EPID 892/MHCH 892: INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR ON HEALTH DISPARITIES

TIME: FRIDAY, 1:25 PM – 2:15 PM
LOCATION: McGAVRAN-GREENBERG, ROOM 2303

Instructor: Anissa I Vines, PhD, MS
Director, IHD Certificate Program – UNC ECHO Program
Research Assistant Professor, Epidemiology
Office: 266 Rosenau Hall
E-mail: avines@unc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Credit: 1 credit hour

Prerequisites and requirements:

- MCH 756 Understanding and Addressing Health Inequities in the US
- At least one additional course from Health Disparities Certificate Curriculum
- Enrollment in the Interdisciplinary Health Disparities Certificate Program
- Permission of Instructor required

Course Overview:
This seminar course will create opportunities to synthesize knowledge across disciplines and to develop a stronger basis on which to build the student’s health disparities research or public health work. A high level of intellectual exchange and independent work is expected. Students must be sufficiently self-directed in order to use the seminar to develop their own conceptualization, methods and research.

Key Competencies:
- To understand the use of an interdisciplinary approach in addressing disparities.
- Gain exposure to methodologies, theories, and challenges being applied in diverse areas of health disparities research.
- Discuss innovative study design, research approaches, and methods specific to health disparities.
- Leverage the knowledge, expertise, and feedback of peers and research scholars to gain new insights that will result in the formation of a new research or practice approach to reducing disparities.

Required Assignments:

1. Class Participation: In addition to regular class attendance, there will be four required seminars to attend that are part of the spring ECHO Health Disparities Seminar Series and the 2015 Minority Health Conference afternoon webcast. The purpose of the course is to increase exposure to topics outside of one’s research area or field of study and to gain new insights on how health disparities are being addressed. Students will be expected to engage the speaker by demonstrating existing knowledge and incorporating relevant information from the presentation through questions and dialogue.
2. **Topic Summary (Due: January 14th):** Students will be required to identify a specific question or area of interest relating to current or proposed work relevant to health inequities. This could include a Master’s thesis or dissertation topic, an exploratory topic related to existing research or practice, or a specific challenge perceived in efforts to eliminate disparities. Students will be expected to advance the current dialogue on this issue by exploring theories, constructs, and other content from previous courses and experiences as well as information presented and discussed in the seminar course. Students will be required to prepare a 2-3 page summary of their specific topic of interest relating to health inequities. This summary, will:

- describe the nature of the problem and how it is a disparate or health inequity,
- state of the literature,
- limitations in current research on that topic,
- perceived as barriers/challenges in developing research or interventions to reduce disparities
- discussion of what other disciplines you feel may offer to the state of the science.

During class on January 16th, students will present their topic and receive guidance from the rest of the class that may be useful to further development of their thinking throughout the course.

3. **Meet the Expert (optional):** Identify 3 scholars or key informants outside your discipline to gain their perspective of your topic and glean new theories, methods, etc. that may be helpful in your formulation of an innovative interdisciplinary research approach.

4. **Reflection Blogs:** Following each class session, students will be encouraged to reflect on the class discussion/seminar presentation using the Sakai blog site to process the new information, stimulate further discussion, and/or dialogue towards gaining new insight on their topic summary. In other words, the blog posts and exchange may be used to analyze how the topics/discussion themes advance or not their understanding or aid in defining a solution to their identified problem (e.g. how does it advance their conceptualization, measurement, research strategies, intervention strategies, etc...). The blog reflections will be assessed on the thoroughness of documentation and the quality of reflection. This activity helps students to develop skills in communicating complex ideas to other professionals and in developing an interdisciplinary perspective which will be necessary for the conduct of disparity research.

5. **Special Topic/Issue in Health Disparities:** 2-3 students will be paired to identify a reading for class discussion. The reading must be relevant to health disparities. For example, it may be a paper discussing the life course, an ethical dilemma, or a method or approach that you have been considering for your research. The paper selection does not need to limited to one from a public health journal.
6. **Oral Presentation:** (5-6 minutes) summarizing the development of their interdisciplinary thinking on the topic at the end of the semester.

**Grading:** Consistent attendance and engaged participation in all in-class discussions, seminars, etc. and completion of the assignments (except Meet the Experts) will earn a ‘P’ course grade. To earn an H, students must complete the Meet the Experts assignment. In addition, to receive an H, the student must be able to demonstrate their use of higher-level thinking in advancing their understanding of the methods, theories, or approaches that may be important in addressing their topic. The student should be able to convey in their final presentation a new interdisciplinary approach to their research.

**University Attendance Policy:** A student who incurs an excessive number of absences may be withdrawn from the class at the discretion of the instructor. Please contact Dr. Vines if you anticipate missing more than 2 classes.

**Honor System:**
As set forth in the Instrument of Student Judicial Government, Carolina students pledge to maintain ideals of academic honesty, personal integrity, and responsible citizenship. When a student applies to Carolina, he/she undertakes a commitment to the Honor Code principles. We expect your full participation and observance of the Honor Code. No form of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism or unauthorized collaboration will be tolerated. If you have questions about the honor system or 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.

**On-line Course Evaluation:**
We strongly encourage completion of an anonymous online course evaluation to share your assessment of the quality of instruction and learning. The system opens during the last two weeks of class. Some class time will be provided on 4/24/15 to complete the evaluation.

**Valuing, Recognizing, and Encouraging 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 and is critical to maximizing the learning that we expect in this course. Our own closely held ideas and personal comfort zones may be challenge. The results, however, create a sense of community and promote excellence in the learning environment. Diversity includes consideration of (1) the variety of life experiences others have had, and (2) factors related to “diversity of presence,” including, age, economic circumstances, ethnic identification, disability, gender, geographic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, social position. This class will follow principles of inclusion, respect, tolerance, and acceptance that support the values of diversity.
# Interdisciplinary Seminar on Health Disparities

*Friday, 1:25 -2:15 pm*

## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 9</td>
<td>Health Disparities Seminar</td>
<td>Rosenau 101 at 1:00</td>
<td>Dr. Jada Brooks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>Topic Summary Presentations <em>(Write-up due Jan 14th – Sakai dropbox)</em></td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>Class Discussion on “Group Think” and Interdisciplinary Science <em>(See Sakai for Readings)</em></td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan 30</td>
<td>Special Topic – TBD</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>Special Topic – TBD</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 13</td>
<td>Health Disparities Seminar</td>
<td>Rosenau 101 at 1:00</td>
<td>Dr. Dan Reuland</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Special Topic – TBD</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Feb 27</td>
<td>2015 Minority Health Conference Webcast/Keynote Lecture</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 6</td>
<td>Reflections on Meeting with Experts Due</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Class Discussion</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Special Topic – TBD</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Health Disparities Seminar</td>
<td>Rosenau 101 at 1:00</td>
<td>Dr. Sarah Albrecht</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>Special Topic – TBD</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Student Led</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>Health Disparities Seminar</td>
<td>Rosenau 101 at 1:00</td>
<td>Dr. Marlyn Allicock</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 17</td>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
<td>Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Apr 24</td>
<td>Oral presentations (continue) and course evaluation</td>
<td>McGav 2303</td>
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