Course Title: Cancer Prevention and Control: Behavioral Science Perspectives

Course Number: HEBS 0675

Course Location: TBD

Course Date & Time: Tuesday 2:00-5:00 PM

Course Instructor: Stacy N. Davis, PhD, MPH

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30 PM; by appointment


Additional Readings: See required readings listed for each weekly class session

Prerequisites: HEBS Core, Epidemiology Core

Course Description: This seminar-style course provides students with an overview of behavioral and psychosocial issues that span the cancer control continuum (prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship).

Lessons regarding behavior change, social determinants of cancer, health disparities, public health policy and community-based interventions can be garnered from the study of the cancer epidemic and cancer control efforts. Topics to be addressed in this course will include but are not limited to: tobacco use, skin cancer prevention, issues in cancer screening, risk communication, psychosocial responses to diagnosis and treatment, and survivorship. A seminar-style course is intended to be a collaborative experience. Students must be active participants and take responsibility for producing and contributing to discussions. The success of the course depends both on your willingness to complete the reading and assignments on time and your eagerness to participate.

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

- Participate in formulation of public health policy, with regard to health education and promotion principles and practices;
- Assess and delineate health education and promotion needs of diverse populations using a variety of techniques;
- Develop and critique health education materials, methods and programs
- Demonstrate ability to critically analyze and interpret the scientific literature
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:

1. Describe major behavioral risk factors for several common cancers and evaluate trends in the cancer epidemic
2. Highlight the role of behavior in cancer prevention and control
3. Identify critical behavioral components of the cancer control continuum
4. Identify disparities in cancer and behavioral risk factors that exist throughout the cancer control continuum
5. Critically evaluate the literature and examine current controversies in cancer prevention and control

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation and participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Weekly assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Final project:</td>
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<td>Presentation:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Paper:</td>
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Grading Scale:
- 94+ A
- 90-93 A-
- 87-89 B+
- 84-86 B
- 80-83 B-
- 77-79 C+
- 74-76 C

**Seminar Presentations and Participation**

The purpose of the seminar presentations is to gain knowledge and to stimulate discussion of issues in cancer prevention and control. For most seminar sessions, selected readings are assigned to everyone to read and other articles are assigned to each group. A representative from each group will present and critique the group’s assigned article. Over the course of the semester, students are expected to make an equal (or a nearly equal) number of seminar presentations. Students are also expected to contribute to each class discussion.

Seminar Presentation Guidelines:

Step 1: Relax.
Step 2: Do the impossible. Briefly tell us what we should know about the article(s). You have ten* minutes to present. You don't have time to present every detail. Focus on the most important issues.

Here are key issues to consider:
Basic Facts
Who did the study, when, where? What kind of a study was it -- case/control, randomized controlled trial, etc? How big was it? Who paid for it?

Purpose
What is/are the main point(s) of the study? What is/are the main hypothesis or hypotheses?

Results
What are the most important findings?

Good, Bad, Ugly
What are the study's major strengths and weaknesses?

Punch Line
Given the above, what is the study's conclusion and do you buy it?

Why Should We Care?
What is the study's and or result's relevance for cancer prevention and control? Or, why did we have you read this?

What else?
Please conclude with a good discussion question.

Most but not all articles will lend themselves to the above outline. Some articles will more closely resemble review or data summary articles rather than analytic studies. Do the best you can. And, whenever possible, resist the temptation to conclude with “more research is needed.”

Step 3: Re read Rule #1.

Here is how the seminar sessions will generally work:

• Each group will be assigned readings for which they are responsible. A representative from each group will take ten* minutes to present the main ideas and offer a brief review of the paper's/study's strength and weaknesses. Please conclude with a good discussion question.

• Each group will decide who should make the presentation on a given date. Each member of the group should present about the same number of times during the semester. The math may not always work out so that everyone is equal, but it should be close.

• It’s up to each group to determine to what extent you will collaborate or work independently to prepare each presentation. Some groups, for example, might choose to meet outside of class time to prepare. Others might prefer just to share presentation notes with other group members a day or two before class for feedback. Your group will find the model that suits your styles and schedules.

• You don't need props or power points for your presentations.

• We need to be done with all three presentations in about 45 minutes. Following all the presentations, the class as a whole will discuss the general themes of the articles, and address questions, comments, etc.

• Grading will be individually, not for the group as a whole. The grade will be based 80% on quality of content (how well you described and critiqued the article) and 20% on quality of presentation (clarity, organization, style).

Weekly Assignment
In order to demonstrate familiarity with the material and help guide the seminar discussion, each student will submit a one page (double-spaced) written assignment, no later than 9am on the day of class. The assignment should include at least 2 paragraphs and describe one or more issues
that you found interesting or perplexing in the readings. Follow this up with one or more questions that you would like to see discussed during class related to the week’s topic that is not answered in the required readings. The question(s) can relate to anything covered in the readings or anything related to the topic that was not adequately addressed in the readings. These weekly assignments will be used to direct and promote class discussion, so please be prepared to discuss the issues addressed in your assignment.

The assignment should include insightful and pertinent reflections on the course material and topic. Please make every effort not to simply summarize the readings as you prepare your reflections and discussion statements. Rather, share what you found to be interesting, surprising, or perplexing. To get started thinking about the reading materials, you might ask yourself questions such as: What data was most interesting and why? How did the readings change my understanding of the topic or issue? How do the materials relate to other topics we’ve covered in the course?

**Final Project**
Students are required to deliver an oral presentation and prepare a position paper on a cancer prevention and control topic. The topic can be of your own choosing (with instructor approval) or from a list provided. You will choose a position on the topic and build a case for your position using the research literature. Sources/references must be peer-reviewed publications or governmental reports. Deliverables will include a class presentation and the written paper. An effective position paper would range from 9 to 11 pages in length (does not include references). The paper should be double spaced with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Please follow the reference format used by the American Journal of Public Health. Follow the paper structure guidelines from Xavier University with respect to the content of the paper (i.e., introduction, body, conclusion) ([http://www.xavier.edu/library/help/position_paper.pdf](http://www.xavier.edu/library/help/position_paper.pdf)). General comments to consider as you write your position paper:

1. Provide a context. Provide information and discussion that will convince the reader of your topic’s importance. For example, this information might include its public health impact because of disease rates or prevalence of risk factors.
2. The literature you include in paper should provide both a comprehensive and a pertinent look at prior work that is relevant to your topic. It is important to cite and discuss the right articles.
3. Analysis of the literature acknowledges that no single study is perfect so a consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the body of literature is warranted.
4. Be sure to conclude your paper with a summary of what you consider the critical points for moving this issue forward.
5. Organize your comments on the literature in a logical and sequential fashion! A simple recitation of “one study showed this and another study showed that” is insufficient.

**Readings**
Please read the readings marked “everyone,” and those assigned to your group for the day. I recommend you also look at the abstracts of papers assigned to other groups.
Course Schedule:

Week 1 – September 5, 2017
*Introduction to Cancer Prevention and Control, Part 1*

**Everyone**

Week 2 – September 12, 2017
*Introduction to Cancer Prevention and Control, Part 2*

**Everyone**
- Miller et al. (2008), Chapters 1–3

Week 3 – September 19, 2017
*Early Detection and Screening*

**Everyone**
- Feel Good War on Breast Cancer By: Peggy Orenstein. NY Times. 4/25/2013

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Week 4 – September 26, 2017
Cancer Disparities: Black and White in the US

Everyone


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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.