HBEH 726: ADOLESCENT HEALTH RISK BEHAVIORS  
FALL 2015 SYLLABUS  
Department of Health Behavior  
Gillings School of Global Public Health  

Instructor: Susan T. Ennett, MSPH, PhD
Schedule: Tuesdays, 2-4:50 pm  
Room: Rosenau 332  
Office Hours by Appointment  
Course Website: Accessible through Sakai, at http://sakai.unc.edu/

Course Description
The course focuses on selected behaviors that can result in adolescent mortality, morbidity, and social problems: driving, sexual behavior, obesity-related behaviors, bullying and cyberbullying, and alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use. Emphasis is on examining these adolescent health risk behaviors from developmental, contextual, and theoretical perspectives, considering their distributions domestically and globally, and with reference to policies and programs for preventing or ameliorating risk. The course is structured as a seminar where student participation and engagement are expected.

Course Objectives
At the completion of the course students will be able to:

- Identify behaviors that contribute to adolescent mortality, morbidity, and social problems domestically and globally;
- Situate adolescent health risk behaviors in a developmental perspective;
- Apply theoretical frameworks to conceptualizing the etiology of adolescent health risk behaviors;
- Understand how social and environmental contexts contribute to adolescent health risk behaviors; and
- Address the applicability of policy and program approaches to preventing and reducing adolescent health risk behaviors

Assignments and Grading
The quality of the course depends on your preparation for and participation in class discussion and assignments. You are expected to read the assigned readings before class and come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. Assignments include two group and two individual assignments. Additional details will be provided for each assignment. All assignments will be turned in using the dropbox feature on the Sakai website. Assignments are as follows:

1) Group presentation (30 minutes total) on the epidemiology of a set of health risk behaviors addressed in class:
   a. The presentation will include identification and definitions of key behaviors/outcomes, current information on prevalence and time trends in the U.S. and globally (selectively), and description of differences in prevalence and trends by demographic characteristics.
   b. Prepare a set of PowerPoint slides, posted to the dropbox by 5 PM the day before the presentation. Group assignments will be made at the start of the semester.

2) Student-led (2 or 3 student teams) class (45 minutes total) on a selected topic:
   a. Presentations on 9/22, 10/27, and 11/24 will focus on special topics relevant to adolescent health risk behaviors not formally addressed in class.
   b. Prepare a class plan for addressing the topic, select and assign one (or two) readings, and lead the class. The class plan should include a) key points to be covered, b) discussion questions and/or other activities for engaging students with the responses expected (creativity is encouraged!), and c) references. The assigned reading(s) (pdf file) must be posted to the dropbox by 5 PM on the Thursday before the panel and the class plan must be posted to the dropbox by 9 AM on the day of panel. Assignments will be made at the start of the semester.
3) Individually written “white paper” (3 pages max plus references) in which you will choose one of three policies or interventions (to be provided) and write an op-ed-type piece in which you will provide a persuasive argument that frames the need for the policy/program in terms of a range of factors. Due date: 11/10, 5 PM.

4) Individually written research paper (7 pages max plus references) in which you will choose and justify a health risk behavior for which a specific population is at risk, critically review the scholarly literature (peer-reviewed) on risk and protective factors within a single selected context of your choice (e.g., family, school), and conclude with implications for prevention. Due date: 12/8, 5 PM.

Grading will be based on participation/engagement in the class discussion (15%), epidemiology group assignment (15%), student panel group assignment (20%), white paper (25%), and research paper (25%).

Honor Code
Students must observe the Honor Code in all course assignments. You are expected to produce your own work, except where group work is allowed. In all written assignments, you must not plagiarize the work of others. The instrument defining the Honor Code defines plagiarism as "deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise." If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to me 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.

Please include the following pledge on all written assignments: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.”

Course Evaluations
Student evaluations are critical to course development and improvement. Students are asked to complete the official on-line departmental/school evaluation at the close of the course; time will be set aside in the last class for students to complete the evaluation. I welcome informal feedback at any time.

Course Schedule
8/18 Introduction, course overview, review of syllabus
8/25 Adolescent health trends and objectives, in the U.S. and globally
9/1 Life course perspective and social determinants of adolescent health and development
    Guest: Ms. Melissa Cox, Health Behavior, UNC-CH
Research on Adolescence, 21, 273-280.


9/8 Pubertal development and implications for adolescent risk behaviors


9/15 Adolescent sexual behavior: Global and domestic focus

Group presentation: *Epidemiology of sexual behaviors domestically and globally*


Sanytha, KG. (2010). Associations between early marriage and young women’s marital and reproductive health outcomes: Evidence from India. *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 36*, 132-139..


9/22 Student presentations: Implications for adolescent engagement in health risk behaviors of 1) sleep patterns, 2) work experiences, and 3) religious involvement

9/29 Brain development and implications for adolescent risk behaviors


10/6 Driving and motor vehicle crashes; graduated driver licensing

Guest: Dr. Rob Foss, UNC Highway Research Safety Research Center

Group presentation: *Epidemiology of motor vehicle crashes domestically and globally*


Masten, SV, Foss, RD, & Marshall, SW. (2011). Graduated driver licensing and fatal crashes involving 16- to-19-


10/13 New and old media and implications for adolescent risk behaviors


10/20 Obesity and obesity-related behaviors: Social ecological focus

*Group presentation: Epidemiology of obesity, dietary behaviors, physical activity, sedentary behavior domestically and globally*


10/27 Student presentations: Health risk behaviors of 1) LGBTQ youth, 2) runaway and homeless youth, and 3) Native American youth

11/3 Bullying & cyberbullying: Peer focus

*Group presentation: Epidemiology of bullying and cyberbullying domestically and globally*


11/10 Alcohol use: Family focus

*Group presentation: Epidemiology of alcohol use domestically and globally*


White paper due

11/17 Tobacco and marijuana use: Neighborhood focus

*Group presentation: Epidemiology of tobacco and marijuana use domestically and globally*


11/24 Student presentations: Mental health implications for health risk behaviors: 1) depression and anxiety, 2) eating disorders, 3) conduct problems in childhood

12/1 Prevention & Wrap Up


12/8 *Research paper due, 5 PM*