



SYLLABUS

HAPP 445: Planning and Evaluation for Public Health Programs

1. Overview

All public health programs share the same overarching goal—to improve the health of a population. At the same time, public health practitioners have finite resources to work with. To make the best use of their resources, practitioners must regularly answer the following questions:

- What are the most important health problems in our target population, where our investments can make the biggest impact?
- What interventions/programs are most effective at addressing this health program, and what steps must we take to implement them?
- Is our program being implemented as it should in order to make a difference?
- Did our program have a positive impact on the health of our target population?

In this course, students will learn about the “tools” (e.g., frameworks, theories, methods, and data) that public health practitioners commonly use to answer these questions. They will also apply these tools to develop program and evaluation plans for a real community health need in Maryland.

2. Goals and learning objectives

The goal of this course is to prepare students to contribute to program planning and evaluation in a professional setting. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Interpret population health data to identify community health needs
- Select public health interventions that address specific community health needs
- Develop program goals and objectives
- Distinguish between types of program planning and evaluation models and develop an impact model
- Construct appropriate indicators for program inputs, processes, outputs, quality/fidelity, outcomes, and impact and identify data sources for these indicators
- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of impact evaluation design options

3. Learning Approach

“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.” —Socrates

This course is structured to guide your learning as you gain knowledge and experience about public health program planning and evaluation. The format for this course is interactive: students will ask and receive questions, have class discussions as a team, and work on small exercises and assignments individually and as a team. Students are expected to actively engage with the material to advance their own learning, by:

- Completing the assigned readings in advance of class;
- Contributing to class discussions and exercises;
- Being constructive and responsible team members.

According to UMBC's credit hour guidelines, in a 3-credit course, students are expected to spend a minimum of 300 minutes (5 hours) per week on class-related work outside of the faculty instructional time. For this course, students should budget this amount of time to thoroughly complete the readings and any group assignments ahead of class.

Consistent attendance and active participation are expected and are essential to success in this course. You are responsible for your own learning and are expected to take ownership over your progress—the more you invest in this course, the more you will learn and benefit.

4. Textbook and Readings

The required textbook for the course is:

Issel and Wells. 2018. *Health Program Planning and Evaluation, 4th Edition*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett.

This course also uses a free manual, which supplements but does not replace the textbook:

Frankel and Gage. 2016. *M&E Fundamentals: A Self-Guided Mini-Course*. Chapel Hill, NC: MEASURE Evaluation.

Additional required readings for each week will be posted on Blackboard or available in e-reserves.

5. Student Assessment:

- **Reading Credit (15%):** Because completing the assigned readings in advance of class is essential to students' comprehension of the material, reading quizzes and notes are assigned to keep students on track and provide credit for their efforts. To accommodate different learning styles, two options are available to students to earn reading credit—quizzes and notes. Students may complete both quizzes and notes, and will receive the highest score earned for that week. For example, if a student takes the quiz and receives a 70%, but also submits reading notes meeting all

- criteria, then the student will receive 100% for the week's reading credit.
- **Option A—Reading quizzes:** Online quizzes will be available on blackboard to gauge students' progress with and mastery of the required reading material for each week. The quizzes must be completed by noon on Mondays. You may reference your textbook, other reading materials, and notes, but you may not discuss the quiz with other students. No make ups will be allowed.
 - **Option B—Reading notes:** As an alternative to reading quizzes, students may complete and turn in reading notes. The notes must be handwritten and in the Cornell Notes format (see BB for details and templates), must be at least four pages in length, most cover all required reading for the week, and must be detailed and of high quality. Notes that meet these criteria will be awarded full credit. Notes that do not meet these criteria (e.g., not Cornell format, too short, don't cover all of the reading, poor quality) will be subject to a point reduction according to the judgment of the professor. Notes are due at the start of class on Monday; late submissions will not be accepted. After grading, notes will be handed back to the students to use for studying.
- **Exams (40%):** There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. The midterm exam will be given in class and will contribute 20% of the grade. The final exam will also contribute 20% of the grade.
 - **Midterm Exam (20%):** October 24th, in class
 - **Final Exam (20%):** Dec 19th, 1 to 3 pm
 - **Program Implementation & Evaluation Proposal (40%):** Students will develop an implementation and evaluation proposal for a program to address a public health need in a Maryland community. Undergraduates will work in groups, while graduate students will develop individual proposals. Significant class time will be devoted to working on the proposal, although students will need to work on the proposal outside of class as well. The purpose of the program proposal is to “get your feet wet” by applying the concepts you learn in class to a real world health problem. All students will review and provide feedback on the proposals of other teams. The proposal project is divided into four deliverables, as follows:
 - Deliverable 1 (10%): Critique of chosen Community Health Needs Assessment
 - Deliverable 2 (10%): Program logic model
 - Deliverable 3a (10%): Preliminary evaluation plan (with revised logic model)
 - Deliverable 3b (10%): Revised evaluation plan
 - **Participation (5%):** Attendance, engagement in class discussion (e.g., asking questions, responding to questions), and constructive participation in teamwork will all contribute to the participation grade. Participation will be assessed in several ways: a) attendance logs; b) contributions to discussion; c) online peer evaluations for group work; and, d) review of in-

