



Seminar in Tobacco Control & Public Health SBHS-0657J-030
School of Public Health
Tuesdays, 6:00-8:00pm, SPH Rm 234

Course Instructor:

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Office location: IFH Rm 405, New Brunswick

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Course Description: Lessons regarding behavior change, social determinants of health, health disparities, public health policy, and community-based interventions can be garnered through the study of the tobacco epidemic and tobacco control efforts. This seminar-style elective provides an overview of the history, health effects, policies, prevention, and treatment of tobacco use, providing a framework for understanding the tobacco epidemic and its public health impact. 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 on both the students' willingness to complete the readings and assignments on time and eagerness to participate in class discussions.

Department Competencies Addressed: Each department identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH (or other degrees) for the Department of Social & Behavioral Health Sciences are to:

- Understand the importance and use of public health policy in health behavior change and health promotion
- Utilize health behavior theories and models for understanding health behaviors

Visit <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 how tobacco control fits into a public health framework and describe the major objectives of the tobacco control movement and the constructs of the epidemiologic model of tobacco control and nicotine addiction.

2. Identify the major health effects caused by tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke, and explain the population impact of tobacco use morbidity, mortality, and disability.
3. Describe trends in tobacco use by socio-demographic characteristics with a particular focus on health disparities and vulnerable populations.
4. Describe strategies used in tobacco control and how these fit into the constructs of the epidemiologic model of tobacco control and nicotine addiction.
5. Describe potential influences on public risk perceptions and attitudes toward tobacco products.
6. Identify ways that the tobacco industry promotes tobacco and how these tactics have changed over time based on FDA restrictions.
7. Describe strategies of health communication and anti-tobacco campaigns and theories used to influence behavior change.
8. Describe what a harm reduction approach might look like for tobacco control, and articulate both sides of the ongoing harm reduction debate.
9. Describe the diverse challenges facing the global tobacco control community in the 21st century.
10. Identify and describe the components of a successful comprehensive tobacco control plan at the state and local level.

Required Text: None

Course readings/resources: References for required readings will be provided; for copyright reasons, students are expected to find the readings through library databases or provided links. Other readings not readily available online will be provided by the instructor posted to Canvas.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Participation and attendance	30%
Reading commentaries	30%
Final paper/presentation	40%

A	(90% or above)
B+	(86%-89%)
B	(80%-85%)
C+	(76%-79%)
C	(70%-75%)
D	(60%-69%)
F	(59% or below)

Reading commentaries (30%)

Each week a number of readings will be assigned pertaining to a particular topic. In response to these readings, you will write a reaction paper on the topic for that week. This assignment is intended to foster critical thinking and reflection with regard to the readings and topics. For these papers, you should choose an issue from the readings that you believe is either central to

the topic or important in some way, and write a reaction paper on it, reflecting on your thoughts and reactions to what is being presented in the readings (in some cases you may want to tie readings to your personal experience). Be sure not to summarize any of the readings but jump right in to your commentary. This can be general, such as: What do I think about the author's proposition that XX is critical to tobacco control or behavior change? Do I agree with the author's suggestion that the evidence is strong to support this proposition? If not, what approach do I think might work better? Or, you may want to be more specific, such as: On page XX of the Author (year) reading, she suggests that... Do I agree with this statement? Why or why not? Or, did you find anything particularly surprising or perplexing? Why? What questions remain? Or, you may want to tie the readings to your personal experience.

Commentaries should be 1-2 double-spaced pages (12 font, 1" margins, Times, only name/date on one line in header). Please submit commentaries via Canvas by noon the Monday before class on Tuesday.

Participation and attendance (30%)

In-class participation: Because in-class discussions and/or assignments will occur every week, it is crucial to attend and participate in every class. In-class discussions will be based on the readings, students' reading commentaries, and students' Canvas postings. I may prompt you in class to share comments/questions from your commentaries/Canvas postings to propel discussion; however, I encourage everyone take initiative in adding to discussions. (10%)

Canvas postings: To ensure that everyone reads and has an active role in the discussion process, students are required to submit at least 2 discussion questions each week. Questions should be thoughtful inquiries related to the week's readings that will help foster discussion on that particular week's topics.

