

PUBH/PHNU 785: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Occupational Health

Spring 2013—Distance Learning Course

Classes begin Wednesday, January 9, 2013 and end Friday, April 26, 2013

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Credits: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This on-line course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to gain knowledge about work and its effect on health. The complexities of workplace exposures and the impact of work-related health hazards and their interactions will be examined. Concepts of risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication will be studied within the context of prevention, health promotion, and health protection strategies to reduce work-related health risks. Regulatory influences, ethical issues, and epidemiologic concepts related to workplace exposures and their implications for worker health and safety will be discussed. Interdisciplinary approaches to occupational health problem identification, investigation, and resolution will be a major emphasis. This is a required course for all NIOSH-funded ERC students.

OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss workforce, workplace, and work-related epidemiologic injury and illness trends, issues, and impacts.
2. Discuss major legislative/regulatory, labor, and related issues that impact occupational health and the importance of program evaluation.
3. Discuss the interdisciplinary nature and role of the occupational health team in the recognition, management, control, and prevention of occupational health hazards and related ethical issues.
4. Discuss risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication approaches including screening, surveillance, and control/abatement measures in dealing with occupational health problems.
5. Describe health protection and health promotion strategies (primary, secondary, and tertiary levels) to effectively reduce work-related health risks and improve quality of life.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/READINGS

Levy, B.S., Wegman, D.H., Baron, S.L., & Sokas, R.K. (2011). *Occupational and Environmental Health. Recognizing and Preventing Disease and Injury* (6th Ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. (2004). *Worker Health Chartbook*. Cincinnati, OH: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2004-146. **Access the document on-line from:**
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-146/pdfs/2004-146.pdf>

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Institute of Medicine. (2000). *Safe Work in the 21st Century: Education and Training Needs for the Next Decade's Occupational Safety and Health Personnel*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

TEACHING METHODS

- Lectures/discussion forums
- Video, Song of the Canary
- Individual and group work
- Virtual tour (walkthrough) to learn about work processes and related health hazards

VALUING DIVERSITY

Promoting and valuing diversity in the classroom enriches learning and broadens everyone's perspectives. Inclusion and tolerance can lead to respect for others and their opinions, which is valuable in itself and is critical to maximizing the learning that occurs in this course. Therefore, this class follows principles of inclusion, tolerance, and respect for multiple and diverse points of view.

EVALUATION

Evaluation		Percent of Grade	Assignments Due
Participation	Discussion Forums 1. Song of the Canary 2. Core Disciplines in Occupational Health 3. Risk Communication in times of Disaster 4. Health Protection/Health Promotion	10% 10% 10% 10%	January 22-28 February 4-11 February 18-25 March 18-25
Virtual Tour	Individual Assignment	20%	April 8
Interdisciplinary Group Work	Paper on assigned industry to assess work process, various health hazards, and adequacy of control measures A set of PowerPoint slides are to be submitted as a presentation Group participation form	40%	February 18 (choices for paper submitted) April 22 (paper, PowerPoint slides, group participation form)

Please turn in written assignments using Sakai dropbox.

Participation (60%)

Readings are expected as well as active participation and contribution in discussion forums (see Discussion Forum guidelines). Please comment on peer comments as this is an important aspect of learning from each other. Everyone is expected to view the *Song of the Canary* (video) which will be mailed to you; it should be returned within 3 days so others can see the film.

Interdisciplinary Group Work (40%)

Groups will be assigned by faculty. Each group will submit at least 2 choices for your paper (industry with a specified hazard/population) to course faculty by **February 18** for approval. The relevant NORA Sector will also need to be identified.

The group will prepare a joint paper, 12-15 double-spaced typed pages, along with appropriate, current references using APA guidelines. The paper should include the following:

1. Describe the nature and scope of the work (major products; operational processes; relevant toxicological data, types of jobs or job classifications);
2. Review and summarize previous studies (work-related health hazards; major causes of illnesses/injuries/lost work-time);
3. Describe control measures used to mitigate health hazards and risks (engineering; work practices; administrative; personal protective equipment), and standards/regulations indicating compliance directives;
4. Recommend abatement, control, and prevention strategies; and
5. Describe the role of the occupational safety and health team in problem identification and problem solving.

Each group member will also submit the group participation form stating that you actively participated in the paper.

Each group will submit PowerPoint slides of the paper (in lieu of a presentation).

HONOR CODE

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty share the responsibility. If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to your instructor or consult with the office of the Dean of Students or the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. This document, adopted by the Chancellor, the Faculty Council, and the Student Congress, contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected.

Information about the Honor Code is listed in the Student Handbook. All written work should be submitted with the following pledge with your signature: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment."

OTHER

1. By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the UNC-Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources. Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy (<http://help.unc.edu/1672>) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette, and privacy protection.
2. As part of this course, you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC-Chapel Hill Information Security Policies (http://its.unc.edu/TTS/about_its/its_policies/index.htm) when participating in online classes.
3. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill, such as Google or Youtube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access to rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC-Chapel Hill.
4. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the presence of malware on such sites.

GRADING

H = 93-100
P = 85-92
L = 80-84