I. Course Description

Health disparities will be eliminated when health equity is achieved. Achieving health equity requires dismantling systems of structured inequity and putting in their place systems in which all people can develop to their full potential. In order to do this, a clear understanding of the axes of inequality is necessary. The main objectives of this course will be to: (1) identify and describe the axes of inequity (e.g. socioeconomics, income distribution, race, etc); (2) demonstrate the link between these axes and health disparities; (3) trace the impact of social policy on the axes of inequality and health disparities. Knowing, for example, that income is associated with positive outcomes does not assure that giving people more income will improve their health status. Effective social policy requires a detailed understanding of the dynamics through which these outcomes occur.

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

**Analytical/Assessment Skills:**
1.2.1 Describes factors affecting the health of a community (e.g., equity, income, education, environment)

**Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills:**
8.2.2 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
II. Course Prerequisites

None

III. Course Goals and Objectives

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Describe and operationalize the difference between social determinant of health and social determinants of equity
2. Describe the link between social determinants of health, social determinants of equity and disparate health outcomes
3. Examine structures, policies practices, norms and values within our public health and social services infrastructure and their impact on health and health disparities

IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

This course combines lectures with individual and group work during class
- Students are expected to complete a series of pre-readings and daily readings that will be explored during the class
- Students are expected to write a daily reflection that draws from the discussions during the day and the readings assigned for the next day.

Readings and assignments
- Students are expected to spend 3-4 hours preparing before the first class session and 2-3 hours at the end of each day reading and completing assignments
- Students are expected to read all of the required readings by their due dates

Participation during class
- Students are expected to participate in class discussions and small group activities. Each participant will be provided multiple opportunities to make in-class contributions such as group reports or summary of discussions.

Final assignment
- Group project presentation due on final day of class
- Final paper due – June 3

Course Text and Readings

The required and optional readings are available through the UMN Library, which can be accessed through the course Moodle site. Course readings will be available on the course Moodle site by April 12.

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

Pre reading:


2. Adler NE, Newman K. Socioeconomic Disparities In Health: Pathways And Policies Inequality in education, income, and occupation exacerbates the gaps between the health “haves” and “have-nots.” Health Affairs. 2002.21(2).60-76.
3. MN Advancing Health Equity Report; pg 1-130.  

4. Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report;  
(Peruse, no need to read all 146 pages at this point)

5. Williams, DR. Jackson PB. Social Sources Of Racial Disparities In Health Policies in societal domains, far removed from traditional health policy, can have decisive consequences for health; pg 1-11. http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/24/2/325.full.pdf+html


7. Mechanic D. Disadvantage, Inequality and Social Policy. Health Affairs. 2002 21(2); pg 48-59; http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/21/2/48.full


Day One:

1. Commission on Reconciliation and Equity


3. Social and Economic Policies as Health Policy: Moving Toward a New Approach to Improving Health in America  
http://www.npc.umich.edu/publications/policy_briefs/brief18/

4. United States of Health, Social Policy is Health Policy:  
http://unitedstatesofhealth.com/2012/04/12/social-policy-is-health-policy/


Day Two:

1. Revisit Independent *Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report*


9. Kawachi Race and Social Class…Think about what Dr. Jones said—income inequality without addressing the background the mechanisms, structures, norms and values we would start to see a stratification by race again

Day Three:


