Course Title: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)

Course Number: QNME 0506

Course Location: Medical Sciences Building Room F506

Course Date and Time: Spring - Mondays, 5:30pm – 8:30pm

Course Instructor: William Halperin, MD, MPH, DrPH, Professor, Department of Quantitative Methods
Associate Dean, School of Public Health;
Professor and Chair, Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health,
New Jersey Medical School
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
MSB, Room F-506 - 185 South Orange Avenue
Newark, NJ 07103
(973) 972-4422
WILLIAM.HALPERIN@RUTGERS.EDU

Office Hours: By Appointment Only

Course Assistant: None

Required Course Text: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report available by free electronic subscription at www.CDC.GOV.

Course Description: Students read 3 MMWR articles per week. In rotation, approximately every One to two weeks, students lead an in depth discussion of one of the three articles including discussion of major references cited, offer a mini-lecture on the biological basis for the disease or injury discussed in their assigned MMWR, and lead a class discussion. Course is intended to introduce students to diseases and injuries of world importance, to understand how to conduct an epidemic investigation, and how to read and write a report for public distribution. QM: Epidemiology students can take this course for 3 credits in order to fulfill the biological basis of disease requirement.

Selected Department Competences Addressed: Each Department identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH and MS for the Department of Quantitative Methods: Epidemiology and Biostatistics include:

Using epidemiologic concepts to identify and evaluate public health and clinical problems
- Assess surveillance systems.
- Utilize a sentinel health event approach.

Describing important epidemiologic challenges on the local, national, and international level
- Read Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports.

For Epidemiology Majors:
Understanding basics of acute and chronic disease including infectious disease pathology, diagnosis, treatment and identification of risk factors
- Describe the classification of bacterial, parasitic, viral, fungal and atypical infections.
- Describe the pathology, diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases of major public health importance.
- Interpret laboratory data to assess the public health risk of infectious diseases.
Please visit the Department webpages on the School of Public Health’s website at http://sph.rutgers.edu/ for additional competencies addressed by this course for other degrees and departments.

This course introduces students to current public health issues and public health practice methods through the weekly reading, analysis and discussion of the Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report.

**Course Objectives:**
By the completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Identify diseases and injuries of local, national, and international public health interest.
- Deconstruct the scientific literature to determine what was known before the publication, what the publication contributed and what are the public health implications.
- Identify biases and limitations of scientific literature.
- Critically analyze and summarize literature, speak in public, and write succinctly.
- Evaluate the magnitude, severity, and distribution of epidemics of public health interest.

**In this course, students will weekly:**
- Read the three leading MMWR articles published electronically in the prior week.
- On a rotating basis, prepare presentations (lasting 30 minutes) on an assigned article from MMWR.
- The PowerPoint presentation must be emailed to the instructor before the start of class.
- Participate in group discussions of current reports in MMWR.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

- 50% Attendance and participation in active discussion
- 50% Presentations
- Variable Credit – One to three credit units will be awarded for attendance, successful participation in 15, 1, 2 or 3 hour sessions, successful presentation of assigned articles

**Grading**

- A
- B-
- A-
- C+
- B+
- C
- B
- F

**Course Schedule:**
- Assignments and assigned readings are due weekly.

**School of Public Health Honor Code:** The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the student bulletin (sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog/index.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.

**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.