Course Title: Culture and Health

Course Number: UGPH0521J03

Course Location: School of Public Health, Newark (synchronous), and on Zoom: Spring 2022 Online Culture and Health Class Link

Course Date & Time: Tuesdays, 6pm-8pm

Course Instructor: Merlene Fredericks - James, MBBS, MPH, Dr. Associate Professor, Urban Global Public Health, Rutgers School of Public Health. (Please see Canvas for contact information)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4.30pm – 5.30pm, Newark office and on Zoom

Course Website: canvas.rutgers.edu


Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources: See Reading List and Canvas

Course Description: This course examines theoretical, ethical, and applied elements of sociocultural research including major methods, challenges, and practices. It also combines a diversity of timely cases to convey the need for cultural awareness and competency in all contexts on global health.

The course further seeks to explain the various concepts and perspectives on culture and health and situates culture as an integral component to be considered in attaining health goals. Participants will examine public health problems within a larger social and cultural context. The role of culture in research, development of and evaluation of public health initiatives, will also be explored.

To effectively create and implement public health policies and practices, public health professionals must account for the cultures of the people they serve, while recognizing cultural blind spots practitioners and the discipline possess. This course will examine examples of how public health officials have succeeded and failed to account for culture and its influence on how communities have engaged with, created, and responded to public health campaigns and actions.

Selected Concentration Competencies Addressed: The competencies addressed in this elective course, Culture and Health for the MPH in Global Public Health include:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health

2. Analyze root causes of morbidity and mortality in major regions of the world and how they are affected by demographic, sociocultural, biological, occupational and environmental factors
3. Apply fundamental principles of global standards for the protection of human subjects in diverse cultural settings

4. Apply the fundamental principles of global public health perspectives on global public health education, research, and practice

5. Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity

Please visit the Concentration webpages on the School of Public Health’s website at sph.rutgers.edu for additional competencies addressed by this course for other degrees and concentrations.

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

- Describe and explore varying definitions for culture in the context of health
- Differentiate the following:
  - Cultural impacts on health
  - Culture of health
  - Cultural competency/respect
- Assess and relate cultural experience to a health promoting belief or practice
- Describe the Social Determinants of Health conceptual framework and discuss the positioning of culture within that framework
- Utilize a cultural model to determine cultural factors to be considered in the development of a health program
- Recommend and detail the application of methods of research on culture for a health-related challenge
- Analyze ethical issues in past health research on different cultures and discuss measures to prevent recurrence in future health research
- Describe the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and explore the contribution of culture to health-related SDG Targets
- Discuss the work of global health agencies from a culture and health perspective.
- Reflect on how well-meaning health policies can negatively impact on the culture of local populations
- Critique existing global health policies from a culture and health perspective
- Explore the impact of culture on a current global health crisis

Special Circumstances During COVID-19 (For Spring 2022): To keep our on-campus communities safe, compliance with all current guidance and policies as set forth in the Guide to Returning to Rutgers is required at all times and without exception. Students, faculty, staff, or visitors who do not comply with these policies will not be permitted to remain on-site. The use of face-coverings indoors *IS* required in classrooms and offices as well as shared spaces (such as hallways and bathrooms). Rutgers employees and students must use the My Campus Pass symptom checker, a self-screening application, each day when traveling to campus or entering a Rutgers building. Please remember to wash your hands, wear a mask while indoors,
particularly in crowded spaces and groups, and stay up-to-date on university guidance by consulting the Guide to Returning to Rutgers and the university’s COVID-19 website.

