Course Description: This course provides a broad overview of urban public health issues with an emphasis on community and environmental health. The course empirically applies the social gradient of health to examine special vulnerabilities of underserved populations, who often work, reside, attend school, and play in neighborhoods with disproportionate environmental exposures and lack access to medical care. Core topics covered in this course include: history and core disciplines within public health, the role of government, health inequities and disparities, occupational health and environmental health, infectious and chronic diseases, health care reform, tobacco and substance abuse, the role of media and controversies in public health.

Course Objectives: The main objective of this course is to acquaint students to current public health issues, especially as they concern community, societal, and environmental influences on health and well being. By the end of this course, students will have a broad understanding of how public health functions in relation to science and politics and the ways in which health is largely shaped by social determinants.

Required Textbook: Schneider, Mary Jane. *Introduction to Public Health.* 3rd edition. Available at Oxy Bookstore. Other reading material will be made available as handouts or electronic documents throughout the course.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Assignments are due on the date specified. Late assignments lose 10% of points for each week past the deadline.

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION [35% of grade]

   A. Attendance and Participation [10% of participation grade]
   You are expected to come to class prepared, having read the course material, participating in class discussions, and completing all assignments. If you are sick or know that you will be unable to attend class, please let the professor know during a prior class or by email (in advance) as soon as possible. One component of this grade will be occasional Public Health in the News discussions. Articles or segments of articles will be sent before class in order to be discussed at the beginning of class.

   B. Movie Critique [10% of participation grade]
We will watch one in-class documentary film and you will be expected to provide a written (1-2 pages double-spaced) analysis and critique for each. Be prepared to discuss the movies in class. The written assignment instructions are as follows. 1) Describe the public health topics that are evident in the documentary/movie; 2) Comment on the environmental, political or cultural factors that contributed to the public health conditions; 3) Based on your current knowledge or additional research, comment on how the public health conditions had an impact on society.

B. Student-led discussion [30% of participation grade]
The class will be divided by the instructor into groups of 3-4 students during the second week of class. Each group will be responsible for leading one class discussion on one of the core content areas identified in the schedule. Group members are encouraged to elicit participation from the class and challenge students to think creatively about contemporary public health problems and solutions. Group members are responsible for sending readings to the class prior to class discussion.

C. Debate [50% of participation grade]
Each class member will participate in a formal debate on a public health topic.

2. PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTION [35% of grade]
The class will divide into teams of 3-4. Each team will select a community organization, identify a key public health challenge it faces and develop a proposed public health intervention. Some class time will be devoted for preparation of the group project. More detailed instructions on each phase of the project will be provided. The components of the project include: Annotated Bibliography and Problem Analysis, Poster Session on problem and proposed intervention, and Peer Review of Individual Contributions.

3. FINAL EXAM [30% of grade]
A comprehensive final exam covering materials presented throughout the semester and composed of multiple choice and short answer sections will be administered during the final exam period. Salient topics from each session, including guest lectures, will be noted by the instructors as the class progresses. The learning objectives for each session will likely match the most salient points for each session. The content of the final exam will derive from these in-class notes, required readings and power point presentations. There will be a preparatory review session during class prior to the exam.

4. EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY [BUMP FINAL GRADE BY 1%]
You can watch a second movie/documentary outside of class and provide a written (1-2 pages double-spaced) analysis and critique. A list of health-related films is available on loan in the library, but you may select others. The written assignment is as follows. 1) Describe the public health topics that are evident in the documentary/movie; 2) Comment on the environmental, political or cultural factors that contributed to the public health conditions; 3) Based on your current knowledge or additional research, comment on how the public health conditions had an impact on society.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

