I. Course Description

This course will provide an overview of how politics have affected food access and availability throughout time, nationally and internationally. It will engage participants in discussions of US food assistance programs and how they impact a population’s health. Participants will also explore the intricacies of how policy affects an individual’s autonomy in choosing the foods they eat. It will empower participants to think critically about food assistance policies and programs and explore the role they can play in local and national efforts and decisions regarding food and health.
This course fulfills an elective requirement for the 7-credit, Health Disparities Interdisciplinary Concentration (HDIC). The HDIC addresses the unequal burden of health risks, morbidity and mortality experienced by minority cultural and social groups in the U.S., as well as unequal quality of and access to healthcare.

**Competencies:**
The core competencies identified in the HRSA Council of Linkages model that apply to this course include:

2. **Policy Development/Program Planning Skills** Tier 2
   2.1 Ensures state/Tribal/community health improvement planning uses community health assessments and other information related to the health of a community (e.g., current data and trends; proposed federal, state, and local legislation; commitments from organizations to take action)
   2.6 Develops options for policies, programs, and services (e.g., secondhand smoking policies, data use policies, HR policies, immunization programs, food safety programs)
   2.7 Examines the feasibility (e.g., fiscal, social, political, legal, geographic) and implications of policies, programs, and services
   2.12 Evaluates policies, programs, and services (e.g., outputs, outcomes, processes, procedures, return on investment)

5. **Community Dimensions of Practice Skills** Tier 2
   5.10 Advocates for policies, programs, and resources that improve health in a community (e.g., using evidence to demonstrate the need for a program, communicating the impact of a program)

6. **Public Health Sciences Skills** Tier 2
   6.7 Uses evidence in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving policies, programs, and services

8. **Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills** Tier 2
   8.1 Describes public health as part of a larger inter-related system of organizations that influence the health of populations at local, national, and global levels
   8.9 Advocates for the role of public health in providing population health services

II. **Course Prerequisites**

Course Prerequisites: Graduate or professional student or health professional in a health-related field such as public health, medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, nutrition, social work or related fields. Other individuals interested in the course should contact the course instructor for permission. **Students are required to complete a pre-course assignment prior to the first day of class, which is explained below in the section on course activities.**

III. **Course Goals and Objectives**

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe the interconnection between food insecurity, food politics and obesity in the US.
- Describe how policy has affected food availability, nutrition and health through history.
- Explain the effects of food assistance programs on the health of the population, with particular focus on obesity.
- Describe ways for individuals to become active participants in food policy and advocacy efforts.
- Reflect on the experience of living on a very limited food budget as outlined in the SNAP challenge.

IV. **Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations**

The course will consist of completing a SNAP Challenge project, in-class lectures, supplementary readings, in-class discussions and debates, and a final project that includes a writing policy brief. Students are expected to attend all course lectures and discussions, as well as to spend at least 30 hours of additional time on supplemental readings and the completion of a course project.
This course does not utilize a text book, rather relies on a series of readings taken from peer-reviewed journals and professional practice papers which are key references for specific topics covered within the course. Students are expected to read the articles prior to class, as they provide background information that is critical to participation in course discussions. Students should contact the course instructors if they have difficulty accessing the required readings.

V. Course Text and Readings

The required and optional readings are available through the UMN Library, which can be accessed through the course Moodle site.

Access Course Moodle Site

- go to www.umn.edu click on the "myU" button
- login with your University ID and password
- scroll to your course and click on the Moodle site link

Day 1: Overview & Historical Perspective


Day 2: Childhood Obesity and Politics


Day 3: Food Insecurity and Food Politics with a focus on SNAP


Day 4: Food Insecurity and Food Politics with a focus on Food Pantries and Food Banks


VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-course Assignments</th>
<th>SNAP Challenge (for description, see below section on course activities)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete readings prior to the start of class</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1- Monday, June 1,</th>
<th>Introductions – Everyone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Overview- Aida Miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015

Historical perspective: Food Politics and its effect on food availability, hunger and health.- J. Stang.

Video: The Great Famine (Historical/ International experience).