class case studies on several randomly selected days.

- Actions that improve students' participation grades:
 - Attending class regularly
 - Volunteering answers and/or questions during open class discussion (note: students' contributions to discussion are not judged based on whether their comments are correct or incorrect, but rather whether they attempt to make a constructive contribution to the class)
 - Thoroughly completing case studies
 - Contributing to group projects in a responsible and fair manner
- Actions that hurt students' participation grades:
 - Having side conversations during class
 - Texting during class
 - Working on other assignments, and surfing the web during class
 - Leaving class early without discussing with the professor in advance
 - Not contributing to open class discussion
 - Not contributing to group work
- Students may have only two absences from class without an impact on their participation grade. Therefore, wise students will attend class regularly to save their allowed absences in the case they become ill or have an unexpected important conflict with the class time.

6. Academic Integrity

"Academic integrity has everything to do with one's character. I often say to students that character has everything to do with who a person is, not only when others are watching, but even more important, when no one is watching. I also frequently quote former California Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas, a strong advocate for human rights and justice in the mid-1900s, who said that 'Character isn't inherited -- it's built thought by thought, action by action.' Through our thoughts and actions, and by the choices we make each day in the classroom, on the campus, and in our lives, we either strengthen or weaken our character."

–President Hrabowski

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, a grade of 0 on the relevant assignment, failure of the entire course, suspension, or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory. Every student should read and fully understand the information given at <http://www.umbc.edu/academic-integrity>.

In particular, for this course:

- No cheating will be tolerated on the quizzes, the midterm exam, or project. Cheating includes gaining specific information about the exam before taking it. The on-line quizzes and in-class midterms should be taken individually. Giving and/or receiving help on the quizzes or midterm is counted as serious academic misconduct in this course, and the appropriate authorities at UMBC will handle the case.
- Do not discuss the peer-performance evaluations with your teammates. The peer evaluations are strictly confidential.
- Plagiarism (misrepresenting any part of the work performed by another person as your own work, including Internet sources) applies to the team project as a whole. All submitted deliverables must be the original work of team members. Also, no part of any work completed for any other course or any other semester may be used as part of the project deliverables for this course.
- Academic dishonesty also includes interfering with another student's work or aiding another student to commit academic dishonesty. This includes signing someone else's name on an attendance sheet. Students should be particularly careful about collective actions that are academically dishonest but might feel all right because others participate in them. Do not give in to peer pressure.

7. Group Work

The professor will assign each undergraduate student to a group for completing the three-part research proposal that makes up the group project. Students should adhere to the following guidelines for completing group work.

- Groups should discuss and decide how they would like to respond to each section of the assignments before dividing sections for writing the brief. These analytical discussions are the most important part of the group work, and student comments indicate that they are very beneficial for developing a deep understanding of the concepts covered in the class. The final submitted brief should represent the analysis and consensus of the whole group; it is readily apparent when each group member worked in isolation on different sections, as the sections do not relate to each other, and those groups receive lower grades.
- For each deliverable one member of the team will serve the following roles:
 - Project manager: Responsible for overseeing the project. Plans and allocates all resources including staff (team members) and time.
 - File manager: Keeps all the files produced by the project team and different revisions, and creates back ups.
 - Reference manager: Keeps records and copies of the information sources discovered by the project team.