[When we have guest speakers, we will combine classes and meet in Fowler 112]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Aug 28</td>
<td>What is Public Health?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 2</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Sept 4</td>
<td>-Philosophy of Public Health: Individual v Collective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-The Role of Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 9</td>
<td>Health Inequities and Disparities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Sept 11</td>
<td>Social Determinants of Health</td>
<td>Movie critique #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Guest speaker, Beatriz Solis, The California Endowment</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>funded by the Remsen Bird Fund</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 16</td>
<td>Epidemiology: fundamentals</td>
<td>Group 1 reading discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Sept 18</td>
<td>Epidemiology: outbreak exercise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 23</td>
<td>Social determinants of health review; History of activist physicians; U.S. health care “system”; Comparison to other health care systems</td>
<td>Group 2 reading discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Thu Sept 26</em></td>
<td><em>The Upstream Doctors</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30- 7:30 pm</td>
<td><em>Guest speaker: Dr. Rishi Manchanda, M.D., Veterans Administration</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Dumke West</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 30</td>
<td>Occupational Health</td>
<td>Group 3 reading discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Guest Speaker: Kevin Riley, PhD, MPH</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Oct 2</td>
<td><em>Controversies in Breast Cancer Advocacy</em></td>
<td>Group 4 reading discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:40- 7:30 pm*</td>
<td><em>Pink Ribbons, Inc Film Screening and Discussion</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Oct 7</td>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFECTIOUS DISEASE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds Oct 9</td>
<td>STDs and HIV</td>
<td>Group 5 reading discussion Bibliography &amp; Problem Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Oct 14</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Deliverables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Weds Oct 16     | **Vectorborne diseases in California**  
Guest Speakers: Rachel Civen, MD, MPH and Van Ngo, MPH, Acute Communicable Disease Control Program, LA County Dept. of Public Health |                                     |
| Mon Oct 21      | **Introduction to Chronic Disease Risk Factors and Epidemiology**  
Debate prep | Group 6 reading discussion |
| Weds Oct 23     | **Analyzing and responding to the obesity epidemic among American children; UEPI guest lecture; Debate preparation** |                                     |
| Mon Oct 28      | **Class Debate** | Group 7 reading discussion |
| **CHRONIC DISEASE** |                                                                      |                                     |
| Mon Oct 28      | **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Federal health programs and health care reform  
Dylan Roby, PhD  
UCLA Department of Health Policy and Management  
UCLA School of Public Health |                                     |
| Mon Nov 4       | **Prep time for poster session** |                                     |
| **POLICY: CREATION, RESPONSE, ADVOCACY** |                                                                      |                                     |
| Weds Nov 6      | **Introduction to substance abuse and addiction**  
Role play | Draft content poster |
| Mon Nov 11      | **Harm reduction and injection drug users**  
Ricky Bluthenthal, Ph.D.  
Department of Preventive Medicine  
University of Southern California |                                     |
| Weds Nov 13     | **Tobacco Control and Policy in LA**  
Guest Speaker: Monty Messex, MPH  
LA County Tobacco Control and Prevention Program |                                     |
| Mon Nov 18      | **Public Health Career Panel (TBD)** |                                     |
| Weds Nov 20     | **Poster Session** | Poster presentation |
| Mon Nov 25      | **Federal Food Programs** |                                     |
| Weds Nov 27     | **NO CLASS-Thanksgiving** |                                     |
| Mon Dec 2       | **Women’s Health** |                                     |
| Weds Dec 4      | **Review and wrap up** | Extra credit due |
| Tues Dec 10     | **Final Exam** |                                     |
| 6:30-9:30 pm    |                                                                      |                                     |
LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND READINGS

Week 1, Wed Aug 28: What is Public Health?
Learning objectives:
1) Discuss the three core functions of public health: assessment, assurance and policy development.
2) Identify 8 public health achievements in the US.
3) Identify the disciplines within public health.
4) Be able to define public health.

Week 2, Mon Sept 2
NO CLASS

Week 2, Wed Sept 4: Public Health Philosophy: Individual v Collective; Role of Government
Learning objectives:
1) Identify the three basic principles on which the public health system was founded: social justice, public responsibility for social health and welfare, and collective social action.
2) Explore the tradeoff between individual liberties and protection of the public’s health.
3) Understand how public health can engender controversy on religious or moral grounds.
4) Discuss the role of government in regulating health.

