

Course Title: *Social & Behavioral Health Sciences in Public Health*

Course Number: *PHCO 0505 (Web)*

Course Prerequisite(s): *None*

Course Instructor: Joye C. Anestis, Ph.D.
Associate Professor; Dept. of Health Behavior, Society, & Policy
joye.anestis@rutgers.edu (e-mail is preferred)
(732) 235-5619
(When emailing, please include the course number [PHCO0505] in the subject line.)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-2PM EST, and Wednesdays, 10-11AM EST. Office hour instructions are available on Canvas.

Course Assistant: Jamie Fuega, MPH
jf1001@sph.rutgers.edu

Course Website: canvas.rutgers.edu

Required Course Text: *None. Required reading materials will include a combination of chapter texts, articles, websites, and other sources. All will be posted on Canvas.*

Course Description: This course provides students with an overview of the concepts, principles, and methods of health education and behavioral science. Health education is introduced as one of the core public health functions. The course will review behavioral determinants of health and consider these in the context of behavior change theories. In addition, the course aims to provide students with an applied overview of needs assessment as well as program planning and evaluation methods, which are critical to implementing and sustaining effective public health programs.

Competencies Addressed: The competencies addressed in this course include:

1. Describe the role of a health educator and behavioral scientist in addressing public health problems (*Assessed by Module Exam*);
2. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health (*Assessed by Assignment 1*);
3. Apply basic theories concepts and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in public health research and practice (*Assessed by Assignment 2 and Module Exam*);
4. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health (*Assessed by Module Exam*);
5. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors (*Assessed by Final*);
6. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs (*Assessed by Final*);
7. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content (*Assessed by Final*);

8. Select methods to evaluate public health programs (*Assessed by Final and Assignment 3*);
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention (*Assessed by Assignment 3*); and
10. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation (*Assessed by Assignment 1, Assignment 3, and Final*).

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate the role of health education/health promotion in addressing public health problems;
- Describe the role of health education agencies and critical stakeholders in the public health systems framework;
- Provide examples of the role of social and community factors in both the onset and solution of public health problems;
- Identify and apply basic health behavior theories and models to developing health education programs;
- Undertake methods of needs assessment and understand their importance in various populations;
- Describe methods for effectively planning and implementing health education programs;
- Critically assess written health education materials; and
- Broadly apply methods for evidence-based program evaluation.

Course Communication: The instructor will communicate with students primarily through the tools within the Canvas course. If you have a question that you feel may help other students as well, please post your question in the “Class Help: Ask A Question” discussion thread. If you have a personal concern or question you would like to talk about, please email Dr. Anestis directly or attend office hours. During the work week, Dr. Anestis will aim to respond to personal emails or your posts directed to her within 48 hours. For communications posted/emailed over the weekend, Dr. Anestis will try to respond by the end of the business day on Tuesday for most situations. Dr. Anestis does not open work e-mail after 5PM EST, on the weekends, or on holidays. If Dr. Anestis is out of town without Internet access, she will post a note in Canvas in Announcements. The goal will be to post grades within seven days of the final due date of the assignment, unless otherwise stated.

Fostering Course Community: Dr. Anestis will work to foster community through discussion boards, chat sessions, online activities, etc. Students are encouraged to get to know each other and contribute their particular strengths, expertise, and experience to enrich the class. Working with your classmates, explaining concepts to each other, and interacting with your instructor and course assistant are the most effective ways to understand the course concepts and succeed in this course. By posting questions on Canvas (rather than via email) the entire class has the benefit of learning from the discussions, so please consider posting your question as a first option.

Canvas Announcements: This course will use Announcements in Canvas to share course information, highlight lessons learned, and send reminders. Be sure you review your notification settings in Canvas so that you receive these Announcements using your preferred contact

method. In addition, please be sure to check the Announcements tab at least once each week in the Canvas shell for this course.

Module Schedule: All course deadlines are listed in Eastern Time Zone. Canvas will record all deadlines in this time zone. If you are in a different time zone, plan accordingly. Each week will begin on a Tuesday and will end on the following Monday. In order to complete all of the module assignments, you should plan to spend approximately 9 hours per week on the course material for a total of approximately 145 hours of course-related activities (discussion boards, assignments, papers, readings, etc).

