posts:

Students will be asked to complete three guided discussions as part of this course, but only grades for the posts included in Modules 2-3 will be considered in the overall course grade. The instructor will provide feedback on the assigned post for Module 1 to guide you in completing the graded posts. For each discussion, students will be asked to complete assigned readings and respond briefly to a few questions. Students are expected to incorporate material from the assigned readings (and additional references as appropriate) into their posts. While posted material may be based on opinion, students are expected to identify the sources of knowledge used to formulate their opinions. **Students are also required to provide comments in response to at least three other student posts for each discussion activity. Students who do not respond to at least three other discussion posts will have five points deducted from their discussion post grade for each missing set of substantive comments.**

### *Grading Rubric for Discussion Posts:*

<i>Allocation of points</i>	<i>Needs Improvement (&lt;74%)</i>	<i>Satisfactory (75-84%)</i>	<i>Meets Expectations (85-94%)</i>	<i>Exceptional (95-100%)</i>
Content & Development (60% of grade)	Main points are unclear or non-existent. Facts are inaccurate.	Major points are addressed, but not well-supported.	Major points are addressed and well-supported. Arguments are logical and well-presented.	Major points are addressed in-depth and with complexity. Writer is involved with subject, not merely "doing an assignment." Interesting and engaging.
Quality of Research/ Supporting Information (40% of grade)	Fails to cite additional sources. Source reliability is highly questionable.	Fails to cite sufficient sources and/or connect sources to material.	Reliable and sufficient sources cited.	Reliable and sufficient sources cited. Clearly connects non-assigned sources with course material.

All posts should be substantive and professional. Please note that it is expected that posts will NOT contain grammar/spelling errors and will be written in full sentences. All posts must be written in a manner that is respectful to everyone. Students will be expected to:

- Submit the required postings to the discussion board, each of 100 words or longer
- Address the discussion questions posed in their first posting with integration of what they have learned from the course lecture and readings

- Include at least one reliable reference source (e.g., peer-reviewed journal article, government website; do not cite lecture notes) in their original post.
- Include the citation for that source using AMA or APA citation guidelines
- Provide well-supported evidence for the points made within their postings; opinions are fine, so long as they are supported with legitimate evidence
- Contribute something new to the discussion (responses primarily comprised of statements such as “I agree with Jane Smith...” will not be considered thoughtful postings, making new contributions)

#### Module Quizzes:

Each module includes a short quiz that covers the lecture material contained within that module and the assigned, required readings. The format for module quizzes will be primarily multiple choice, true/false and short answer questions. Each quiz will contain approximately 5-10 questions and students may choose to drop the points associated with one quiz by simply notifying the instructor. These quizzes can be completed on an “open book” basis using resources from class or outside of class but taken only once.

#### Independent projects:

*Undergraduate students: News media reflection.* Students are asked to identify one recent article that has addressed an obesity prevention policy-related issue. This article should be published in a recognized news media source (i.e., major newspaper, reputable website, local or national magazine, etc.). Students will be expected to write a reflection including a brief summary of the issue and the policy being discussed, the strengths and weaknesses of the policy, and whether or not they think this policy will be effective in preventing pediatric obesity. Reflections should be 1 page in length and should reference course readings and/or additional reliable resources, as needed. References lists are not included in the page limit. **The article to be discussed should be submitted to the instructor by February 15<sup>th</sup> (5 points) and the written reflection (100 points) is due by February 29<sup>th</sup>.**

*Graduate students: Comprehensive policy brief.* This assignment is intended to provide an opportunity for students to work on their written communication skills that can be used in the practice or policy field. The assignment should be written for the public health practice or lay scientific community, and be presented in an easy-to-read format. Students will focus on one specific area related to pediatric obesity prevention for new policy implementation. Policy briefs should be 2-3 pages in length (single-spaced, Times New Roman 10-12 point font, 1 inch margins). Briefs must include scholarly scientific references (i.e., reports from government agencies and/or peer-reviewed articles, systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses). References lists are not included in the page limit. **An outline for the brief should be submitted to the instructor by February 15<sup>th</sup> (5 points) and both the final written brief (100 points) and a peer feedback checklist (5 points) are due by February 29<sup>th</sup>. The final written brief should incorporate feedback from the instructor on the submitted outline and feedback from a peer on a draft brief. Students will be assigned a peer in the graduate section of this course and expected to provide that peer with feedback on their brief by February 25<sup>th</sup> using a checklist to be provided by the instructor.**

Components of the brief will include:

- Title and brief introduction/overview of the brief (suggested length: 3-4 sentences)
- Rationale (suggested length: approximately ½ page): Short, to-the-point summary of the most compelling evidence describing the problem. Why is this problem of public health significance? Why should we be concerned? This section may address factors such as the prevalence of the problem, disparities, consequences, and/or risk and protective factors if applicable.
- Policy opportunity (suggested length: approximately 2 pages): A description of your suggested policy, including implementation details, arguments in favor of this policy, and potential opposition to the policy (acknowledge potential opposition, as well as a brief rationale for why you think this policy should still move forward, despite this opposition).
- Brief final summary of the strengths and limitations of this policy (suggested length: 4-5 sentences).

