I. Course Description

This seminar introduces students to the links between medical practice and public health practice. Emphasis is placed on exploring interdisciplinary public health interventions. Two relatively common medical problems will serve to focus the ongoing discussion about the intersection of medicine and public health. The seminar will stress a problem-solving approach that demonstrates how population science is integrated into practice. It is the intent of this course to assist the student in becoming aware of the scope of the field of public health, becoming familiar with the concepts upon which public health interventions are based, and to practice consulting public health resources to identify appropriate interventions for community health problems.

II. Course Prerequisites

Enrollment in Program in Public Health Medicine; or MD, or equivalent degree, with permission of the instructor.

III. Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Recognize how health systems, government, private activities and voluntary communities contribute to maintaining and improving public health.

2. Define public health as a social enterprise that seeks to extend the benefits of current scientific knowledge in ways that will have the maximum impact on the health status of populations.

3. Discuss public health principles and decision making processes used for the prevention of infectious diseases.

4. Identify and critically assess resources for the application of public health principles in delivering preventive health services and healthcare.

IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

Seminar - Principal method.
Readings – From resources found by searching the medical literature and the Internet.
Discussions – Based on participants’ research prior to each session.
V. **Evaluation and Grading: Grading Option – This seminar is only available S/N**

Grading Criteria – To achieve a grade of Satisfactory, students must:

a. attend a minimum of 11 of the seminars (50% of grade); and,

b. actively participate in seminar discussions by finding, reviewing, synthesizing and presenting information on the assigned topics (50% of grade).

Please note the following:

- If applicable, students may change grading options during the initial registration period or during the first two weeks of the term. **The grading option may not be changed after the second week of the term.**
- An incomplete grade is permitted only in cases of exceptional circumstances and following consultation with the instructor. In such cases an “I” grade will require a specific written agreement between the instructor and the student specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year.

VI. **Scholastic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

Students are responsible for knowing the University of Minnesota, Board of Regents’ policy on student conduct and scholastic dishonesty: [http://www.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.html](http://www.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.html). Scholastic dishonesty as defined in the policy and will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs: [http://www.sja.umn.edu/](http://www.sja.umn.edu/) and will result in a grade of “F” or “N” for the entire course.

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://cisw.cla.umn.edu/plagiarism/uofmpolicies.html](http://cisw.cla.umn.edu/plagiarism/uofmpolicies.html).

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/](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.”

VII. **Course Withdrawal**

School of Public Health students may withdraw from a course **through the second week** of the semester without permission. No “W” will appear on the transcript. **After the second week,** students are required to do the following:

- The student must contact and notify their advisor and course instructor informing them of the decision to withdraw from the course.
- The student must send an e-mail to the SPH Student Services Center (SSC). The email must provide the student name, ID#, course number, section number, semester, and year with instructions to withdraw the student from the course, and acknowledgement that the instructor and advisor have been contacted.
- The advisor and instructor must email the SSC acknowledging the student is canceling the course. All parties must be notified of the student’s intent.
- The SSC will complete the process by withdrawing the student from the course after receiving all emails (student, advisor, and instructor). A “W” will be placed and remain on the student transcript for the course.
- After discussion with their advisor and notification to the instructor, students may withdraw up until the eighth week of the semester. There is no appeal process.
VIII. Course Evaluation

Beginning in fall 2008 the SPH will collect student course evaluations electronically using a software system called CoursEval. The system will send email notifications to students when they can access and complete the course evaluations. Students who complete the course evaluations promptly will be able to access their final grades just as soon as the faculty member renders the grade. All students will have access to their final grades two weeks after the last day of the semester regardless of whether they completed the course evaluation or not.

Student feedback on course content and faculty teaching skills are important means for improving our work. Please take the time to complete a course evaluation for each of the course for which you are registered.