In addition, the School of Public Health recognizes that students may experience challenges or be negatively impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mental and emotional health toll from systemic racism, altered personal and professional obligations, and other crises existing at the moment in our local, national, and global communities. 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. If additional support is needed, students may reach out to the Office of Student Affairs (studentaffairs@sph.rutgers.edu) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the SPH Student Connect Canvas page.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Group Assessments which occur during class (Assignment 2) will be submitted before the end of the respective in-person or online synchronous classes. All other assessments (Discussions, Quizzes, Assignments) will be due by 10 am on the Monday following classes. Due dates for Online 30 activities will vary (see Course Schedule). Assessment for Week 8 will be due on Monday after Spring Recess. See exact submission dates in the Course Schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Value</th>
<th>Discussion forum: Your opinion matters. Students will post a comment to the discussion online and then respond to at least 2 other posts.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 pts</td>
<td>Online Quiz: Quizzes will be based on weekly readings or material related to content covered during the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 pts</td>
<td>Assignment #1: Demonstrating culture and health terminology. Students will be given a scenario and will prepare short written answers (1-page assignment).</td>
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<td>5 pts</td>
<td>Assignment #2: A case study on the Social Determinants of Health. This group assignment will be done during class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 pts</td>
<td>Assignment #3: Recommend and detail the application of one method of formative research on culture, for a given health related scenario.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 pts</td>
<td>Assignment #4: Explore the contribution of culture to one Health related Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 3 Target</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 pts</td>
<td>Assignment #5: Explore the impact of culture on a current global health crisis: Culture and the Coronavirus disease /COVID-19 outbreak.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 pts</td>
<td>Class Participation: Points will be awarded to students who are present throughout each class and contribute (at least once/verbally or by text) to weekly class discussions (includes final class activity).</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 pts</td>
<td>Online 30 activities: Due dates for these activities will vary. See Course Schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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</tbody>
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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
## Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date 2022</th>
<th>Course Topic</th>
<th>Link to Competencies</th>
<th>Online 30 Activities</th>
<th>Assignments/Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>Overview of course &amp; review of Syllabus</td>
<td>Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity</td>
<td>Read Syllabus, review reading list and Canvas course site</td>
<td>Discussion post and replies Due by Monday Jan 24, 10am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>Culture and health: Cultural impacts on health.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health</td>
<td>Group discussion on cultural practices from the assigned reading (1 point) Due by Monday Jan 31, 10am</td>
<td>Online quiz Due by Monday Jan 31, 10am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Culture and health: Cultural competency/respect. Culture of health.</td>
<td>Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity</td>
<td>Student led activity on “Culture of Health” (1 point) Due by Monday Feb 7, 10am</td>
<td>Assignment 1 Due by Monday Feb 7, 10am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
<td>Assess and relate cultural experience to a health promoting belief or practice</td>
<td>Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity</td>
<td>Informal interviews of family and friends in preparing class presentations* Due by 6pm Tuesday Feb 8</td>
<td>Discussion post and replies Due by Monday Feb 14, 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Due Date and Time</td>
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| 5    | Feb 15 | Social Determinants of Health conceptual framework and the positioning of culture within that framework | Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health | Students share additional videos on the Social Determinants of Health (1 point)  
|      |       |                                                                          | Due by Monday Feb 21, 10am | Note: Group Assignment 2 done during class |
| 6    | Feb 22 | Utilize a cultural model to determine cultural factors to be considered in the development of a health program | Apply the fundamental principles of global public health perspectives on global public health education, research, and practice | Social annotation/Hypothesis activity (2 points)  
|      |       |                                                                          | Due by Monday March 1, 10am | No Assignment for Week 6 |
| 7    | Mar 1  | Application of one method of research on culture, to a health-related challenge | Apply the fundamental principles of global public health perspectives on global public health education, research, and practice | View multiple videos related to research on culture (1 point)  
|      |       |                                                                          | Due by 6pm Tuesday March 1 | Assignment 3  
|      |       |                                                                          | Due by Monday March 7, 10am | |
| 8    | Mar 8  | Ethical issues in past health research on different cultures and measures to prevent recurrence | Apply fundamental principles of global standards for the protection of human subjects in diverse cultural settings | Students share articles with examples which were not covered during class (1 point)  
|      |       |                                                                          | Due by Monday March 21, 10am | Discussion post and replies  
<p>|      |       |                                                                          | Due by Monday March 21, 10am - after Spring Recess | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due Date and Time</th>
<th>Assignment Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 22</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the contribution of culture to health-related SDG Targets</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health</td>
<td>Due by 6pm Tuesday March 22</td>
<td>Students prepare for brief sharing on one preassigned SDG during class.</td>
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<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Due by Monday March 28, 10am</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 29</td>
<td>Work of global health agencies reviewed from a culture and health perspective</td>
<td>Analyze root causes of morbidity and mortality in major regions of the world and how they are affected by demographic, sociocultural, biological, occupational and environmental factors</td>
<td>VoiceThread student led activity (1 point)</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 4, 10am</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion post and replies</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 11, 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 5</td>
<td>How well-meaning health policies can negatively impact on the culture of local populations</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health</td>
<td>View additional videos related to the topic discussed</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 18, 10am</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online quiz</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 18, 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 12</td>
<td>Critique existing global health policies from a culture and health perspective</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, educational, political, sociocultural, environmental, ecological and biological conditions that represent obstacles to attaining global health</td>
<td>Students share articles/videos with examples which were not covered during class (1 point)</td>
<td>Discussion post and replies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion post and replies</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 18, 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
<td>Impact of culture on a current global health crisis</td>
<td>Analyze root causes of morbidity and mortality in major regions of the world and how they are affected by demographic, sociocultural, biological, occupational and environmental factors</td>
<td>Students share articles of interest (not limited to COVID-19). (1 pt)</td>
<td>No assignment for Week 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Due by Monday April 26, 10am</td>
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### Explore the Impact of Culture on a Current Global Health Crisis

