CE SOC 533: Public Health in Rural and Urban Communities
Fall Term, 2013*: Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45 pm
Microbial Sciences Building • Room 1510

Instructor: Josh Garoon
Assistant Professor
Department of Community & Environmental Sociology

Office: Agricultural Hall, Room 346B
Email: garoon@wisc.edu
Website: http://www.urbanjustice.net/courses/phruc2013
Phone: (608) 890 0981
Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:45-5:15pm – or by appointment
See http://www.urbanjustice.net/courses/phruc2013/office-hours/

I. Introduction

Medicine is a social science, and politics is nothing greater than medicine writ large.

(\textit{Die Medizin ist eine soziale Wissenschaft, und die Politik ist weiter nichts als Medizin im Großen.})

Rudolf Virchow, 1848

This course provides an overview of public health issues, institutions, and interventions in rural and urban communities, primarily from the perspective of the social sciences. It combines conceptual and practical surveys of the determinants of health and illness, ranging from the individual to the global and points between (including sociocultural, economic, political, and environmental aspects of health and well-being). The course focuses on efforts to achieve improved health and well-being in the United States. While in the thirteenth week of the course we will consider international issues, this course is not an introduction to global health; the U.S. context will remain central throughout.

II. Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will gain capacities in:

1. Understanding biological, social, environmental, and other pathways that produce health and illness, and especially how these pathways intersect;

2. Analyzing publicly available data on health outcomes and health behaviors in urban and rural communities, and summarizing them for a lay audience;

3. Investigating a particular public health problem in detail, evaluating the interventions that have been undertaken to ameliorate that problem, and assessing those interventions’ impacts.

III. Required Readings

All required articles will be made available via the course website. There are no required books for this course. I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule if needed to accommodate the schedules of guest speakers or our progress through the material. Any changes will be announced in class, via the course email list, and on the course blog.

*Acknowledgment and thanks to Professor Laura Senier for providing the syllabus for the Spring 2013 version of this course, which served as a point of departure for this term’s offering. Students familiar with the Spring 2013 syllabus should note changes to the course topics, readings, assignments, and policies and procedures.
IV. Evaluation

Your grade in this course will be based on the following four components:

(1) Class preparation and participation, tracked through a series of 13 weekly blog posts, and comments on others’ blog posts, and (if necessary) through class attendance.

To help us all engage each other, I ask you to post an entry of approximately 300 words to a personal (individual) weblog that you’ll set up via Wordpress (http://wordpress.com). These entries should be made once per week of the term, excluding “Zero Week” and Week 14.

You should set up your blog following the instructions I’ve provided here (and via email).

Blog posts are due by noon (12pm) on Monday or Wednesday, as follows: Monday if your last name starts with the letters A-M, and Wednesday if your last name starts with the letters N-Z.

You’re also required to comment on the blog entries of your classmates, as often as you like, but at least once during the week (before 5:00 pm on Friday). If you don’t comment on anyone else’s posts, your blog score for that week will be reduced by 5 points (i.e., the maximum blog score for that week will be 25 rather than 30 points). Brief comments (of ~150 words) will suffice, though you’re always welcome to write more, as the spirit moves you.

An important note: the three lowest scores for your blog entries will be dropped, so you’ll end up with 10 graded blog posts, at 30 points each. This means that you can take three weeks off, at your discretion, during the semester. Blog entries posted after noon on Monday or Wednesday will not be graded (consider that one of your three “off” weeks).

Five easy pieces on the blog posts, comments, and in-class participation:

(a) The posts do not have to be polished critiques of the readings. That said, they shouldn’t just be free-associating riffs on the article titles or abstracts. Good blog posts will be grounded in at least one text, meaning that they’ll include references to page numbers or passages that you want to discuss. Really good blog posts will draw links among texts, connecting back to readings and discussions from earlier in the course.

(b) Feel free to be creative with this assignment. If you’re confused about a reading, consider writing a letter to the author, asking him or her to explain a point, or lay out how what they are saying is different from what another author is arguing. Include links to multimedia resources or web pages that connect to the week’s readings.

