

School of Public Health

Syllabus and Course Information



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM

PubH 6045 Skills for Policy Development Spring 2016

Credits:	1
Meeting Days:	T, Th
Meeting Time:	1:25-3:00
Meeting Place:	Mayo A110
Instructor:	Traci Toomey, PhD
Office Address:	Suite 300, 1300 South 2 nd Street (380 WBOB)
Office Phone:	612-626-9070
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E-mail:	toome001@umn.edu
Office Hours:	After class and by appointment
Assistant:	Laurie Zurbey (zurbey@umn.edu)

I. Course Description

Students will enroll in this course spring term for 1 credit. Students will identify a public health-related policy issue that they will focus on throughout the course. This course focuses on developing skills that are relevant to policy development and implementation. Class meetings will include a combination of lectures, guest speakers, and skill-development sessions. Students will be expected to actively participate.

II. Course Prerequisites

The course is intended for graduate students who have an interest in public health policy and have previous policy-relevant coursework. This course serves as the capstone course for the SPH policy concentration.

III. Course Goals and Objectives

The goals of this course are:

- To introduce students to strategies used to influence and shape public policy development;
- To develop skills and self-efficacy to implement these strategies;
- To apply these skills to one policy issue related to public health.

Objectives: As a result of this course, students will understand how to:

1. Give an effective media interview;
2. Structure and give effective testimony;
3. Develop fact sheets and other written materials for legislators and media;
4. Communicate with elected officials;
5. Understand different strategies for influencing policy changes.

This course is also a Community Health Promotion (CHP) intervention course and addresses the following CHP competencies:

- (1) Identify policy-level interventions that are effective in promoting healthy behaviors and social conditions
- (2) Communicate health information effectively both in writing and orally
- (3) Advocate for public health programs and resources

IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

Students are expected to fully participate in the course by attending classes, participating in class and small group discussions, reading course materials, and completing assignments by the assigned due date. Students are expected to be respectful of other students' opinions expressed in class.

Assignments: Choose one public health policy issue that will be the focus of all of your class assignments. This policy issue may: (1) one that you have worked on in previous courses, (2) one that you focused on as part of your paid or volunteer work, and/or (3) one that you have interest in working on. Given the shortness of the course, it is better to select a policy issue that you already know. **More detailed descriptions of each assignment, including grading criteria, are posted on Moodle.**

Brief Descriptions of Assignments:

- Assignment – Representatives: Identify and submit the names and contact information of each of your own city, county, state, and federal representatives (up to 5 points)
- Assignment – Key Media Messages: Develop 3 key messages for your mock media interview (up to 10 points for written key messages)
- Assignment – Testimonial Strategy: Write a brief summary of your testimonial strategy for your advocacy campaign (up to 10 points)
- Assignment – Oral Testimony: Prepare a 4-minute oral testimony in support of your policy issue. You will present this testimony in front of half the class. Turn in a written copy of this testimonial (20 total possible points: up to 10 points for written testimony; 10 points for completing oral testimony in class)
- Assignment – Draft Op-ed: Draft a 300-500 word op-ed in support of your policy issue along with a cover letter (up to 5 points for turning in full assignment)
- Assignment – Draft Fact Sheet/Resolution: Draft a 1-2 page fact sheet or resolution that describes key components of your policy and rationale for the policy (up to 5 points for turning in full assignment)
- Assignment – E-mail Communications: Draft two brief e-mail messages to a legislator. The first message should be framed in terms of the research evidence that supports the proposed policy; the second e-mail message should be framed in terms of an economic perspective (up to 10 points)
- Assignment – Practice Broadcast Media Interview: Modify key messages based on feedback. Review guidelines for practice interviews (10 points for completing media practice interview)
- Assignment – Peer Review: Provide written, constructive feedback for assigned fact sheet/resolution and op-ed drafts (up to 10 points)

- Assignment – Meeting: Prepare and execute practice meeting with a “senator” (10 points)
- Assignment – Final Fact Sheet/Resolution : Finalize fact sheet or resolution (up to 15 points)
- Assignment – Final Op-ed: Finalize op-ed (up to 15 points)

V. Course Text and Readings

Required readings are posted on Moodle. Some readings are from the following:

- Avner, M. *The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook for Nonprofit Organizations*, Fieldstone Alliance: St. Paul, MN: 2013.,
- Fox, J.A. & Levin, J. *How to Work with the Media*, Sage: Newbury Park, CA, 1993; Chapters 5,6.
- Nelson, D.E., Brownson, R.C., Remington, P.L., Parvanta, C. *Communicating Public Health Information Effectively*, APHA, 2002, Chapters 6,7.
- Wagenaar & Associates, *Community and State Coalitions for Public Health Policy Change: A Quick-start Guide*, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.