Readings:
1) MS: Prologue, Chaps 1-3
2) Bayer, Continuing Tensions

Week 3, Mon Sept 9: Health Inequities and Disparities
Learning objectives
1) Understand the role of SES, racism and disempowerment on health outcomes in different communities.
2) Describe the role of housing, education, jobs/wages on health outcomes.

Readings:
1) Review health equity topics on left column of Unnatural Causes website
   http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/resources.php

Week 3, Weds Sept 11: Social Determinants of Health
Learning objectives
1) Define health equity.
2) Explore the nexus between health and well-being and social conditions.
3) Discuss social and economic impacts on health.

Readings: None due (Movie Critique due)

Week 4, Mon Sept 16: Epidemiology Fundamentals
Learning objectives
1) Introduce the concept of epidemiology which studies the causes and patterns of disease occurrence in the population and the factors that influence these patterns.
2) Understand that epidemiology is used to perform the public health’s assessment function.

Readings
1) MS Chaps 4-6
**Week 4, Wed Sept 18: Epidemiology in the Field**
Learning objectives
1) Learn the who, where, what and when of disease investigation using basic math principles.

Readings
1) MS Chaps 7-8

**Week 5, Mon Sept 23: Health Care Systems**
Learning objectives
1) Learn the significance of Virchow’s report on the typhus epidemic as the foundation of the social determinants of health review; trace the SDH movement to current public health efforts.
2) Explore the evolution of a social determinants approach to health through a focus on several activist physicians and public health professionals.
3) Introduce the key features of the U.S. health care “system” and briefly compare to national health care systems. Analyze the U.S. health care system through the lens of social determinants of health.

Readings
2) Manchanda, The Upstream Doctors. Prologue, Parts 1 and 2.
   a. Download either to your Kindle, smartphone or computer. Instructions for how to download are available via the following link: [http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/ref=dig_arl_box?ie=UTF8&docId=1000493771](http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/ref=dig_arl_box?ie=UTF8&docId=1000493771). Whether you download via Kindle or using the free Kindle app on your smartphone, tablet or computer you will need an Amazon account.
3) MS Chapter 27

**Week 5, THURS Sept 26: Health Care Systems**
Learning objectives
1) Understand Manchanda main criticisms of the U.S. health care system and his vision for improvement.

Readings
1) Manchanda, The Upstream Doctors. Part 3, 4 and 5.

**Week 6, Mon Sept 30: Occupational Health**
Learning objectives
1) Understand the history and role of worker health and safety practices in the US.
2) Explore the different occupations that have a high incidence of work-associated health hazards.

Readings

**Week 6, Wed Oct 2: Controversies in Breast Cancer Advocacy**
Learning objectives
1) Be able to summarize the main themes of the documentary.
2) Critically analyze the documentary; it’s evidence-base, arguments, logic and style.
Readings

3) MS p 419

**Week 7, Mon Oct 7: Environmental Health**

Learning objectives

1) Understand how pollutants in air, water, soil and food can affect health.
2) Describe the role of government in regulating clean air, food and water, sewage and wastes.
3) Define environmental justice and describe how communities may be adversely impacted by unhealthy environments.

Readings

1) MS chapters 20-23
2) Andrea Hricko, “Global Trade Comes Home, *Environmental Health Perspectives.*”

**Week 8, Wed Oct 9: STDs and HIV**

Learning objectives

1) Understand the epidemiology of STDs and HIV in LA County.
2) Describe health disparities in STD/HIV prevalence among particular age, ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

Readings

1) UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies Fact Sheets: *Prevention Needs: Young MSM and women, IDUs, sex workers, global efforts*

**Week 8, Mon Oct 14:**

NO CLASS

**Week 7, Wed Oct 16: Infectious Diseases**

Learning objectives

1) Describe common infectious diseases in the nation’s early history.
2) Understand the chain of disease infection and modes of disease transmission.
3) Identify common concerns and misperceptions about vaccines.