(c) Given the number of students in the course, I won’t be able to provide feedback (beyond the score) on all of your blog entries. That said, I’ll bring up at least a few of them in each session, and provide written comments on at least some of your posts. If you have any questions about your blogging at any time, please do email me about them.

(d) If you’re new to blogging, and have questions about this assignment, don’t panic! Come and talk to me after the first class, or send me an email.

(e) I’d prefer not to keep roll each class or to track preparation and participation for each of you. That said, if over the course of the term I notice that you’re serially (at least 2 or 3 times) absent or showing a lack of preparation, and you haven’t provided advance notice of the reason(s), we’ll have to talk, and I’ll have to start tracking your in-class performance. You’ll then have 15 points deducted from your blog grade for each additional unexcused absence and/or class in which you’re unable to participate due to demonstrated lack of preparation. (Let’s all agree to avoid this, yes? Unpleasant for all.)
(2) A short (3-4 page) analysis of public health data of a county of your choice.

Detailed instructions will be posted on the course website. For now: using the County Health Rankings (a project hosted here at Wisconsin), you’ll choose a county and, in a 3-4 page report, you’ll use the data available to briefly describe the state of health behaviors, clinical care, and social, economic, and physical environment in that county. Due at the end of Week Five, on Friday, October 11, 2013 by 4:00 pm, via the Learn@UW dropbox.

(3) A term paper submitted in three parts (15-20 pages total):

Details will be posted to the website. Topics will be developed in consultation with me. Your project will be completed in three phases:

(a) Prospectus (1-2 pages): A description of a specific health problem in a specific place and why you're interested in writing your term paper about it. Due at the end of Week Eight, on Friday, November 1 by 4:00pm, via the Learn@UW dropbox.

(b) Part 1 (8-10 pages): Describe and justify the selection of the health problem chosen through the prospectus process, and analyze its causes and consequences. Due at the end of Week Eleven, on Friday, November 22 by 4:00pm, via the Learn@UW dropbox.

(c) Part 2 (6-8 pages): you will review policies and interventions that have been proposed to mitigate the problem, evaluate their merits and drawbacks, and provide your own recommendations. Due by 4:00pm on Wednesday, December 18 (during Exam Week), via the Learn@UW dropbox.

(4) A poster that describes your research project to share with the class in Week Fourteen.

Attendance at these last two class sessions is mandatory. Instructions for poster will be posted.

Assignment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County rankings analysis</td>
<td>By 4pm on Friday, October 11 (End of Week 5)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper prospectus</td>
<td>By 4pm on Friday, November 1 (End of Week 8)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper, part 1</td>
<td>By 4pm on Friday, November 22 (End of Week 11)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster on term paper</td>
<td>On day of presentation (during Week 14)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper, part 2</td>
<td>By 4pm on Wednesday, December 18 (Exam Week)</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog posts and comments</td>
<td>Once a week for 10 weeks (per instructions above)</td>
<td>300 (30x10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class participation</td>
<td>Each class; see 1(e) above for deduction policy</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade Distribution
This course isn't graded on a curve, which means that you'll earn the grade you receive based on your scores on individual assignments. You'll be able to assess your progress in the course at any time during the semester.

Grades for this course will be assigned in accordance with the undergraduate grade policy, using the following point distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>≥940</td>
<td>≥94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>890-939</td>
<td>89.0-93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>830-889</td>
<td>83.0-88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>770-829</td>
<td>77.0-82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-769</td>
<td>70.0-76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699</td>
<td>60.0-69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>≤59.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some important notes on grading, grade bases, etc. (in alphabetical order):
I'm as bound as you are by the policies noted below; I have little-to-no say on issues such as dropping the course or Pass/Fail status. In other words, it's largely on you to meet relevant deadlines and other criteria; if you have questions, please consult your adviser or the Registrar.

Auditing: Due to course enrollment and limited seating, I can't accommodate auditors.

Dropping: The deadline to drop the course (or withdraw from the University) without a grade notation (“DR” or “W”) on your transcript is Wednesday, September 11. The deadline to drop or withdraw without academic penalty is Friday, November 22.