- Editor: Reads and approves the deliverables (consistency, spelling, grammar, conformance to assignment requirements, etc.).
- Filling one of the assigned roles does not mean that a student will not do any other work. The project manager is responsible for ensuring equal and fair distribution of the necessary workload for each deliverable.
- Each assignment will have a statement of contributions, similar to the statements that many academic journals require from authors. This statement will clearly and honestly describe the contributions made by each group member. All group members are responsible for ensuring that this statement is true.
- Option to “fire” a group member: All students are expected to contribute equally to their group’s work. Groups that feel strongly that a member has not contributed to the group assignments are at liberty to fire a group member. The first step in this process is for the concerned group members to contact the professor for a discussion of the situation. The student in question will be given a warning from the professor, and allowed an opportunity to rectify the situation. Members who are fired by their group must complete the remaining assignments individually.
- If a student encounters an issue that will make it difficult for them to continue to be a productive group member, they should bring this to the instructor as soon as possible.

8. Extra Credit

- Attending seminars and events:
 - Throughout the semester, the professor may offer extra credit for attending seminars or events that are relevant to the course, and submitting a short reflection paper. Specific opportunities will be announced in class and on Blackboard.
 - Attendance and submission of a reflection paper at any one event will allow students to earn up to five extra credit points towards their overall reading quiz/notes scores.

9. Additional Course Policies:

- Communications: Questions from students are an integral part of the learning in this course for all students. Therefore, the best time for questions is during class time, when all students can benefit from the discussion. This course is organized in a discussion and exercise format to provide the greatest opportunity for exchange of ideas. Please refer to the following decision making rules for how to address your questions related to course content and assignments:
 - Option A (first choice): Ask the question in class.
 - Option B (second choice): Ask the question during office hours.
 - Option C (third choice, not preferred): Send an email with the question.

If a student asks a question in office hours or by email that is relevant to the entire class (e.g. clarification on a concept or instructions for an

- assignment), then the question and answer will be shared with the entire course, either verbally in class, or by posting to Blackboard.
- *Email-specific communications*: Email is the preferred method of communication outside of class time and office hours. I will endeavor to respond to all emails within 24 to 48 hours. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, please send a reminder then, but not before. For questions related to assignments, please ensure that you send them at least 48 hours before the assignment is due. Out of fairness to all students, there must be an opportunity to provide the same feedback to all students with enough time that they can incorporate the feedback to their own assignments.
 - *Attendance*: Attendance is required and is part of the participation grade (see above). Attendance will be monitored with a sign-in sheet. You cannot do well in this course if you don't attend regularly.
 - *Assigned readings*: All assigned readings are required unless otherwise noted. It is a firm expectation that students will come to class prepared, having completed the assigned readings for that week/session.
 - *Late assignments*:
 - Assignments that are turned in late will receive a 10% grade deduction per day past the due date, up to a 30% deduction on the third late day and thereafter. No late assignments will be accepted after the last day of regular courses for the term. This policy applies to reading notes as well.
 - Quizzes must be completed on time—late submission is not allowed and there are no make-ups for quizzes.
 - Exams must be completed on the day of the exam. Make up exams will only be allowed both with: a) an exceptional circumstance; AND, b) advance notification of the exceptional circumstance by the student, which must happen prior to the start of class time. Each request for a make up exam will be judged on a case-by-case basis and a make up exam is not guaranteed. The professor may require documentation of the extenuating circumstances to permit a make up exam, such as a doctor's note. If the professor decides that a make up exam is permissible, the exam score may be subject to a points deduction.
 - *Cell phone/computer use*: To ensure a positive and engaged learning environment, students should refrain from cell phone and computer use, except during in-class work on group assignments. Students who are texting during class will be asked to stop texting or to leave the class.
 - No audio or visual recordings are permitted without prior consent of the professor.

8. Student Support Services

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (SSS) is the UMBC department designated to:

- Receive and maintain **confidential** files of disability-related documentation,
- Certify eligibility for services,
- Determine reasonable accommodations,
- Develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and
- Serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues.

If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact SSS in the Math/Psych Building, Room 213 or Academic IV-B wing Room 345 (or call 410-455-2459 or 410-455-3250). SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability and complete a Request for Services form available at <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/sss>. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS-approved accommodations.