Readings

1) MS chapters 9-10

**Week 9, Mon Oct 21 Chronic disease risk factors and epidemiology**

Learning objectives

1) Be able to describe the epidemiologic and demographic transitions.
2) Gain basic understanding of the epidemiology of chronic disease/ risk factors in the US.
3) Analyze data related to trends in chronic disease.
4) Critically analyze the positive and negative influence of pro-profit corporations on chronic disease in the US.

Readings

1) MS chapter 11
3) Brody, Diabesity,’ a Crisis in an Expanding Country, NYT 2005

**Week 9, Wed Oct 23: Obesity in U.S. children**

Learning objectives

1) Summarize the trend of childhood obesity in the US, the variations in prevalence and main risk factors.
2) Understand the implications of an epidemic in childhood obesity on the future health of our children.
3) Gain exposure to two responses to the epidemic being implemented by the Urban and Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental.

Readings

1) MS Chapter 16
2) LA County Dept of Public Health, Childhood obesity: tipping the balance towards healthy, active children. July 2008

**Week 10, Mon Oct 28: Class Debate Day**

Debate Resolution: Soda taxes are an effective way to reduce obesity/obesity-related disease; must be enacted.

Learning objectives

1) Gain a thorough understanding of the debate topic; memorize key arguments and facts.
2) Advance ability to work in a team and act and react quickly.
3) Appreciate alternative perspectives on a contentious issue in public health.

Readings

1) On the NYT website, search “soda tax”
2) Check Moodle folder for this session for supportive articles, websites and other information

**Week 10, Wed Oct 30: Federal Health Programs and Health Care Reform**

Learning objectives

1) Describe the major federal health programs: their mandate, evolution, challenges, stakeholders.
2) Understand the key tenets and controversies surrounding the Affordable Care Act.

Readings

2) US Commerce Dept, Patient Protection and Affordable Healthcare Act,
3) [http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf](http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf) Scroll to page 10 and review Title IV, Prevention of Chronic Disease and Improved Public Health

**Week 11, Mon Nov 4: In class prep time for Poster Session**

Learning objectives

1) Meet with group members and develop written plan for poster session.

Readings: None due today

**Week 11, Wed Nov 6: Introduction to Substance Abuse and Addition**
Learning objectives
1) Describe the most commonly abused drugs by youth/adolescents.
2) Understand the impact of the war on drugs and other health policy initiatives on drug use consumption.

Readings
2) Highlights of the 2010 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits. 7/2/12

Week 12, Mon Nov 11: *Harm reduction and injection drug users*
Learning objectives: TBD
Readings: TBD

Week 12, Wed Nov 13: *Tobacco Control and Policy in Los Angeles*
Learning objectives
1) Understand the policy adoption model for tobacco control policy in Los Angeles.
2) Describe the role of community organizing in reducing tobacco access and use.
Readings: TBD

Week 13, Mon Nov 18: *Public Health Career Panel-TBD*
Learning objectives TBD
Readings: TBD

Week 13, Wed Nov 20: *In-class Poster Session*
Learning objectives
1) Present your group’s identified public health problem and proposed intervention to class members.
2) Learn about other public health topics through classmate’s proposals.
Readings: None for today

Week 14, Mon Nov 25: *Federal Food Programs*
Learning objectives
1) Be able to identify the major federal food programs; their mission, stakeholders, evolution, and current leadership and structure
2) Appreciate the intensely political nature of these programs; gain in-depth understanding of the linkages between Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Farm Bill
3) Appreciate the strong influence of pro-profit corporations on the federal food programs

Readings:
3) Farm Bill FAQ. Food Research Action Center. [http://frac.org/farm-bill-faq/](http://frac.org/farm-bill-faq/)
Week, 15 Wed Nov 27, No Class

Week 16, Mon Dec 2: Women’s Health
Learning objectives
   1) Learn about the top 10 causes of death among women in the US.
   2) Understand the role of ethnicity and SES on women’s health status.
Readings:

Week 16, Wed Dec 4: Review and Wrap Up

Tues Dec 10 FINAL EXAM