Day 2, Tuesday, June 2, 2015

Childhood Obesity and Politics – Aida Miles

- Changing statistics
- The WIC program and its impact on child obesity
- School Meals – Regulation or Over-regulation

Guest Speakers: Susie Nanney, PhD, MS, RD (need to confirm). “Bridging the Research to Health Policy Gap through a Health Disparities Lens,” and Jane Bende (need to confirm), MN School Nutrition Association Public Policy Chair, “Challenges and Opportunities in New USDA School Meals Guidelines.”

Day 3-Wednesday, June 3, 2015

SNAP Challenge Relection paper due

Food Insecurity and Food Politics – The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Aida Miles

- SNAP challenge- lessons learned
- Food Insecurity, Food Politics and Obesity- what is the link?
- Class debate – pro and con regulation of sugar sweetened beverages.

Guest Speaker: John Randolph, MN Hunger Solutions SNAP Outreach associate (need to confirm).

Day 4-Friday, June 5, 2015

The Right to Choose – Whose is it? – Aida Miles

- Conflicts and controversies surrounding healthy food policies.
- Small groups – Food Policy design and presentations

Guest Speaker: Lisa Horn, Executive Director, The Open Door Pantry (formerly Eagan Resource Center) (need to confirm). Healthy Foods Policy at the Open Door.

Post course assignment – introduction, questions/answers. –Aida Miles

Post Course Assignment

Write a policy brief. Explained below in the section entitled Writing a Policy Brief and on the course Moodle site. Due date: June 19

COURSE ACTIVITIES

Pre-Course: SNAP Challenge (Reflective paper due Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 8am, via Moodle).

The issue of food insecurity is central to an understanding of food choice, food policy health equity and obesity prevention. Prior to the start of class we want you to spend some time experiencing what being food insecure might feel like to the thousands of Americans who fit this category.

In 2007, Congress members were issued a challenge. They were asked to attempt to live on a typical “food stamp” budget. This was called the Food Stamp Challenge. Since then, hundreds of groups across the US have participated in SNAP (the new name for “Food Stamps”) challenges.

As your pre-course assignment, you will also take the “SNAP Challenge”, but with slight adjustments. You will create a 3-day menu with the assumption that you are a SNAP recipient and thus have a limited amount of funds to spend on food. Then you will “live out” this challenge by following your menu for 3 days. After completing the challenge, write a reflection on the experience.

Complete step-by-step directions are found in Moodle.

Your reflective paper is due by 8am on Wednesday, June 3, 2015, submitted via Moodle. Please bring a copy to class since we will be discussing your experiences.

Class Debate (Wednesday, June 3, in class)
Prior to the start of the course students will be divided into 2 groups and will be provided with articles to review regarding regulation of sugar-sweetened beverages as an obesity-prevention tactic. One group will be asked to focus on the Pros of regulation, and the other group will focus on the Cons of regulation. On Monday and Tuesday, June 1 and 2, groups will have 45 minutes to work in class to organize their thoughts about each issue. On Wednesday, June 3rd, we will have a debate in which both groups will present and support their arguments.

Complete directions for the class debate are found in Moodle.

**Food Policy Design** (Friday, June 4th, in class)

Students will be divided into small groups. Each group will be given a site and scenario (like a school where most students receive free lunches, a food pantry in a primarily Hmong community, etc). Each group will come up with a list of food policies that this site should utilize. Groups will then present their set of policies to the class and explain why they feel these policies should be instituted and enforced.

**Post Course: Writing a Policy Brief** (due Friday, June 19, 8am via Moodle)

Each student will write a Policy Brief in a topic related to this course. The policy brief topic must be approved by Aida Miles no later than June 5, 2015.

The following resources, found at the Women's and Children's Health Policy Center's website will be instrumental in drafting a policy brief:

**Video:**

This module is intended to help public health students and practicing professionals to:
- Understand the basic elements of a policy brief
- Identify the information needs of different audiences
- Synthesize data to convey policy implications
- Craft concise language
- Organize information effectively

**Exercise:**

**Exercise:**

Additional directions about your policy brief are found in Moodle.

It is due no later than 08:00 AM on Friday, June 19, 2015, as a Moodle attachment in Word format.

**VII. Evaluation and Grading**

Evaluation of student performance will be weighed as follows:

SNAP Challenge and Reflection 30%
This course is offered A/F or S/N

- **A/F letter grade will be determined by total effort as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.000 (93-100%)</td>
<td>Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.667 (90-92.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.333 (88-89.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.000 (83-87.9%)</td>
<td>Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.667 (80-82.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.333 (78-79.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.000 (73-77.9%)</td>
<td>Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.667 (70-72.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.333 (68-69.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.000 (60-67.9%)</td>
<td>Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to:
http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html.