Discussion Board Guidelines and Expectations: Discussion prompts will be posted on Canvas weekly. You will utilize readings, videos and other information to inform and engage in the discussion boards each week. Respect, critical thinking and application of knowledge will guide these discussions. Original posts for Discussions are due by Thursday at 8PM EST and your replies are due Sunday at 8PM EST. The instructions and expectations for the Discussion Board are posted on Canvas.

Research on Taking Notes and Enhancing Your Attention: Research demonstrates that taking notes by hand rather than on the computer triggers higher-level thinking and leads to higher recall and better understanding (Mueller and Oppenheimer, 2014). Consider taking your notes of the presentations (lectures) by hand either in a notebook or using a smartpen with a tablet – what’s important is writing your notes rather than typing your notes.

Paying attention and holding your attention is important for learning. But it is not as easy as it sounds! There are strategies that can help you enhance your attention. Research on meditation has shown that it can help increase our ability to control our attention by changing our brain structure (Jha, 2011) In addition, our brains are wired to pay attention to whatever is most interesting at any point and we can hold that focus until something else shifts our focus away. By removing or eliminating distractions we can help ourselves to stay focused. While viewing the presentations (lectures) or completing the readings, consider turning your cell phone off to avoid losing focus every time a text message or notification pops up. And if you’re still having trouble resisting the temptation to check your email or surf the web, try downloading a website blocker. These website block applications can help eliminate distractions by blocking the apps or websites that tend to compete for your attention. For a list of sample website block applications, visit <https://freedom.to/blog/8-website-blockers-for-studying-productivity-focus/>.

Course Requirements and Grading: *In this section, Instructor should include*

	DUE	GRADE VALUE
<u>School of Public Health Honor Code Quiz</u>	-	1 point
<u>Active Participation/Discussions.</u> Our greatest class resource is you! Your thoughts, ideas, questions and comments will enrich everyone’s learning experience, so please be actively involved in class! Be prepared by reading the course text and articles and participate in the classroom discussions.	Twice a week (see Canvas)	21 points
<u>Personal Reflection Journal.</u> Each student will choose one health behavior they want to change for themselves. Then each student will apply the knowledge and skills learned in the course to help them change their own behavior and write about the process in a reflection	VARIOUS DEADLINES	10 points (5 required entries)

journal. More details will be provided on Canvas. There are 5 journals total.

<p><u>Assignment 1: Behavioral and Psychological Factors Affecting Health.</u> Each student will choose one leading cause of death (health problem) and a target population (age group) and develop a written document (not a paper) for laypeople explaining the behavioral and psychological factors (PRE Factors) affecting that health problem. More details will be provided on Canvas.</p>	<p>JAN 30</p>	<p>10 points</p>
<p><u>Assignment 2: Application of Behavior Change Models.</u> Each student will choose one interpersonal theory and one intrapersonal theory and complete the assignment for each theory selected (i.e., there are two parts). More details will be provided on Canvas.</p>	<p>FEB 20</p>	<p>10 points <i>(part A and part B – 5 points each)</i></p>
<p><u>Module Examinations.</u> Two online module exams will be based on readings and presentation materials. The first will cover modules 1-6 and the second modules 7-14. These online module exams will be timed and students must complete each of them independently but can use readings and notes. Students will be able to start the exam when they choose after it opens, but it must be completed by the deadline. Once started, the exam timer also starts.</p>	<p>MARCH 6 & APRIL 24</p>	<p>20 points <i>(10 points per exam)</i></p>
<p><u>Assignment 3: Group Health Education Program.</u> In small groups, students will choose a health topic and associated health behavior of interest and design a small-scale health education program for a target population. Each individual student will write a program proposal, and groups will complete a presentation describing the program. More details will be provided on Canvas.</p>	<p>VARIOUS DEADLINES</p>	<p>30 points</p>
<p>DUE DATES:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Group Contract: Feb 13 Topic Selection: Feb 27 Brief Program Description, Goals and Objectives: March 27 Evaluation Plan: April 10 Peer/Self-Evaluation: May 5 Final Individual Program Proposal: May 5 Group Presentation: May 5</p>		
<p><u>Final Examination.</u> One final exam will be based on readings and lecture materials. The final exam will be open book and non-timed; however, students must complete the final exam independently, without the assistance of other students.</p>	<p>MAY 8</p>	<p>25 points</p>
<hr style="border-top: 3px double #000;"/> <p>TOTAL</p>		<p>127 points</p>

Grading Policy:

94 – 100	A
90 – <94	A-
87 – <90	B+
84 – <87	B
80 – <84	B-
77 – <80	C+
70 – <77	C
<70	F

Assignment Standards:

Independent Work. The module examinations and final examinations are to be done INDEPENDENTLY, not with other classmates. Individual written assignments are expected to be independent and original work. Please refer to the School Honor Code on p. 8.

