Course Title: Modifying Health Behaviors: Theory and Practice

Course Number: HEBS 0653J

Course Location: SPH, 683 Hoes Lane West, Room 334

Course Date & Time: Wednesdays 6:10 - 9:00pm

Course Instructor: Patrick R. Clifford, Ph.D.
Professor and Associate Dean for Research
Institute for Health, 112 Paterson St., Room 404
patrick.clifford@rutgers.edu; (848) 932-8064

Office Hours: By appointment

Required Course Text:


Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources: Select Journal Articles

Course Description: A major focus of Public Health is to prevent illness, disease and injury as well as the promotion of health and well-being through various strategies, to include behavior change. Health behaviors often are complex, and successful behavior change can be challenging. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the principles of learning theory that underlie the more commonly used, and scientifically supported, health behavior modification theories and models that facilitate successful behavior change.

Selected Department Competencies Addressed: Each Department identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH degree for the Department of Health Education and Behavioral Science includes:

- Using health behavior theory and models to understand health behaviors
- Utilizing health behavior theory and models to design health behavior/health promotion programs

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.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:
identify key concepts/constructs of behavioral science theories/models that are commonly used in public health oriented behavior change interventions

- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these theoretical frameworks
- integrate health behavior interventions and behavioral science theory

Course Requirements and Grading:

- Class Participation – Based on assigned readings and class lectures, students are expected to engage in meaningful dialogue regarding behavior change and its maintenance. Time permitting the latter portion of each lecture class will be devoted to such discussion.

- Behavior Change Theoretical Model - Each student (or 2 student team) will review the relevant literature regarding a specific behavior change theory and/or model. The student will deliver an in-class Power Point presentation that is to include a summary of the relevant literature regarding the model’s utility/efficacy as well as an overview (i.e., graphical representation) of the theoretical model that depicts the interrelationships among model components. Model strengths and limitations should be presented and discussed. This presentation should be approximately 15 minutes in duration, well organized, and presented in a professional manner. The student should be prepared to address issues raised by the instructor and fellow classmates (an additional 10-12 minutes will be allocated for this discussion period). An electronic copy of the presentation should be emailed to the instructor by 5:00pm the Monday prior to the scheduled presentation. In addition, paper copies of the presentation should be made available to the instructor and all students on the day of the scheduled presentation.

- Behavior Change Interview Session Role Plays - Each student will role-play, using motivational interviewing techniques, a health behavior change interview session. Students will role-play client, health practitioner, and consultant roles. Each role-play will be approximately 30-40 minutes. A 15-minute discussion will follow each role-play.

- Behavior Change Project Presentation - Each student (or 2 student team) will identify a contemporary behavioral health concern that s/he would like to address. Specific health behaviors (i.e., immediate and distal, if appropriate) targeted for change should be identified. The student will develop a theoretically based behavior change protocol to modify the selected behavior(s) that will include an overview of the theoretical model (i.e., graphic representation), a description of the procedures that will be used to modify the selected behavior(s), and a protocol for monitoring behavior change (Not Program Evaluation)). Each student (or 2 student team) will deliver an in-class presentation of approximately 15 minutes. Students should be prepared to address and discuss issues raised by the instructor and fellow classmates regarding their projects (an additional 10-12 minutes will be allocated for this discussion period). The presentation should be well organized and presented in a professional manner. An electronic copy of the
presentation should be emailed to the instructor by 5:00pm the Monday prior to the scheduled presentation. In addition, paper copies of the presentation should be made available to the instructor and all students on the day of the scheduled presentation.

**Grading:**

- Class Participation – Although class participation is not part of the grading calculation per se’, the instructor reserves the right to adjust student grades based on in-class contributions to behavior change discussions.

- Behavior Change Theoretical Model (50%) – Grading considerations include, but are not necessarily limited to, the development and presentation of an overview of the selected theoretical model (i.e., graphical representation), summary of the relevant literature that addresses the model’s utility/efficacy and strengths and limitations. In addition, grading considerations will include organization of material, presentation style, and fielding audience questions.

- Behavior Change Project Presentation (50%) – The final behavior change protocol should be realistic (e.g., not dependent upon the submission and/or potential funding of a grant application). Grading considerations include, but may not be limited to, the identification and specification of behavior(s) (immediate and distal if appropriate) targeted for change (caution: Do not confuse desired outcomes with targeted behaviors. For example, an exercise program and weight loss; weight loss is an outcome not a behavior.), integration of the selected theoretical model and behavior change protocol (i.e., specification of the actual procedures that will be used to modify chosen behavior), and articulation of a behavior monitoring protocol.

**Course Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Learning Theory: Classical Conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Learning Theory: Operant Conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Guest Speaker – Dr. Boyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Learning Theory: Operant Conditioning (contd.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Cognitive Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Critiques of Health Behavior Theoretical Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Critiques of Health Behavior Theoretical Models (contd.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
--    Spring Break – No Class

9     Self-Regulation Theory (SRT)

10    Assessments and Behavior Change

11    Practical Applications/Skill Building (Motivational Interviewing)

12    Practical Applications/Skill Building (Role Playing)

13    Health Behavior Change Program Presentations

14    Health Behavior Change Program Presentations (contd.)

Session    Reading Assignments (Should be read prior to class):

2     Glanz et al. Preface, Chapters 1 and 2

3     Glanz et al. Chapter 3; Mason and Butler Chapters 1 and 2

4     Glanz et al. Chapters 4 and 5

5     Glanz et al. Chapter 6; Mason and Butler Chapter 3

6     Mason and Butler Chapters 4 and 5

7     Glanz et al. Chapters 7 and 8; Kazdin and Nock Article

8     Mason and Butler Chapters 6 and 7; Mackinnon et al. Article

9     Glanz et al. Chapters 9 and 10

10    Glanz et al. Chapters 11 and 12; Clifford and Davis Article

11    Glanz et al. Chapter 13; Mason and Butler Chapter 8

12    Glanz et al. Chapters 14 and 15

13    Glanz et al. Chapters 16, 17 and 18

14    Glanz et al. Chapter 20

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.