Incomplete: You'll receive a grade of “I” if, as the Incompletes policy notes, you were on track to pass the course approaching term’s end, but because of unusual and substantiated circumstances beyond your control (e.g. illness), you were unable to complete some limited amount of term work. Note that if you were not on track to pass the course, the policy dictates that you must receive an “F” rather than an “I.” Please consult the policy for further details about the ramifications of an “I” grade.

No Work: If you’re enrolled but I have no evidence that you’ve ever attended class, and you don’t submit any work, but you don’t drop or withdraw by the Friday, November 22 deadline, you’ll receive a “No Work” designation on your transcript. If you enrolled and I do have evidence that you attended class, but you stop participating without dropping or withdrawing by the deadline, you’ll be given a grade of “F,” unless there are grounds for assigning an Incomplete (“I” – see above).

Pass/Fail: The deadline to take this course on a Pass/Fail basis is Friday, September 27. It’s your option whether to take the course on a Pass/Fail basis. I'll be blind to your choice; I'll give you a letter grade, and the Registrar will render it an “S” (C and above) or “U” (D or F) on your transcript.
V. Academic Honesty

I expect all students in this course to be familiar with the University’s policies on academic honesty and integrity. For more information, please visit the “Academic Integrity” page on the Dean of Students Office’s website. (And don’t let the cheesiness of the video and its “Sweet Caroline” instrumental background fool you – I do take this stuff seriously.)

Accordingly, I expect that all your work in this course will reflect your own ideas and analyses, and that you’ll appropriately cite all supporting data and sources. In this course, you will be producing papers that draw on a variety of sources, including scholarly books and articles, government reports, and Internet resources. It can sometimes be enormously difficult to figure out how to cite such materials. The UW Library has a webpage with helpful links to a variety of citation guides.

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other breach of academic integrity on an assignment in this course will result in an automatic failing grade of 0 for the assignment in question, and my submission of written reports to the dean of your school or college and the relevant dean of students. Those administrators may (at their discretion) take further disciplinary action. Please note that ignorantia juris non excusat: lack of familiarity with policies will not excuse failure to comply with them.

If you still have questions about how to cite materials appropriately, or about other matters of academic integrity, please come and see me. I’m happy to help you learn about appropriate ways to credit the work cited in your papers, and to avoid running afoul of academic integrity policies.

VI. Accommodations

Please let me know as soon as possible (earlier is better!) if you’ll need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order to enable you to participate fully in the course. The McBurney Resource Center will provide useful assistance and documentation.

In addition, if you have difficulty accessing course materials, please come and talk with me. All required readings are available on the course website. If you have trouble accessing that, again, please talk to me.

VII. Course Expectations

Here are details on student-oriented expectations in terms of:

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course. As a result, I recognize that you’re a heterogeneous group, with different backgrounds, foundations, goals, etc. You should also recognize this during discussions. What’s obvious to you might not be so obvious to other students, and vice-versa. Please be patient in the former case, and don’t panic in the latter!

On a related note: quantitative analysis is a key piece of public health research and practice. In particular, linear regression is a very common tool. As such, a number of the readings assigned feature regression results. While I’ve assigned a 12-slide cartoon summary of regression analysis, I absolutely do not expect any of you to be able to deconstruct regressions in this course. Don’t get hung up on the numbers; concentrate on the discussion. And if you’re unclear on something, please do two things: (1) assume at least one other person in the course is also unclear on that thing; and (2) raise questions about that thing in a blog post, and/or in an email to me, and/or in the in-class discussion – or all of the above.
Workload: This course assumes UW’s standard “3:1” rule, meaning that for every course credit hour you spend inside the classroom (namely, 2.5 hours each week) you should expect to spend an average of three hours working on course requirements outside of class (so: 7.5 hours per week). In sum, 10 hours a week total workload.

Readings: You should expect to read 75-100 pages per week on average (with some weeks a bit lighter, and some a bit heavier) in addition to the research and reading you’ll need to undertake for the final term paper. The early readings introduce critical concepts and frameworks that we’ll be using throughout the term. If you’ve read this far, you’ll know that the blog posts are the single biggest component of your grade. Since good scores on blog posts depend on close, critical reading of the assigned texts, keeping up with the reading assigned will be crucial to your grade. More importantly (to me, at least): you won’t get much out of this course if you don’t given enough time to and stay on top of the readings.

