

**Disparities in Health in America:  
Working Toward Social Justice**

**GRADUATE SYLLABUS – Fall 2015**

**Instructors of Record For Graduate Students**

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Office Hours – By appointment only  
Class Time –Tuesday, 5:30- 8:30 p.m.

**Course Description**

More than thirty years of research demonstrate that there are wide disparities in health throughout America. Health disparities are differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist when specific population subgroups are compared. It is now known that the distribution of health is not at random, but that health is systematically distributed according to different levels of social advantage. This course will examine the social, societal, and genetic/epigenetic factors that are fundamental in creating disparities in health. In addition, the course will focus on the formulation of public policy objectives to reduce and ultimately eliminate health disparities.

**Course Objectives**

Candidates will be expected to:

- a. Acquire introductory knowledge and experience related to the complex social, behavioral and medical determinants of populations' health, which will enable them to understand the origins of health disparities within a population and to conceptualize programs and policies to reduce and eliminate those disparities.
- b. Examine and gain an understanding of the latest findings of specific research that demonstrate that there are wide disparities in health among certain populations.
- c. Demonstrate awareness of factors that currently contribute to wide disparities in health among certain populations.
- d. Identify the role of (various) health professionals in eliminating disparities.
- e. Investigate community and state-level resources that can be mobilized for planning, policy development, program interpretation and funding for reduction of health disparities.
- f. Develop a global vision of inequalities in health and medical care.

### Student Conduct

1. Each registered student **must sign-in** at the beginning and the end of each class. Starting on **August 23, 2016**, sign up sheets will be collected during the class. Starting on **August 30, 2016** the sheet will be taken up **promptly 20 minutes** after the class has started. Two absences will be granted starting **August 23, 2016**, so please do not ask any of the faculty or staff about signing in if you are late after **August 30**. You still will be responsible for signing out at the end of class. So if you leave early, please do not ask about signing out early.
2. All classes will start promptly at 5:30 p.m. Please be courteous to Visiting Professors, fellow students and faculty by being **on time for class**.
3. Cell phones, pagers, etc. **must be turned off** before coming to class.

### Policy of Academic Honesty

All students are subject to the UHD Academic Honesty Policy (PS 03.A.19) and to all other university-wide policies and procedures as set forth in the UHD University Catalog and Student Handbook. **Plagiarism and cheating** will be treated as academic misconduct. **Plagiarism** consists of taking and/or using the ideas, work, and/or writings of another person as one's own. For this class, this means ***you are expected to do your own work***. Copying each other's work or getting someone else to do your assignments for you is considered both **plagiarism and cheating**. Your grade will be based on *your* performance. This means: (1) *all work you hand in to be graded for this class must be your own*, and (2) *no unauthorized materials or resources may be used as "aids" on exams*. The penalty for an academic honesty violation on a significant course requirement such as a term paper/project or final examination shall be an "F" for the course.

### Accommodations for Disability

The University of Houston-Downtown complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, UHD strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a documented disability requiring academic adjustments/auxiliary aids, please contact the Office of Disability Services, One Main St., Suite 409-South, Houston, TX 77002. (Office) 713-226-5227 (Website) <http://www.uhd.edu/disability/> (Email) [disabilityservices@uhd.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@uhd.edu)

### Course Evaluation

All students begin this course with an **A** grade. In order to maintain this grade, the following expectations must be met.

Class Participation	25%
Research Paper	50%
Final Exam	25%

- **Attendance Policy** - Class attendance and participation throughout the semester is a **requirement** for successful completion of the course as dictated by University policy and the course instructors. Students are responsible for all information in the lectures and the discussions that follow. If you are absent for family emergencies or illness please send an email to your institution Instructor of Record and Dr. Stacy Lloyd at **Stacy.Lloyd@bcm.edu**. All students are responsible for retrieving any class materials via the Blackboard website.

***For students registered at UHD:*** *Your failure to attend class or make contact with faculty to adequately explain your absence by the 10th class calendar day of the semester will result in your being administratively dropped from this course. Being dropped from this course may affect your enrollment status and/or your financial aid eligibility.*

• **Power point presentations, syllabus/lecture and course schedule will be available on the University of Houston-Downtown Blackboard website.**

• **Research Paper** – Students should select a research topic and have it approved by **Dr. Lovell A. Jones, no later than October 4, 2016**. Submit your research topic with a brief abstract of the subject to Dr. Jones via email and approved by him **before** you write your research paper. The topic should then be thoroughly researched, the information analyzed, and specific aims for further action identified. Only professional literature is to be used and cited, i.e. no use of the popular press.

However, please take into consideration the following requirements in selecting a research topic:

- 1) provide an adequate background on a disparity topic
- 2) how would you address the disparities with regard to reducing it?
- 3) if it worked, what would be the expected outcome?
- 4) if it did not work, what would you change to improve the approach?

The student is then responsible for writing a clear, concise plan of action to address the disparity using an RO1 grant format (**15-20 pages excluding references**, double-spaced, 12 pt. font). Please visit the website: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r01.htm> for grant format. The research paper is due to **Dr. Lovell Jones on or before November 29, 2016**.

**Research Paper Format:**

- 1” margins: Left, right, top, bottom
- Header: Name on every page
- Footer: Number at the bottom of page (centered)
- Spacing: Double Space
- Title Page: Name, Title of Topic, Health Disparities Course, Date
- Abstract of Proposal
- Statement of Specific Aims (Goals)
- Background and Significance
- Preliminary Studies/Progress Report
- Research Design and Methods
- Expected Results
- References

• **Final Exam** –This will be a comprehensive, take-home exam distributed on **November 29, 2016**. The exam is due to be returned in class or via email on or before **December 6, 2016 in class at 5:30 p.m. or sent via email to hdeartconsortium@gmail.com** with a copy to stacy.lloyd@bcm.edu. **(NO EXCEPTIONS)**.

**Grading Scale**

A+ = 97-100	C+ = 77-79	Minimum Passing Score for UTSPH School
A = 94-96	C = 74-76	
A- = 90-93	<u>C- = 70-73</u>	
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69	
B = 84-86	D = 65-66	
B- = 80-83	D- = 60-64	
	F = 63 or less	

With the **EXCEPTION OF THE RESEARCH PAPER**, each Masters Level Graduate Student will have the option of following the Undergraduate Syllabus **\*\***(see below). However, We will need a written statement of **such by the second class (August 30, 2016)**.

**\*\*GRADING OPTION:**

- Quiz and Midterm Exam - There will a take home **quiz given after** the first lecture on September 1, 2015. This quiz will be take a home exam in an essay format to be returned in class on the following week. A formal Midterm will be distributed on **October 11, 2016**. The midterm exam will be a take home exam in an essay format. The midterm exam should be returned in class on **October 18, 2016** at 5:30 p.m at the beginning of that class. Undergraduate and MPH/MS (option) Students will take the Mid-term Exam. If you make an “A” (90 or above) on your Midterm Exam, you will have the OPTION to take **Either** the Final Exam **OR** write a Research Paper

**Course Evaluation**

All students begin this course with **A** grade. In order to maintain this grade, the following expectations must be met.

Class Participation	25% or 33%
Midterm Exam	25% or 33%
Research Paper	25% or 33%
Final Exam	25% or 33%

**No** extra credit is offered or will be accepted. **No** grades will be dropped. A grade of “**I**” for incomplete is given only when an emergency prevents a student from completing the work in the course.