Additional readings may be added as the course progresses.

VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

See pages at the end of the syllabus.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

Students may choose to be graded on an A-F or S-N basis. Final grades will be based on class participation (20%) and assignments (80%). One point will be taken off for each day the assignment is late. Class participation is based on attendance, class discussion, and active participation in exercises.

Grades will be determined by total effort as follows:

A = 95-100 pts	Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
A- = 90-94 pts	
B+ = 87-89 pts	
B = 83-86 pts	Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
B- = 80-82 pts	Represents achievement that meets the minimum course requirements
C+ = 77-79 pts	
C = 73-76 pts	
C- = 70-72 pts	
F (or N)	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit, or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I

For additional information, please refer to:

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

Course Evaluation

The SPH will collect student course evaluations electronically using a software system called CoursEval: www.sph.umn.edu/courseval. 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. 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.

University of Minnesota Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy

A link to the policy can be found at 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.

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 Office of Admissions and Student Resources at 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.

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) 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.

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 DS at 612-626-1333 or 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: *for courses that do not involve students in research:*

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, 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

Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

(Note: Some lectures may be changed to meet course needs)

	Date	Topic(s)	Reading	Assignment Due
WEEK 1				
1	March 22	Discussion/Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Overview • Policy Process 	Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How a bill becomes law in MN:</i> http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/ho/wbill and http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/publications/billlaw.pdf • <i>Administrative laws:</i> https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/administrative_law • • 	
2	March 24	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Communication 	Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout • <i>The Jargon Trap</i> 	
WEEK 2				
3	March 29	Lecture/Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving an Effective Media Interview • <i>Guests: Matt DePoint, Miranda Taylor</i> 	Required Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fox & Levin, Chapters 5,6; • Nelson et al., Chapter 6; • Avner, pp. 131-137 	Assignment - Representatives: Identify and submit the names and contact information of each of your own city, county, state, and federal representatives. (up to 5 points)
4	March 31	Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing key messages 	REQUIRED READING Avner, pp. 125-129	
WEEK 3				

5	April 5	Lecture/Video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Testimony: Planning, Scheduling, Content, Implementation 	Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handout 	Assignment – Key Media Messages: Develop 3 key messages for your media interview (up to 10 points for written key messages)
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6	April 7 No Class	NA	NA	NA
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WEEK 4				
7	April 12	Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice Oral Testimony <i>Co-facilitator: Dr. Toben Nelson</i> Breakout room: TBA		Assignment—Testimonial Strategy: Write a brief summary of your testimonial strategy for your advocacy campaign (up to 10 points) Assignment-Oral Testimony: Prepare a 4-minute oral testimony in support of your policy issue. You will present this testimony in front of half the class. (10 points for completing oral testimony in class)

8	April 14	Lecture/Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating with Elected Officials Guest: Michelle Gin 	Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson et al., Chapter 7 	
WEEK 5				
9	April 19	Exercises: Practice Media Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Facilitator: Dr. Toben Nelson Breakout room: TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other resources linked on Moodle 	Assignment – Draft Fact Sheet/Resolution: Draft a 1-2 page fact sheet or resolution that describes key components of your policy and rationale for the policy (up to 5 points; no instructor review) <u>Bring copies of op-ed and fact/sheet resolution to distribute to peer review group.</u> Assignment- Draft Op-Ed: Draft a 300-500 word op-ed in support of your policy issue (up to 5 points; no instructor review)
10	April 21	Lecture/Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for Policy Change Guest: Jeff Nachbar: 	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wagenaar & Associates, Community and State Coalitions for Public Health Change Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbyist Handbook Political Committee and Political Fund Handbook 	Assignment – E-mail Communications: Draft two brief e-mail messages to a legislator (one with economic frame and other with research frame (up to 10 points) Assignment – Practice Broadcast Media Interview: Modify and review key

				messages; review guidelines (10 points for completing media practice interview)
WEEK 6				
11	April 26	Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Review: fact sheets & op-ed drafts Prepare for meeting with elected official 		Assignment – Peer Review: Provide written, constructive feedback for assigned fact sheet/resolution and op-ed drafts (up to 10 points)
12	April 28	Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practicing communication with elected officials <i>Guest: TBA</i> 		Assignment – Meeting: Prepare and execute practice meeting with a “senator” (10 points) Assignment – Final Fact Sheet/Resolution: Finalize fact sheet (up to 15 points) Assignment – Final Op-Ed: Finalize op-ed (up to 15 points)