14 Apr 26 | Explore the impact of culture on a current global health crisis. | Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity | Students to prepare talking points for the final class on May 3 | Assignment 5 Due by Monday May 2, 10 am

15 May 3 | Oral Reflections on culture and health | Exhibit skill sets required for global health practice including written and verbal communication skills, capacity for interprofessional teamwork, leadership, social awareness and cultural competency to enhance capacity strengthening and service delivery with compassion and integrity | Participate in oral reflections. Complete course evaluations. | Graded activity (3 points)

**NOTE:**

*See Reading List attached and in Canvas, for weekly readings and supplemental materials*

(Week 4: Online 30 activity: Informal interviews of family and friends in preparing class presentations for sharing how one’s personal cultural experience assisted in shaping a current health promoting belief or practice)
Learning Management System: Canvas will be used extensively 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@canvas.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.

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.

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

Syllabus Addendum: Remote Learning Policies: As you know, we are engaged in this course under extraordinary circumstances. Not only are we now conducting the class remotely, but we are all working under the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are class policies for our class sessions with Zoom. Please read carefully; these policies apply to the Spring 2021 semester. All students are expected to adhere to the policies.

General: Log into Zoom using your Rutgers NetID and sign-in with your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. (If you use a different name than what is listed on the class roster, please email the instructor in advance of the class or send a private Chat message.) Using your full name allows the instructor to know who is in attendance and to quickly sort students into their groups when needed. Users who do not log into Zoom using their Rutgers NetID may have trouble accessing the Zoom classroom.

Video: Please turn on your video when possible. We recognize that this isn’t always easy but this will help to build our class community. Seeing the faces of your classmates more closely duplicates the typical in-person learning experience and may shift your mindset into more focus and attention. Seeing each other can also provide each of us with positive social interactions.

- If you’re unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions or prefer to not show your living space as a background, feel free to use a virtual background (several virtual background images created by the School of Public Health are available in the Student Connect Canvas page).
- To save bandwidth, there may be times during class when the instructor asks students to turn off videos.
- Add a photo to your Zoom profile. (Then in times when videos are off, we’ll see photos of everyone rather than an empty box.)
- If you have limited internet bandwidth or other issues impacting your video use, please inform the instructor.
Audio: Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.
- Use a headset, if possible. If you own headphones with a microphone, please use them. This improves audio quality.
- Be in a quiet place, if possible. Turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

Chat: Stay on topic and be respectful. Use the chat window for questions and comments that are relevant to class.

NOTE: Class meetings on Zoom will be recorded and made available for students in the course on Canvas only.