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Chronic Disease Epidemiology - Course Syllabus 2011-2012

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Chronic Disease Epidemiology

Spring 2012

Instructor: Bettina F. Drake, PhD, MPH
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Course Meetings: Thursdays 9 AM – 12 Noon
Course Location: TBD
Office Hours: By arrangement

Course Overview:

Chronic diseases account for more than 70% of the annual deaths in the U.S. This course provides students the opportunity to apply the methods learned in the foundation epidemiologic methods courses to chronic disease epidemiology problems. We will survey the major chronic diseases in the U.S. with emphasis on recent epidemiology research and findings. Classes will focus on the disease of interest and examine a methodological challenge related to studying the epidemiology of the disease. Additionally, we will examine the challenges associated with key chronic disease risk factors and their behavioral epidemiology. Students will then think through the challenges of applying their epidemiologic knowledge of the disease to a prevention question.

Course Format:

Classes will include interactive presentations by the course instructor and guest lecturers. There will be assigned readings for every class, assignments and a class presentation. Class participation by students is essential to the success of the course.

Course Objectives:

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

- ✓ List the major risk factors for particular chronic diseases
- ✓ List the risk factors for each of the leading chronic diseases.
- ✓ Understand epidemiological aspects of chronic disease
- ✓ Present a detailed description of the epidemiology of one chronic disease.
- ✓ Discuss contemporary approaches to the prevention and control of chronic disease from the public health perspective
- ✓ Understand common applications of the basic epidemiological concepts and methods to chronic disease prevention and control programs
- ✓ Understand the importance of chronic disease surveillance programs and chronic disease registries

Recommended Textbook:

Reminton PL, Brownson RC, Wegner MW (editors). Chronic Disease Epidemiology and Control, 3rd Edition. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. 2010. ISBN: 978-0-87553-192-2

Additional assigned readings will be listed in the course outline.

COURSE TOPICS

1. Current issues and challenges in chronic disease control
2. Role of infections disease in chronic disease
3. Chronic disease surveillance
4. Health Disparities in chronic disease
5. Risk factors for chronic disease
 - Diet and physical activity
 - Obesity
 - Tobacco and alcohol
 - High blood pressure and cholesterol
 - Non-modifiable factors (e.g. family history, race)
6. Methodological considerations in
 - Cancer
 - Heart Disease
 - Diabetes
 - Mental disorders
7. Identifying preventive strategies, implementing interventions or providing community outreach

Course Requirements

Class participation and attendance: 15%

Article Discussions: 10%

Healthy People 2020 assignment: 20%

Written proposal: 30%

Presentation: 25%

Blackboard

Blackboard will be the primary course communication vehicle. Please check the site regularly for class announcements and readings. Blackboard can be accessed at <https://bb.wustl.edu>. Login with your WUSTLKey. Important updates and reminders will be posted in the Announcements section on Blackboard.

We will utilize the Discussion threads for general questions related to lectures and assignments. Students should post all general questions that may be relevant to others in class to the Discussion thread. The instructor will monitor questions once a day (with the exception of weekends) and post answers. Student-specific questions (e.g. related to a grade or conflict) should be emailed directly to the instructor. Every effort will be made to answer student emails within 24-hours (excluding weekends). Please put the course number and title in the subject of the email. Students are encouraged to post materials related to class (e.g. link to a news story) on Blackboard for the rest of the class to access.

Course Syllabus Subject to Change:

Every effort will be made to follow the syllabus content and schedule. If circumstances dictate, there may be modifications made during the semester and every effort will be made to notify students in a timely manner.