Attendance: This class is a mix of lecture and discussion, with a heavy weight on the discussion. I don’t spend much time lecturing on the assigned readings, and so it’s important that you both attend lecture and (again) keep up with the reading. I also don’t make much use of lecture slides, so if you miss a class, it’s up to you to obtain notes from a classmate. If you know in advance that you’ll have to miss class (e.g., for religious observances or athletic events), please let me know at the beginning of the term, so that we can work out mutually happy arrangements. Again, I don’t especially enjoy taking roll – but please see IV.1(e) for the consequences of serial unexcused absences.

Participation: The blogs are designed to give you a space to explore key themes and issues from each week’s readings. Please come to class prepared to discuss what you’ve written in your blog post, and to extend those comments and analyses. I’d really prefer not to have to keep track of in-class participation, and I’m not a fan of “cold-calling.” If I notice that you haven’t spoken up in class in a while, however, I’ll probably call on you (most likely with reference to what you’ve written in your blog post). If you convince me you haven’t prepared for class, I’ll move on, but make a note of it. If it happens serially, the provisions in IV.1(e) will kick in.

Devices: If it’s not something you’re using to view the course readings or related material (student blogs, for instance, or websites related to the topic of discussion), and it’s a digital device, please turn it off or don’t bring it into the classroom. If I have any evidence that you’re using a laptop, tablet computer, phone, or other device for anything other than discussion-related purposes, I reserve the right to prohibit you from using all such devices in future classes. (I promise to be pleasant, private, discreet, and strict in the prohibition.) Please note that Facebook, Twitter, and/or other social-media sites are not discussion-related, even if you’re posting about what a terrific guy I am.

Writing: Your success in this course will depend heavily on the quality of your written assignments. All written assignments (excluding blog posts and comments) should be typed using an 11-to-12-point of a typical font family (e.g., Times New Roman, Garamond, Cambria), one-inch margins, double-spacing, and page numbers on each page. Please make sure your name appears on the first page of
the paper. Please also proofread all of your written assignments carefully. Papers
with frequent misspellings and grammatical errors will be marked down
accordingly.

So: grammar and mechanics are important. Even more important, though, is a
clear and convincing argument, supported by compelling evidence and examples.
I urge you to make use of The Writing Center, where graduate students and
professional staff are available to help you develop your writing. You can make
appointments up to three weeks in advance at the main location, which is 6171
Helen C. White Hall (600 N Park Street). Alternatively, you can drop in for first-
come, first-served sessions at the Center’s satellite locations, and/or avail
yourself of their Skype and/or email services. For best results, it’s recommended
that you make an appointment or drop in for an individual consultation well in
advance of the due date of the assignment.

Submission: All assignments should be submitted via the Dropbox on Learn@UW.
Assignments submitted late without prior permission from me will be marked
down 5 percent of the total possible score for each 24 hours late, with any
proportion of 24 hours rounded up. (In other words, even submitting an
assignment just a few minutes late results in the 5-percent deduction.)

And here are details on instructor-oriented expectations in terms of:

Office hours: My regularly scheduled office hours are after each class, on Mondays and
Wednesdays from 3:45 am to 5:15 pm. You can sign up for appointments of up
to four 15-minute slots of the regularly scheduled hours on the course website.
I know that schedules can be tricksy, though. If my regularly schedule office
hours conflict with your course, work, or athletic schedules, I’m happy to arrange
an alternative, mutually convenient meeting time – just email me to set
something up.

My office is Room 346B in Agricultural Hall (1450 Linden Street). It’s hidden
away a bit, but everyone in the areas around me is friendly – so if you get lost,
just ask. If you can’t find anyone, go ahead and give me a ring on my office line.

I encourage you to come to office hours to discuss any questions you might have
about course content, class discussions, navigating your term-paper topic,
locating research materials, or, really, anything else related to the course.