#### Field activity:

An essential part of learning about the policy process involves observing and getting involved with efforts afoot in your community. Thus, all students will be required to complete one policy-related interview OR one meeting attendance as part of this course. Students will write a one-page reflection of their interview or meeting attendance and submit it to the instructor. Interviews may be conducted with any policy or decision maker or any person who has been intimately involved in the policy process in a professional capacity as an advocate. Suggested interviewees may include: school board officials, school principals, city council members, elected officials to local neighborhood organizations, city planners, legislators or their staffers.

Suggested venues for attending a policy-related meeting include local school board meetings, local neighborhood association meetings, city zoning and planning meetings, public hearings for community development, and/or local parks board meetings. **This assignment is due by March 7<sup>th</sup>.**

The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

- A 4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- A- 3.667
- B+ 3.333
- B 3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B- 2.667
- C+ 2.333
- C 2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- C- 1.667
- D+ 1.333
- D 1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>.

Submission of an assignment after the deadline listed in the syllabus should be discussed with the instructor in advance of the due date. Late work will be penalized one grade notch (e.g., B- to C+) for each day it is late. The weekend counts as one day.

### **Course Evaluation**

The SPH will collect student course evaluations electronically using a software system called CourseEval: [www.sph.umn.edu/courseeval](http://www.sph.umn.edu/courseeval). The system will send email notifications to students when they can access and complete their course evaluations. Students who complete their course evaluations promptly will be able to access their final grades just as soon as the faculty member renders the grade in SPHGrades: [www.sph.umn.edu/grades](http://www.sph.umn.edu/grades). All students will have access to their final grades through OneStop two weeks after the last day of the semester regardless of whether they completed their course evaluation or not. Student feedback on course content and faculty teaching skills are an important means for improving our work. Please take the time to complete a course evaluation for each of the courses for which you are registered.

### **Incomplete Contracts**

A grade of incomplete "I" shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., documented illness or hospitalization, death in family, etc.), the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an "I" requires that a contract be initiated and completed by the student before the last official day of class, and signed by both the student and instructor. If an incomplete is deemed appropriate by the instructor, the student in consultation with the instructor, will specify the time and manner in which the student will complete course requirements. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year (or earlier if designated by the student's

college). For more information and to initiate an incomplete contract, students should go to SPHGrades at: [www.sph.umn.edu/grades](http://www.sph.umn.edu/grades).

### **University of Minnesota Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy**

A link to the policy can be found at [onestop.umn.edu](http://onestop.umn.edu).

## **VIII. Other Course Information and Policies**

### **Grade Option Change** (if applicable):

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 courses) can be found at [onestop.umn.edu](http://onestop.umn.edu).

### **Course Withdrawal:**

Students should refer to the Refund and Drop/Add Deadlines for the particular term at [onestop.umn.edu](http://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 Office of Admissions and Student Resources at [sph-ssc@umn.edu](mailto:sph-ssc@umn.edu) for further information.

### **Student Conduct Code:**

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf).

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty:**

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means 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; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf)) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: <http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to

your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

**Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:**

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>.

**Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:**

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

**Sexual Harassment:**

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf>

**Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:**

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

[http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity\\_Diversity\\_EO\\_AA.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf).

**Disability Accommodations:**

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center Student Services is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DRC at 612-626-1333 or [drc@umn.edu](mailto:drc@umn.edu) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

**Mental Health and Stress Management:**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

**The Office of Student Affairs at the University of Minnesota:**

The Office for Student Affairs provides services, programs, and facilities that advance student success, inspire students to make life-long positive contributions to society, promote an inclusive environment, and enrich the University of Minnesota community.

Units within the Office for Student Affairs include, the Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education, Boynton Health Service, Central Career Initiatives (CCE, CDes, CFANS), Leadership Education and Development – Undergraduate Programs (LEAD-UP), the Office for Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, the Office for Student Engagement, the Parent Program, Recreational Sports, Student and Community Relations, the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Student Parent HELP Center, Student Unions & Activities, University Counseling & Consulting Services, and University Student Legal Service.

For more information, please see the Office of Student Affairs at <http://www.osa.umn.edu/index.html>.

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility:**

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.\*

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, (Dr Kristin Anderson, SPH Dean of Student Affairs), or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

*\* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".*

**Student Academic Success Services (SASS): <http://www.sass.umn.edu>:**

Students who wish to improve their academic performance may find assistance from Student Academic Support Services. While tutoring and advising are not offered, SASS provides resources such as individual consultations, workshops, and self-help materials.

*Template update 9/2014*