

**PHC 6601**  
**Seminar in Contemporary Public Health Issues**  
**Credit: 1 credit**

**Description**

This course is designed to provide a framework for students to integrate a variety of public health topics, issues, and skills into a culminating experience for the MPH program. You will enroll in this course in your final semester, but you will work on elements of the course throughout your MPH program.

- There are several elements to this course: MPH students are required to participate in 16 of the online seminar presentation sessions during their course of study. There will be two categories of sessions: Public Health Seminar Series and Internship Preparation Series. To receive credit for participating in these sessions you must submit a one-page summary of the presentation. In the Public Health Seminar Series you will also need to outline which of the MPH competencies the presentation addressed.
- Complete a major paper and a live online presentation during the final semester of the program.
- Complete an online HIPPA exam the semester prior to entering into the program and each subsequent spring
- As a final course requirement, students are expected to complete the MPH Exit Survey prior to graduation.

**Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss selected interdisciplinary, cross-cutting issues in public health
2. Explain the interrelationships among the five core areas of public health, and discuss the MPH and concentration competencies that have been strengthened through their special projects
3. Complete an MPH portfolio documenting achievement of MPH and concentration competencies in an eLearning site
4. Present a complete project undertaken during the internship in written and oral form, thus strengthening competence in communication.

Specific learning objectives for each seminar session will be developed in collaboration with the speaker for that session and posted on the course website.

**Content**

Seminar sessions are offered online and feature interdisciplinary topics considered essential to the contemporary practice of public health centered on themes, such as:

- **Communication:** The ability to give, solicit and receive oral, written, graphic, and numerical information, taking into consideration target audience and using a variety of mechanisms in both formal and informal settings.
- **Diversity and Cultural Proficiency:** The ability to interact sensitively and professionally with individuals and communities with diverse characteristics.
- **Leadership:** The ability to create and communicate a shared vision for a better future, champion solutions to organizational and community challenges and energize commitment to goals.
- **Professionalism and Ethics:** The ability to demonstrate ethical choices, values and professional practices implicit in public health decisions, giving consideration to the effect of choices on community stewardship, equity, social justice and accountability, as well as to commit to personal and institutional development.

- Program Planning and Assessment: The ability to design, develop, implement and evaluate strategies and interventions to improve individual and community health.
- Systems Thinking: The ability to recognize dynamic interactions among human and social systems and how they affect the relationships among individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

In addition to the above topics, sessions will be offered each semester on the role of MPH and concentration competencies in public health, developing a major paper and presentation, academic integrity, selecting an internship and special project, Institutional Review Board requirements on research involving human subjects, interviewing skills, and resume construction.

Students are required to view the online Internship Preparation Series on the major paper, the program competencies, and other topics before they undertake their internships.

## Requirements

To receive a grade for PHC 6601, students must meet the following **requirements**:

- Participate in at least 16 hours of online seminar sessions during the course of the MPH program and submit a one-page, single-spaced, reaction paper outlining the competencies the presentation addressed via the assignment link in the course. (note: some sessions are less than one hour, some are longer than one hour, the time/credit for each session is noted in the assignment link for the session.)
- Participate in the online seminar session on competencies and submit a one-page, single-spaced reaction paper that identifies the competencies the session addressed.
- Present Special Project in written and oral form on Public Health Day
- Complete the online MPH Exit Survey.

## Readings

Appropriate readings for each seminar session are posted in the seminar online course site.

Readings will include published literature and online resources recommended by the scheduled speaker.

## Major Paper and Presentations

Each student develops a scholarly paper based on one special project undertaken as part of his/her internship. A substantial portion of this paper includes an in-depth discussion of the manner in which all five of the core disciplines and cross-cutting skills are involved in the project. Students are expected to use this opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the broad field of public health. The major paper must be approved by the Supervisory Chair at least two weeks before the student will be scheduled for a presentation.

Students must submit their drafts and final papers via the Assignment link in the eLearning course site at <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>. This submission will be reviewed by TurnItIn to validate the originality of the paper. Students should make all resubmissions of their paper via this same link. Students must also submit a one-page abstract via the Assignment link in the course site by 3pm EST the day before their presentation. Note: due dates for drafts and final paper are on the Detailed Guidelines for Internship form which will be distributed at the beginning of the final semester.

A live online oral presentation based on the paper is made during a Public Health Day near the end of the student's final semester in the program. The oral presentation and written reports constitute the culminating experience and the final comprehensive examination for the MPH program.

