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Office Hours: Available by appointment

Course Number: PUBH 730

Course Description

This culminating course in the MPH program allows students to integrate and synthesize the curriculum in seminar discussion and through a capstone project that reflects a current topic of importance to contemporary public health science and practice.

Students who are planning to enroll in this course must have their capstone project advisor identified and are required to submit all course documents according to the timeline below.

How to find a capstone project advisor: The USD/SDSU MPH program will provide you a list of potential capstone project advisors along with their professional interests and contact information. Please contact the MPH Program coordinator to get more information on finding a capstone project advisor and for more information on required deadlines.

The Public Health Project requires both written and oral components and it is normally completed in the last semester of the student’s MPH program.

Capstone Project Options:

1. Research Project — Students completing a research project will develop a written report (manuscript) suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Students will identify a problem to be studied, review the literature, collect and analyze the data in order to answer the research question posed, discuss the findings, present conclusions, and make recommendations based on the findings.

2. Systematic Review of the Literature — Students conducting a literature review will define a study question, identify appropriate literature, read and review the literature, summarize the findings, present conclusions, and make recommendations based on the systematic review. This option is intended to demonstrate the student’s ability to critically review literature and synthesize published findings on a public health topic.

3. Evaluation of an Existing Program — Students will develop a plan to evaluate or monitor an existing public health program. Documentation will include a description of the program.
under review, the purpose of the evaluation, the methods and procedures used to evaluate the program, and present the results of the evaluation.

4. Written Plan for a Program — This option asks students to develop a plan and describe the implementation process for a new public health program. Students will conduct a needs assessment, create a program mission, goals, and objectives, develop an intervention, describe how the program will be implemented, and explain how the program would be evaluated.

5. Grant Proposal — Students writing a grant proposal for a public health initiative will identify the problem for which the grant would be used, explain the significance, list the hypotheses/questions to be answered, review the literature associated with the problem, create goals and objectives, methods, create a timeline and budget, and explain how the intervention would be evaluated.

6. Manual — Students creating a manual for a public health initiative will demonstrate the need for the manual, create goals and objectives for the manual, create a table of contents, develop the content for the manual, describe how the manual will be used, and explain how the manual would be evaluated.

Oral Requirement:

- Students are required to give a 15 min oral presentation summarizing their public health research projects to the committee.
- All students are required to present at USD/SDSU MPH Program online research symposium, which will be held at least two weeks prior to the end of semester.

Course Goals and Student Outcomes

The course goal is for students to synthesize, integrate and apply the skills and competencies they have acquired during their MPH program to a relevant public health problem. Students will demonstrate proficiency at communicating the details of their project to faculty, fellow students, and relevant stakeholders.

Summer Semester

The summer term starts on May 15 and ends on August 4. All course related activities must be completed by August 4, 2017. Last date to drop full term course with “W” – Wednesday, July 12, 2017.

Textbook None

Credit Hours

A total of six (6) credits will be awarded for the public health project and should be completed within a single semester.

Course Prerequisites

All required coursework must be completed prior to beginning the PUBH 730 (public health project)
course. Students wishing to complete their project in coordination with their practice experience (PUBH 720) will need to notify their Academic Advisor and the Course Instructor to facilitate registration.

**Research with Human Subjects**
Public Health research projects involving human subjects must submit a complete research protocol to the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. Research project cannot carried out until IRB approves the research proposal. You can visit [http://www.usd.edu/research/irb-application-process](http://www.usd.edu/research/irb-application-process) to learn more about application process.

**Grading**
Grades will be given on a pass/fail basis. Students will be notified of their final grade the last week of the semester via the D2L grade tool. Final grades are posted in web advisor.

**Timeline**
1. Student identifies and contacts capstone project advisor
2. Capstone advisor information submitted to course instructor
3. Student submits project topic to course instructor
4. Course instructor approves project topic
5. Student submits outline to course instructor
6. Student submits first draft to course instructor
7. Student submits subsequent drafts as determined by course instructor
8. Student submits final project submission
9. Student presents project to online MPH research symposium.

**Technology Requirements**
The University of South Dakota has established minimum technology requirements for participation in online courses. These are outlined under the “Technology Support and Requirements” section in the CDE Online Orientation document. Click here [http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/usb-online/online-orientation-guide.ashx?la=en](http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/usb-online/online-orientation-guide.ashx?la=en) for CDE Online Orientation document.

**Student Resources:**
The University of South Dakota provides a number of useful services to students:

- **CDE Online Orientation Guide** (see: [http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/usb-online/online-orientation-guide.ashx?la=en](http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/usb-online/online-orientation-guide.ashx?la=en)):
  This contains important information related to the services provided by the University of South Dakota as well as the University policies. In it, you will find such information as:
  - Academic support services such as the library, writing center, proctor and testing information, book purchasing, etc.
  - Student support services such as advising and enrollment information, financial aid, student life, and counseling, etc.
  - Technology support services like technology requirements, ITS Help Desk contact
information, discounts on computers and software, etc.

- **USD Portal (http://my.usd.edu):**
The USD Portal is your one-stop place for a majority of services offered to any student taking a USD course—like this course. You can access the following services from the “Academics” tab in the portal:
  - WebAdvisor
  - I.D. Weeks Library

- **The USD Writing Center (http://www.usd.edu/academics/academic-commons/writing-center.cfm):**
The USD Writing Center was established to provide writing assistance to students in order to help them become better writers. It is available on campus during regular business hours and online in the evenings. Please visit the URL above for more information.

**Contacting Me**
My contact information is listed at the top of this document. The best way to contact me is via the course in D2L mail, which can be access within the course. I will do my utmost to respond within 24 hours during the week, and within 48 hours over the weekend and holidays. Note: **please do not use the pager tool to contact me.**

**Plagiarism Policy:**
Plagiarism is defined as using the words and/or ideas of another and representing them to be your own, without proper credit to the author or source.

Because it is impossible to evaluate a plagiarized work, no credit can be given. At the discretion of the instructor, a student may be subject to any, or a combination, of the following:

- dropped from the course
- failed in the course
- reported to the program in which the student is majoring and that department may take additional action

**Freedom in Learning:**
Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact department chairperson to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Disability Services:**
Any student who feels he/she may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of any disability should contact and register with the Office of Disability Services during
the first week of class. Please contact both your instructor and the Director of the Office of Disability Services

Director of the Office of Disability Services:

Ernetta L. Fox, Director
Disability Services
Room 119 Service Center
(605) 677-6389
http://www.usd.edu/ds/
dservices@usd.edu

Diversity
The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected. The University of South Dakota’s School of Health Sciences is committed to an environment of inclusiveness in classroom and practice settings that honors diverse perspectives, traditions, heritages, and experiences.