9. Diversity and Inclusion

Each person has a rich personal, social, and intellectual history, one that continues to develop with new experiences. This diversity is part of what we study in the social sciences. It is also what makes a classroom experience and a university education at a place like UMBC engaging.

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Health Administration and Policy is committed to creating an inclusive environment for students of all backgrounds to learn and thrive. We expect our students to be a part of this work. We encourage anyone who has concerns or suggestions to talk with their faculty and advisers.

10. Class Schedule

Week	Session	Topics and Activities	Assigned Reading	Assignments Due
1	1	Topic: Introduction to the course Activity: Review syllabus	Syllabus	
	2	Topic: Introduction to evaluations Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 1 • Kidder, "CDC's Program Evaluation Journey" • M&E Fundamentals, pp. 1-4 	
2	3	Topic: Needs assessments I Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 2 & 3 • ASTHO, "Community Health Needs Assessment Activities" 	Quiz/Notes 1 (Readings for Week 1 & 2): Due [date] before class
	4	Topic: Needs assessments I, cont'd Activity: Case study & community selection	See above	D0: Community selections due in class [date]
3	5	Topic: Needs assessments II Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 4 • Your group's chosen Maryland CHNA 	Quiz/Notes 2: Due [date] before class
	6	Topic: Needs assessments II, cont'd Activity: Group work	See above	
4	7	Topic: Selecting an intervention Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 5 • CDC, "Planning for and selecting high-impact interventions" 	Quiz/Notes 3: Due [date] before class
	8	Topic: Selecting an intervention, cont'd Activity: Case study	See above	D1: CHNA Critique due [date] at 11:59 pm
5	9	Topic: Developing goals and objectives Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 6 • M&E Fundamentals, pp. 7-11 	Quiz/Notes 4: Due [date] before class
	10	Topic: Developing goals and objectives, cont'd Activity: Case study	See above	
6	11	Topic: Developing an impact model Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kellogg Foundation, Logic Model Development Guide, Ch. 1 & 2 • M&E Fundamentals, pp. 14-20 	Quiz/Notes 5: Due [date] before class
	12	Topic: Developing an	See above	

		impact model Activity: Case study		
7	13	Topic: Developing an implementation plan Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 7 & 8 	Quiz/Notes 6: Due [date] before class
	14	Topic: Developing an implementation plan, cont'd Activity: Group work	See above	D2: Program impact model due [date] at 11:59 pm
8	15	Review session	None	No reading quiz
	16	MIDTERM EXAM		In-class Exam
9	17	Topic: Monitoring program activities & introduction to indicators Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 9 • M&E Fundamentals, pp. 23-32, 35-37 	Quiz/Notes 7: Due [date] before class
	18	Topic: Monitoring program activities & introduction to indicators, cont'd Activity: Case study	See above	
10	19	Topic: Assessing program quality & fidelity Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 10 • TBD reading on quality measures 	Quiz/Notes 8: Due [date] before class
	20	Topic: Assessing program quality & fidelity, cont'd Activity: Group work	See above	
11	21	Topic: Evaluating Outcomes & Impact I Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 11 • K4Health, "Types of Evaluation Designs" 	Quiz/Notes 9: Due [date] before class
	22	Topic: Evaluating Outcomes & Impact I, cont'd Activity: Group work	See above	D3a: Provisional evaluation plan due [date] at 11:59 pm
12	23	Topic: Peer critique Activity: Peer-to-peer feedback discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional proposal of assigned peer team 	Notes 10: Completed critique form for assigned peer team due [date] before class

	24	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK		
13	25	Topic: Evaluating Outcomes & Impact II Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 12 & 13 • Habicht, "Evaluation designs for adequacy, plausibility, and probability of public health program performance and impact" 	Quiz/Notes 11: Due [date] before class
	26	Topic: Evaluating Outcomes & Impact II cont'd Activity: Case studies	See above	
14	27	Topic: Did it work? Inference in Evaluations Activity: Lecture & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issel, Ch. 14 & 16 	Quiz/Notes 12: Due [date] before class
	28	Topic: Did it work? Inference in Evaluations, cont'd Activity: Case studies	See above	D3b: Revised evaluation plan due [date] at 11:59 pm
15	29	Topic: Review Activity: In-class review session	None	No reading quiz

FINAL EXAM: ACCORDING TO THE UNIVERSITY SCHEDULE