Lateness. Assignments turned in after the official collection period are considered late. Unless the instructor and student come to an arrangement at least one week before class, there is a 20% point penalty for written work turned in late. Assignments are posted to Canvas by the due date. If you need to turn in something after the date due, please discuss it with the instructor **BEFORE** the due date to avoid point penalty. Please note: if entries for the Discussion Board or Personal Reflection Journal are late, they will be graded as “zero.”

Grammar/Spelling. If more than eight (8) gross punctuation, grammar or spelling errors occur in the written assignments, they will be returned with no grade. These can be resubmitted within one week with a five (5) point penalty or the student can accept a failing grade. There is a formal policy on plagiarism in the college catalog that will be the policy for the class.

Citations. Citation style for references in written assignments is American Psychological Association (APA). Please use this APA citation style for all references. If you are unfamiliar with APA style, these references are useful:

- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html
- <https://libguides.rutgers.edu/CitingSources/apa>

Course Materials. Students are responsible and will be held accountable for all assignments and materials given out during missed classes. Contact the instructor before or after a missed class to pick up any materials provided. All aspects of the course are available via Canvas.

Margins and Page Limits Requirements. Refer to each assignment instructions for margins and page limit requirements. A deduction of 10% will occur if assignment over the maximum page limit. Assignment instructions will be available on CANVAS.

Extra Credit. There will be a couple of ways to earn extra credit for this class. Extra credit opportunities will be posted on Canvas.

Course Schedule:

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MODULE	START DATE	COURSE TOPIC	LINK TO COMPETENCIES AND ASSESSMENTS	ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS
1	Jan 17	Course Overview and Health Education Roles and Responsibilities in Public Health	Describe the role of a health educator and behavioral scientist in addressing public health problems (<i>Assessed by Module Exam</i>)	Module 1 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates] Personal Journal 1
2	Jan 24	Overview of Approaches to Behavior Change and PRECEDE/PROCEED	Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health (<i>Assessed by Assignment 1</i>)	Assignment 1: Behavioral and Psychological Factors Affecting Health (1/30) Personal Journal (extra credit)
3	Jan 31	Introduction to Theory and Intrapersonal Level Behavior Change Theories: Health Belief Model and Transtheoretical Model	Apply basic theories concepts and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in public health research and practice (<i>Assessed by Assignment 2 and Module Exam</i>)	Module 3 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates] Personal Journal 2
4	Feb 7	Interpersonal Level Behavior Change Theories: Social Cognitive Theory and Diffusion of Innovations		Module 4 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates] Personal Journal 3 Assignment 3 Group Contract (2/13)
5	Feb 14	Community Level Behavior Change Theories: Socio-Ecological Model		Personal Journal 4 Assignment 2: Application of Behavior Change Models (2/20)
6	Feb 21	Community Level Behavior Change Theories: Community Organization and Social Support Networks		Module 6 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates] Assignment 3: Topic Selection (2/27)
7	Feb 28	Introduction to Program Planning and Needs Assessment	Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health (<i>Assessed by Module Exam</i>) Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention (<i>Assessed by Assignment 3</i>)	Module Exam 1 (3/3)
8	March 7	Program Planning: Part 1 & Part 2		Personal Journal 5 Module 8 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates]
March 11-19: SPH SPRING RECESS				March 11-19: SPH SPRING RECESS
9	March 21	Program Planning: Part 3 & Program Implementation		Assignment 3: Program Description, Goals & Objectives (3/27)

10	March 28	Program Evaluation	Select methods to evaluate public health programs (<i>Assessed by Final and Assignment 3</i>)	
11	April 4	Communication Strategies	Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors (<i>Assessed by Final</i>) Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation (<i>Assessed by Assignment 1 & Assignment 3</i>)	Assignment 3: Evaluation Plan (4/10)
12	April 11	Health Literacy		Module 12 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates]
13	April 18	Cultural Awareness and Competence	Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs (<i>Assessed by Final</i>) Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content (<i>Assessed by Final</i>)	Module 13 Discussion [See Canvas for due dates] Module Exam 2 (4/24)
14	April 25	Health Risk & Communication	Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation (<i>Assessed by Assignment 3 & Final</i>)	Assignment 3: Individual Brief Proposal (5/1) Assignment 3: Group Presentation (5/1) Assignment 3: Peer/Self-Evaluation (5/1)
15	May 2	Health Education Program – Final Presentations		Final Exam (5/8) Assignment 3: Extra Credit (5/5)