Course Evaluation
The SPH will collect student course evaluations electronically using a software system called CoursEval: www.sph.umn.edu/courseval. The system will send email notifications to students when they can access and complete their course evaluations. Students who complete their course evaluations promptly will be able to access their final grades just as soon as the faculty member renders the grade in SPHGrades: www.sph.umn.edu/grades. All students will have access to their final grades through OneStop two weeks after the last day of the semester regardless of whether they completed their course evaluation or not. Student feedback on course content and faculty teaching skills are an important means for improving our work. Please take the time to complete a course evaluation for each of the courses for which you are registered.

Incomplete Contracts
A grade of incomplete “I” shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., documented illness or hospitalization, death in family, etc.), the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an “I” requires that a contract be initiated and completed by the student before the last official day of class, and signed by both the student and instructor. If an incomplete is deemed appropriate by the instructor, the student in consultation with the instructor, will specify the time and manner in which the student will complete course requirements. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year (or earlier if designated by the student's college). For more information and to initiate an incomplete contract, students should go to SPHGrades at: www.sph.umn.edu/grades.

University of Minnesota Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy - A link to the policy can be found at onestop.umn.edu.

VIII. Other Course Information and Policies
For full-semester courses, students may change their grade option, if applicable, through the second week of the semester. Grade option change deadlines for other terms (i.e. summer and half-semester courses) can be found at onestop.umn.edu. The grading option for Public Health Institute courses may not be changed after the second day of class for 4-day courses. Grading options for 2 day courses may not be changed after the first day class.

Course Withdrawal
Students should refer to the Refund and Drop/Add Deadlines for the particular term at onestop.umn.edu for information and deadlines for withdrawing from a course. As a courtesy, students should notify their instructor and, if applicable, advisor of their intent to withdraw.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course after the noted final deadline for a particular term must contact the School of Public Health Office of Admissions and Student Resources at sph-ssc@umn.edu for further information.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE COURSES
School of Public Health students may withdraw from a 4-day course through the second day of class without permission and no “W” will appear on the transcript. Students enrolled in 2-day courses may withdraw only through the first day of class. After these withdrawal deadlines pass students are required to do the following.

- The student must contact and notify their advisor and course instructor informing them of the decision to withdraw from the course.
- The student must send an e-mail to the SPH Student Services Center (SSC) at sph-ssc@umn.edu. The email must provide the student name, ID#, course number, section number, semester, and year with
instructions to withdraw the student from the course, and acknowledgement that the instructor and advisor have been contacted.

- The advisor and instructor must email the SSC acknowledging the student is canceling the course. All parties must be notified of the student’s intent.
- The SSC will complete the process by withdrawing the student from the course after receiving all emails (student, advisor, and instructor). A “W” will be placed and remain on the student transcript for the course.

**Student Conduct Code**

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:


Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

**Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference:


**Scholastic Dishonesty**

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see:

http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class—e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

**Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences**

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see:

http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html.

**Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials**
Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html.

Sexual Harassment
“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action
The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

Disability Accommodations
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/.

Mental Health and Stress Management
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

The Office of Student Affairs at the University of Minnesota
The Office for Student Affairs provides services, programs, and facilities that advance student success, inspire students to make life-long positive contributions to society, promote an inclusive environment, and enrich the University of Minnesota community.

Units within the Office for Student Affairs include, the Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education, Boynton Health Service, Central Career Initiatives (CCE, CDes, CFANS), Leadership Education and Development –Undergraduate Programs (LEAD-UP), the Office for Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, the Office for Student Engagement, the Parent Program, Recreational Sports, Student and Community Relations, the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Student Parent HELP Center, Student Unions & Activities, University Counseling & Consulting Services, and University Student Legal Service.

For more information, please see the Office of Student Affairs at http://www.osa.umn.edu/index.html.
Academic Freedom and Responsibility: for courses that do not involve students in research

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

OR:

Academic Freedom and Responsibility, for courses that involve students in research

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom and conduct relevant research. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

When conducting research, pertinent institutional approvals must be obtained and the research must be consistent with University policies.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".

Template update 9/2014