Contact info: The best way to contact me outside of class is via email. Generally speaking, I’ll
reply within 24 hours. I’m not typically available online otherwise. My office
telephone number is also listed on the first page of this syllabus. It’s unlikely to
be very useful to you, unless you need to call to get directions while en route to my
office; I tend to use it more for outgoing than incoming calls.

Feedback: As above, I will, to the best of my ability, provide written feedback on your blog
posts – but given the size of the course, I won’t be able to do so every week. I
will definitely provide written feedback on all of your other assignments, as
quickly as possible. Please don’t hesitate to email and/or make an office-hours
appointment to discuss your performance in the course; I’d be more than happy
to provide honest, critical assessments at any time.
VIII. **Reading and Viewing Schedule**

*Note: All texts and videos are listed in suggested order of reading/viewing*

**“Zero Week”: Introduction**

September 4: Course Structure, Class Procedures, and Outcomes

No reading for in-class discussion this week; please get a start on the reading for next week.

**Week One: Defining health and its public**

September 9: What We Talk About When We Talk About Health


**September 11: Plagues in Two Houses: Public Health’s Relation to Medicine**


**Week Two: What counts, counts: Evidence in public health**

September 16: The Numbers Game: Quantitative Approaches and Analyses


September 18: Words, Words, Words: Qualitative Approaches and Analyses


**Week Three: The causes of health and illness**


September 25: A Case of Causes: The Debate Over the McKeown Thesis


**Weeks Four and Five: Place Matters: Where We Live, Learn, Work, & Play**

**September 30: Living for the City: Urban Health and Welfare**


doi:10.1177/107807406296390

**October 2: Pastoral America: Health in the Rural U.S.**

doi:10.2105/AJPH.92.7.1161


doi:10.1080/019476402317276669


doi:10.1177/0002764213487348

**October 7: It’s Not Easy Being Green: Environmental Justice and Health**

doi:10.1146/annurev.publhealth.27.021405.102124


doi:10.1177/0891242408331159
October 9: Workers of the World, Unite: Occupational Health


County Health Rankings due by 4:00 pm on Friday, October 11, via Learn@UW dropbox

Weeks Six, Seven, & Eight: Health & Population Heterogeneity

October 14: What Are Population Health Inequities, Inequalities, and Disparities?


October 16: Income & Social Class


October 21: Race & Ethnicity


LaVeist, Thomas A. “Disentangling Race and Socioeconomic Status: A Key to Understanding Health Inequalities.” Journal of Urban Health 82(2) supplement 3: iii26-iii34. doi:10.1093/jurban/jti061


October 23: Gender & Sex


Short, Susan E., Yang Claire Yang, and Tania M. Jenkins. “Sex, Gender, Genetics, and Health.” American Journal of Public Health. Published electronically August 8, 2013. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2013.301229

October 28: Sexual Orientation & Identity


October 30: Age & the Lifecourse


Prospectus for term paper due by 4:00 pm on Friday, November 1, via Learn@UW dropbox.
Weeks Nine Through Twelve: Public Health Institutions from the Local to the National

November 4: Community-Based Participatory Research


November 6: Community-Oriented Primary Care & Community Health Workers


November 11: Beyond Primary Care: Hospitals, Specialists, and Networks


November 13: Free Radicals: Clinics of the People, by the People, for the People


November 18: Organizing for Health: Coalitions in Diverse Communities


November 20: Virchow’s View: Politics Through the Lens of Public Health


Term Paper, Part 1 due by 4:00pm on Friday, November 22, via Learn@UW dropbox
November 25: National Policy Debates, 1: Health Reform & The Affordable Care Act


November 27: National Policy Debates, 2: Foodways, Fat, & the Farm Bill


Week Thirteen: Health without Borders: Globalization and Global Health

December 2: Preparing for the Big One: Emerging Infectious Diseases


December 4: How Hot is Too Hot Too Handle? Health Implications of Climate Change


Week Fourteen: Poster Sessions

December 9: Poster Session 1
Poster session; no assigned readings. Attendance is mandatory.

December 11: Poster Session 2
Poster session; no assigned readings. Attendance is mandatory.

Term Papers Part 2 due by 4pm on Wednesday, December 18, via Learn@UW dropbox