In addition to posting two questions, you will submit a recent media example that is relevant to tobacco control that you find in the news and/or social media. For example, there may be a recent study that has been published or a law that has been passed that is referenced in the news, or there may be something you observe in social media that you can tie in to what we've discussed in class. Along with this posting, provide a brief paragraph about how this relates to the topic for the week or to tobacco policy/control more broadly and include your personal reaction. Be prepared to share your example with the class. Note the due dates on the Class Schedule referring to "Tobacco Use Disparities." For these days, in lieu of his/her posting of a media example, one student will share with the class findings pertaining to a specific population disparity in tobacco use (refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/index.htm> for a list of populations and info you will need). A sign-up sheet will go around on Sept. 11, so be thinking of which population you would like to cover. You can present your findings verbally but may also include a handout or PowerPoint if that would better assist you. Also note that on the Class Schedule I have already provided two media examples for specific dates (indicated by asterisks).

Please post your 2 discussion questions and media example on Canvas by noon the Monday before class. (10%)

Guest speakers/lecture: Participation is also expected during lecture and when we have guest speakers; this can be in the form of questions/comments relevant to the presentation and/or guest speakers' area of expertise in general. The purpose of inviting guest speakers is to expose you to the broad range of professions and areas of expertise within the field of tobacco control. Use this opportunity to learn as much about their specific area as possible. (10%)

Please note that the use of cell phones/laptops for anything other than what we are doing in class will result in a loss of participation points for that day. Remember that participation points are earned both during lectures and discussions.

Final paper (40%)

For this assignment you will propose a tobacco policy of your own. This could pertain to any product, may extend an existing policy, and/or be a policy already implemented in another country. This portion of your grade involves two requirements: a 20-minute in-class presentation and a paper. Presentations will occur on Dec. 11, but final topic approval and plan will need to be completed by the start of class on Nov 6. This means you will have already met with me to discuss your initial idea/plan and receive feedback.

The following rubric will be used to grade your proposal:

Presentation (10%):

- Slides are well organized, clean, informative without being too wordy, grammatically correct, visuals used effectively
- Speaking is polished, practiced, professional, articulate
- Timing of presentation is between 18-22 minutes

Proposal paper (30%):

- (30%) *Demonstrate the need for your policy proposal:*
 - What is the problem? What does the literature say to provide evidence of the problem? Maybe this policy already exists – what gap will your proposal fill or how will it add to an existing policy? Synthesize the literature instead of summarizing it.
- (20%) *The policy itself:*
 - Who does it target? Does it address any disparities in tobacco use? How?
 - What does it look like? Is it at the federal/state/county level?
 - How does your proposal fit into the Epidemiologic Model of Tobacco Control and Nicotine Addiction? Which construct does it pertain to?
- (30%) *Support your proposal:*
 - What are you predicting it will do? What changes might it influence? What evidence suggests your proposal might result in these changes? Has it been

implemented elsewhere? What were the outcomes? What effects might it have on the public? How might it backfire? What issues and/or legal scrutiny might your proposal face? (e.g. First Amendment infringement?)

- (10%) *Conclusion:*
 - What are some steps to move this proposal forward? Perhaps some research should be conducted first to provide support to policy makers?
- (10%) *Format:*
 - Roughly 10 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font, Times, 1" margins, American Journal of Public Health reference format, fewer than 5 grammar/spelling errors

Late submissions/absences: Keep in mind that late submissions are not acceptable and will result in zero points. If you are having issues with Canvas, you can submit your assignments to me directly via email by the deadline. If you are absent, you will receive zero points for in-class participation and discussion during lectures (that I or guest speakers present). If you have an excused absence, we can discuss opportunities to make up lost points; but please let me know ahead of time if you will be absent. Makeup participation points will be due the following Monday by noon, so do not wait until later in the week to talk with me about it. Please note that weekly topics/readings/etc. are subject to change as needed. I will provide updates regarding any changes.

Quality work: Complete sentences and proper grammar/spelling are expected for reading commentaries, Canvas submissions, and the final paper/presentation slides. Excessive errors may result in a loss of points.

Code of Professional Conduct: Enrollment at the Rutgers School of Public Health is a privilege and not a right. All students enrolled in the school are expected to behave in a professional manner as they pursue their courses, certificates, and degrees. As an institution dedicated to improving the health of diverse populations, the school expects students to treat all people with respect, regardless of their race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, military status, or marital status. The school reserves the right to require withdrawal of any student whenever necessary to maintain standards of scholarship or professional conduct.

SPH Honor Code: The Honor Code is found in the student bulletin (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/sph_current/pg21.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 or 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 communication 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.

Turnitin for plagiarism detection: 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 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.