### Course Title: Critical Issues in Public Health

**Course Number:** HSC 4631

**Dept:** PHC  
**Credits:** 3

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**Section:** 310 / 311  
**Reference Number:** 87905 / 89383

**Section:** 312/317  
**Reference Number:** 89847 / 93349

**Section:** 313  
**Reference Number:** 91110

**Section:** 314  
**Reference Number:** 91738

**Section:** 315 / 316  
**Reference Number:** 93187 / 93348

**Section:** 318  
**Reference Number:** 93350

### Course Description:

This course provides students the opportunity to learn about the multiple ways to view controversial topics in public health. The course covers current public health topics including biomedical issues, social & behavioral factors related to health, and environmental issues.

### Format of content presentation, activities and/or instructional methods:

Web-based (in Blackboard): posted readings/materials

### Course content organization:

Web-based (Blackboard) – [http://my.usf.edu](http://my.usf.edu)

### Textbook and Ordering materials:

**Required Text:**

There is no required textbook for this class. You will be using the website ProCon.org to complete assignments. ProCon.org is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. The purpose of this website is to provide resources for critical thinking and to educate without bias. It promotes informed citizenship by presenting research on controversial issues in a straightforward, nonpartisan format.
**Course Learning Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1) List and describe various methods used to investigate controversial public health topics.
2) Locate and evaluate the information from a variety of peer-reviewed publication databases and incorporate the information into a public health topic.
3) Differentiate how to present public health issues after editing out all personal biases.
4) Understand how to work in small discussion groups to maximize product development while minimizing time.
5) Determine how to explore public health issues that may or may not be of interest to your field of study including financial, ethical, social, behavioral, medical and environmental aspects of each discussion topic.
6) Discuss the challenges faced with complex public health issues that will be faced in the 21st century.

**Technology Requirements (e.g. software or hardware):**

Visit this website for software requirements and downloads:

[http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/eta/students_tech_requirements.htm](http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/eta/students_tech_requirements.htm)
Types of assessments and activities in the course:

**Syllabus Quiz** 10 points
This quiz is located under the Course Document tab on Blackboard.

**Tutorial: Plagiarism** 10 points
This assignment is located under the Course Assignments on Blackboard. You will complete a tutorial on plagiarism provided by the USF Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence. After completing the tutorial you will take the quiz. You will submit your quiz results on blackboard by taking a screenshot of your results page.

**APA Citation Practice Paper** 30 points
You will provide practice citations and references in correct APA style to familiarize yourself with APA referencing. This course requires the CORRECT use of APA. You will provide in-text citations and reference citations for 5 peer-reviewed journal articles.

**Blackboard Discussions** 25 points x 4 topics = 100 points
You will be assigned to a group during the first week of the semester. You will be working with this group for the entire semester as you discuss all sides of controversial, public health issues.

**Main Points Papers** 20 points x 4 topics = 80 points
This paper requires students to fully review all sides of public health issues. Students will gather main points from the pro and con sides of the issue and provide personal analysis of these main points. This serves to familiarize students with the issue and helps students formulate a formal opinion of the issue.

**Policy Papers** 30 points x 4 topics = 120 points
This culminating assignment entails writing a paper encouraging the development of a policy. Students will be assigned a side of the public health issue (they cannot choose) to favor in this paper. Students will select an organization whose mission and values advocates for your assigned side of the issue. You will describe the organization and persuade a legislator to pass your proposed policy. Students must develop a policy recommendation based on their side of the issue.

No extra credit is available in this course. Please refer to the grading rubric, so you know what is expected from each assignment.

Your instructor will grade each assignment within 2 weeks. Feedback will be provided for each assignment, so your grades should improve as the semester progresses.

Course Expectations:
Students are expected to log onto Blackboard several times per week to post discussions and turn in assignments.

For more information about the course contact:

Contact Info:
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Note: For problems accessing the course materials and other computer technical problems, click the Tech Assistance button in your course website and fill out a “Technical Problem Report Form”. Tech Assistance button links to the Technical Assistance page of the Office of Educational Technology & Assessment website at: http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/eta/techsupport.html. Students can also receive assistance via telephone at 813-974-6666, Mon-Fri 8:30am-5pm, or via email at eta@health.usf.edu.

Please Note: The information on this document is subject to change. The course instructor has the right to change any information posted in this document. Students should check the official course syllabus released during the first week of classes for any updates to this document.