4. The Inequality Chronicles. https://placesjournal.org/explore-places/
### VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Daily Schedule</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pre-Course | Complete pre-course reading assignment - due on first day of class.  
2-3 Discussion questions prepared – due on first day of class.  
Readings will be available on the course Moodle site April 12 | |
| Day 1 | Overview and Introduction to Course  
Health Disparities, Health Inequities, Social Determinants—What’s the Difference?  
Identifying Axes of Inequity-systems of power  
Guest Speaker: Michael Belton, Juvenile Corrections Administration at Ramsey County, Minnesota  
Reflection paper and discussion questions | Complete reading assignment - due on May 24  
Assignment due: Reflection Paper and Discussion Questions |
| Day 2 | Axes of Inequity: Exploring Race  
Health Policy and Social Policy-What's the connection?  
Guest Speaker: Acooa Lee Ellis, MPP, Director of Advocacy, Catholic Charities  
Group Discussion: Reflection paper and discussion questions | Complete reading assignment – due on May 25  
Assignment due: Reflection Paper and Discussion Questions |
| Day 3 | Axes of Inequity: Exploring Socioeconomic Status  
SES and Health: Does a Rising Tide Lift All Boats?  
Intersecting Axes of Inequity  
Guest Speaker: Former Minneapolis Mayor, Sharon Sayles Belton  
Group Discussion: Reflection paper and discussion questions | Complete reading assignment – due on May 27  
Assignment due: Reflection Paper and Discussion Questions |
| Day 4 | Axes of Inequity: Where do we go from here?  
Guest Speaker: Lauren Gilchrist, MPH, Special Advisor to Governor Dayton on Health Reform  
Group Discussion: Reflection paper and discussion questions Final presentations | Presentations  
Assignment due: Reflection Paper and Discussion Questions  
Final Paper: Due June 3 |
VII. Evaluation and Grading

**Daily Assignments:**

The overarching goal of this course is to foster thoughtful discussion and learn from one another. There are two daily assignments that I hope will allow for this:

**Reflection Papers and Discussion Questions.** Students will write and submit a 1 ½ to 2-page integrative reflection (single spaced, 1” margins) based on the readings and class material each night. The reflection should address (1) raising questions, criticisms, and issues that the readings have stimulated about the topic (integrated across readings), and (2) the last one-quarter to one-third of a page should be devoted to **approximately 5-7 integrative discussion questions** you propose based on the readings (bullet points are fine for the questions). The questions should not have a Yes/No answer, but rather pose a question that would lead to a discussion. Questions should cover issues/questions that were brought up by the readings, comparisons or contradictions in readings, links between readings across different topic areas, and/or controversial issues.

The reflection papers and discussion questions will be used to guide small group discussions so be ready to share your thoughts with your classmates! In addition to content, reaction papers will be graded for grammar, clarity, and organization as well as the use of and reference to class material. Students might consider using their reflection papers to build towards their final paper (described below). (25% of final grade, 10 points per paper, 30 points total)

**Final Paper and Presentation:**

Select a social policy (either federal, state or county level) and explore how it has played out with respect to health inequities and disparities. **Things to consider:** What do you think the implications have been for health outcomes? What about for health disparities/health inequities? What axes of inequity were impacted? Were certain communities disproportionately impacted? Why or why not? How? Consider if and how the policy should be changed or improved to better promote health equity. If it can’t be changed, what new policy would you create if you had the power and the political backing to do so? I encourage you to think big and get creative here. Really think outside the box. While its important to consider feasibility when creating policy, that is not the purpose of this assignment. (6-8 pages single spaced) (40% of final grade).

**Presentation.** Each student will present to the class in a presentation on the last day of class (10 minutes). The paper supporting the presentation will be due at **11:55 pm on June 3.** You will give a brief presentation summarizing your final paper on the last day of class. You will broadly introduce the topic and components of your paper and summarize the conclusion or take-home-message. (10% of final grade).

25 points/25% Attendance and active class participation
30 points/25% Daily assignments (Reflection Papers and Discussion Questions)
15 points/10% Presentation
30 points/40% Final paper

Failure to complete any of the assignments will result in an “F” or “N” (unsatisfactory) grade.

Due to the experiential nature of this course, participation in all 4 days of the course is required for a satisfactory grade. Therefore no options exist for making up missed days.

Late submission of the final assignments will result in a reduction of 1 letter grade on the A-F scale. Extenuating circumstances, such as personal health issues, may be considered for late submission if prior approval is sought from the instructors.
This course is offered A/F or S/N

- **A/F letter grade will be determined by total effort as follows**
- **S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points/Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.667</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>F = below 60%</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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</tbody>
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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.
VIII. Other Course Information and Policies

Grade Option Change (if applicable)

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: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

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

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".

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