IX. Course Text and Readings

Background Resources:

4. RJ Glasser "We are not immune" Harper's Magazine July, 2004; pages 35-42

Intro

Public Health Foundation: http://www.phf.org/
MN Department of Health: http://www.health.state.mn.us/
Centers for Disease Control: http://www.cdc.gov/
American Public Health Association: http://www.apha.org/

History

The CDC “Timeline”: http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/timeline.htm
The EIS “Timeline”: http://www.cdc.gov/eis/about/timeline.htm
Public Health & WHO: http://www.who.int/archives/who50/

Wrap-up

The population approach to public health http://www.aphs.org/document.cfm?page=724
Public health competencies http://www.trainingfinder.org/competencies/list_ephs.htm
Essential public health services http://www.health.gov/phfunctions/public.htm
In addition, students research discussion assignments through the electronic medical literature indexes (e.g., OVID and PubMed) and on the internet (e.g., NIH, CDC, WHO).

X. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

**Week 1** – Introduction, Class Organization;
Presentation: What is Public Health? The Epidemiological Model

**Assignment:**
1) Using pandemic flu as an example, what are the kinds of information that you would need to effectively plan for a new or emerging threat to the public's health. (Think about the basic epidemiologic equation: agent + environment + host --> disease)
2) Develop a list of the available interventions for protecting the public from pandemic flu (Think about the levels of prevention)

**Week 2** – Protecting the Public Health
Class Discussion: What do we need to know in order to intervene?

**Assignment:** What information is needed to prioritize interventions and critically assess their use? (Consider both “soft” [qualitative] and hard [quantitative] criteria)

**Week 3** – Protecting the Public Health
Class Discussion: What are the important characteristics of interventions?

**Assignment:** Using vaccine for influenza as an example, what are the barriers to implementation of an intervention?

**Week 4** – Protecting the Public Health
Class Discussion: What are the barriers to public health activities?

**Assignment:** What are the essential elements of a plan? Outline an integrated plan for addressing pandemic flu.

**Week 5** – Protecting the Public Health
Class Discussion: The political problems in creating accountability - What are the key elements of the plan? Who are the key players? How are important barriers addressed?

**Assignment:** What should be done about non-compliance in a campaign to protect the public’s health? What is the MDs’ role? What is the MD/MPH role in a public health campaign?

**Week 6** – Protecting the Public Health
Class Discussion: The ethical difficulties in creating compliance - What is the MD’s role? What is the MD/MPH’s role?

**Assignment:** How do we prevent pellagra? (And how do we make this happen?)

**Week 7** – Maintaining the Public Health
Class Discussion: The economic problem of valuing paybacks

**Assignment:** How do we provide safe drinking water to the Twin Cities?

**Week 8** – Maintaining the Public Health
Class Discussion: The ideological problems of public solutions - The basics of sanitation

**Assignment:** How do we provide safe hamburgers at the cafeteria?
Week 9 – Maintaining the Public Health
Class Discussion: The ideological problems of public solutions - The basics of sanitation

Assignment: What are the key differences between a “protection” activity (dealing with the pandemic flu threat) and a “maintenance” activity (delivering clean water)? Consider the resources needed, the activities required, the institutions involved, and the relationships among actors and institutions [political, legal, social, and economic]? What is the public's role in each? What is the MD's role in each? Why do these differences exist (consider the nature of the health problems)?

Week 10 – Maintaining the Public Health
Class Discussion: The practical differences between going to war versus going to work.

Assignment: What are we doing to reduce heart disease? (Plot out the interventions in the “basic equation” vs. “levels of prevention” grid) What about the nature of the risk informs those decisions?

Week 11 – Promoting the Public Health
Class Discussion: What determines whether a health problem is a public health problem?

Assignment: What determines whether a (health) problem is a public health problem?

Week 11 – Promoting the Public Health
Class Discussion: The philosophical problem of valuing the public good - How is “impact” measured?

Assignment: What are the key characteristics of “promotion” as compared to “protection” and “maintenance”? (Consider: use of surveillance, infrastructure needs, administration of the effort, financing of the effort, personnel required, public relations, the public's role, and the application of state power). What is the MD’s role; the MD/MPH role?

Week 13 – Promoting the Public Health
Class Discussion: The existential problems of brotherhood – How to motivate compliance in health promotion?

Assignment: Write a short statement on private responsibility vs. public obligation in the reduction of childhood obesity among families who receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits.

Week 14 – Public Health Medicine
Presentation: What is Public Health Medicine?

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).