Specific guidelines for developing the paper and presentation, meeting with your Supervisory Chair, and evaluating the presentation are posted in the online course site.

Written reports should be 15-20 pages, exclusive of graphics and references. Oral presentations should be 20 minutes in length, followed by a 10-minute question and answer period. Students should use appropriate audio/visual aids in the delivery of their reports. Online oral presentations will be made during one or two Public Health Days at the end of each semester. The dates are announced at the beginning of each semester. Specific times for each presentation are posted two weeks before Public Health Days. All students and preceptors are invited to attend. Three faculty members view each presentation and provide feedback to the student and Supervisory Chair, who also assesses the presentation.

Each report, both oral and written, is expected to include the following content:

### **Background**

- Summary of critical literature
- Rationale and/or need for the project
- Relationship to public health values
- Objectives or specific aims

### **Description of methods**

- Hypotheses
- Specific identification of methods used in needs assessments, policy analysis, epidemiological analysis, financial management, program planning, evaluation, etc., noting especially how methods of concentrations other than your own were used
- Justification of methods
- Stakeholder involvement, as appropriate

### **Results**

- Description of findings/outcomes
- Relationship to objectives, aims, or hypotheses
- Appropriate use of tables, charts, and other graphics
- Interpretation of findings

### **Discussion**

- Relationship of findings to literature cited in the summary of critical literature
- Strengths and limitations
- Generalizability

### **Implications**

- Relationship of this project to the internship experience
- Relationship to practice and research in the larger field of public health, focusing, as appropriate, on each of the disciplines
- MPH and concentration competencies strengthened by this project
- Lessons learned from this project/recommendations for future projects

The quality of the content is assessed by three faculty members representing different disciplines. In general, the project itself should demonstrate your ability to apply one or more of your concentration competencies. Your ability to integrate the MPH core competencies should be evident throughout the paper and presentation. For example, a project may involve biostatistical analysis and an epidemiological research design to produce results that will inform policy decisions.

***Before Public Health Days, students are given opportunities to practice their presentations using the online system. They receive feedback on the content as well as the following characteristics that will be evaluated during the presentations:***

### **Presentation style**

- Energy/enthusiasm
- Voice projection
- Inflection
- Avoidance of “um,” “ah,” etc.
- Ability to hold the attention of the audience
- Ability to maintain your camera presence and address your audience directly

### **Delivery methods**

- Organization of the material
- Clarity of delivery
- Appropriate use of time
- Appropriate audio-visual materials

Students are expected to consult regularly with their Supervisory Chair and Preceptors as they develop their reports. At a minimum, students should have a meeting with the Supervisory Chair at mid-term to evaluate progress and decide on subsequent meetings.

### **Faculty**

Guest experts and faculty of the MPH program, the College of Public Health and Health Professions, and other Health Science Center colleges at UF contribute to the seminar sessions. Timely and relevant Internet broadcasts from outside UF may also be presented. Students will work closely with their Supervisory Chair and internship preceptors to develop their major papers and presentations.

### **Exit Survey**

As a final course requirement, graduating students will complete the online MPH Exit Survey. Students will be provided with access to the survey immediately after Public Health Day, and are directed to complete it before final grades are due. The Exit Survey provides students the opportunity to document the strengths of the MPH Program, and outline suggestions for improvement.

### **Grading**

The course uses the standard letter grade format of the University of Florida. In order to receive a grade for the course, students ***MUST*** meet all requirements identified above. A letter grade is derived from participation in 16 seminar sessions, viewing 6 Public Health Day presentations prior to the semester in which they will present the special project paper, based on:

- the content identified above, (60%),
- oral presentation (30%),
- attention to guidance from supervisory chair and preceptor (10%)

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

To obtain academic accommodations, first register with the Dean of Students' Office. The Dean of Students' Office at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>. The Dean of Student's Office will provide documentation to be given to the course instructor at the time you request the accommodation. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students' coursework.

**Academic Integrity/Honesty Statement**

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida Honor Code, which recognizes that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Cheating or plagiarism in any form is not acceptable.

**Schedule**

The dates for live presentations will be posted at the beginning of the semester. All presenters are expected to be available for their presentation time (EST). Schedules will be posted on that semester's Seminar course site. Students will present from their locations via an Internet site and will not be required to travel to the UF campus for presentations.