Learning Management System: Canvas will be used throughout the semester for course syllabus, assignments, announcements, communication and/or other course-related activities. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Canvas and check it regularly. If you have difficulties accessing Canvas, please inform the instructor and Canvas Support (help@oit.rutgers.edu). Canvas is accessible at canvas.rutgers.edu.

School of Public Health Honor Code: The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the School Catalog (sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html). Each student bears a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her graduate work. For example, all students are expected to observe the generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another's work, to refrain from falsifying data, and to refrain from receiving and/or giving aid on examinations or other assigned work requiring independent effort. In submitting written material, the writer takes full responsibility for the work as a whole and implies that, except as properly noted by use of quotation marks, footnotes, etc., both the ideas and the works used are his or her own. In addition to maintaining personal academic integrity, each student is expected to contribute to the academic integrity of the School community by not facilitating inappropriate use of her/his own work by others and by reporting acts of academic dishonesty by others to an appropriate school authority. It should be clearly understood that plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to sanctions up to and including separation from the Rutgers School of Public Health.

Students with Disabilities: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student must apply for Services by first completing a Registration Form with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (ODS) at ods.rutgers.edu. The student will also be required to participate in an ODS intake interview and provide documentation. If reasonable accommodations are granted, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations which should be shared with your instructors as early in your courses as possible.

Commitment to Safe Learning Environment: The Rutgers School of Public Health is committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the School as a whole. Free expression in an academic community is essential to the mission of providing the highest caliber of education possible. The School encourages civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and constructive engagement. Provocative ideas respectfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with responsibility. The School encourages all students to disclose any situations where you may feel unsafe, discriminated against, or harassed. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will be not tolerated and violations may lead to disciplinary actions.

Student Well-Being: The School of Public Health recognizes that students may experience stressors or challenges that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. If the source of your stressors or challenges is academic, students are encouraged to discuss these challenges and circumstances with their instructor, if they feel they may need additional support or temporary accommodations at the beginning or during this course. The course instructor may consider making reasonable temporary adjustments depending on the student's situation. For personal concerns or if additional support is needed, students may reach out to the [Office of Student Affairs](#) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the [SPH Student Connect](#) Canvas page.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment: If you experience any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. You may report such incidents to the [RBHS Title IX Office](#) or to the School of Public Health's [Office of Student Affairs](#). Rutgers University has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. If you experience any other form of discrimination or harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious, political, or academic, please report any

such incidents to the School's [Office of Student Affairs](#). The School strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to the School. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the School and potentially the University. For example, if you tell a faculty or staff member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty or staff member must share that information with the [RBHS Title IX Coordinator](#). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University [Policy 10.3.12](#). For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#).

Overview of School Policies: Academic and non-academic policies and procedures, such as Auditing a Course, Retaking Courses, Grade Grievance and others that cover registration, courses and grading, academic standing and progress, student rights and responsibilities, graduation and more may be found under [Policies](#) on the School of Public Health website. Below are select specific policies; however, students are responsible for keeping informed about academic and non-academic policies and procedures beyond those noted on this syllabus.

Graduate Student Computer Policy: Students are required to possess a personal laptop, no older than approximately two years, that must meet minimum requirements which may be found online at: sph.rutgers.edu/student-life/computer-support.html

Policy Concerning Use of Recording Devices and Other Electronic Communications Systems: When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communications or recording devices.

Policy Concerning Use of Turnitin: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

Withdrawal/Refund Schedule: Students who stop attending their course(s) without submitting a completed [Add/Drop Course](#) form will receive a failing grade. Furthermore, students dropping to zero credits for the semester are considered withdrawn and must submit a completed [Leave of Absence](#) form from the School of Public Health's Office of Student Affairs. The School of Public Health refunds tuition only. Administrative and technology fees are non-refundable. You may find the Withdrawal/Refund Schedule on the School of Public Health website at: sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html