

**College of Health and Human Performance
Department of Health Education & Behavior**

HSC 6935 Behavioral and Environmental Determinants of Obesity

"Fatty hamburgers, sugar-laden sodas and a couch-potato lifestyle: these are the familiar villains in the crisis of obesity sweeping developed countries."

Fall 2010 **Meeting Time: M – W – F 12:50 PM** **Room: Florida Gym 265**

Instructor: Dr. Jill Varnes, email:jvarnes@hhp.ufl.edu; phone 392-0583x1230

Office Location: Florida Gym 16 (ground floor, west side)

Office Hours: Monday, 2:00 – 4:00 pm; Thursday, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
Other hours by appointment.

Required Text: Hu, Frank B. (2008) Obesity Epidemiology, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

This course is designed to explore the interactions among the range of individual, behavioral and environmental determinants of obesity. We will focus on the extent of the obesity problem primarily in the US from an epidemiological perspective. Additionally ideas for prevention and control will be discussed as well as effective interventions to address obesity and its determinants including broad based policy development and implementation.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

- 1) Provide and support a rationale related to the nature and extent of obesity as a public health concern.
- 2) Discuss the socio-cultural context of body weight.
- 3) Describe interventions for prevention and control including scientific evidence of effectiveness.
- 4) Identify the determinants of obesity most often cited in the literature.
- 5) Identify policy making strategies that may be effective in reducing population obesity levels.

Class Structure: The general format for class will be lecture/discussion, task force activities and occasionally guest lecturers. Each task force will have to complete a task force report on a topic to be assigned. Information from the task force report will be used to prepare a lecture for presentation to the class.

Periodically we will have "buzz sessions" for discussion related to class topics; you will be assigned to serve as a discussion leader for these "buzz sessions". Verbal discussion summaries will be shared with the class.

Class Attendance Policy: Class attendance is expected. Attendance will be taken every class meeting. Please notify the professor **in advance** if you will be absent for a university related or

professional activity; if you will miss class for any reason, please, if at all possible, advise the professor **prior to** the class meeting by phone, email or in person.

Submission of Completed Work: All assignments must be submitted no later than the specified deadline date. Unless noted, assignments are to be submitted in hard copy. Announced deadline dates and times are firm; please plan accordingly to complete assignments on time. Planning and good time management will be essential to your success in this class.

Course assignments:

Task Force Research: You will be assigned to a task force* (group) and each task force will be provided a specific topic on which a report will be completed. Individual members will be required to research 4 different articles related to the assigned topic. Each member is to read his/her articles and develop an individual **annotated bibliography** (see below). It is the responsibility of all members to ensure that no one submits the same article.

* A task force is a (usually interdisciplinary) team who are temporarily assigned to work together to achieve a specific, clearly defined objective (project). In this case the objective will be to research the assigned concept related to obesity and identify possible solutions.

Annotated Bibliography: Submit copies of the articles with the annotated bibliography. Format for submission – your name, task force number and date on the left side, top of paper; paper title is the task force topic; cite the article to be annotated in the American Psychological Association (APA) format and immediately below the citation write the annotation. An annotation is usually about a paragraph in length. Additional information will be provided in class.

Using information from the different articles and the individual annotated bibliography as a basis for discussion each task force will meet to discuss the task force topic and to determine if there is additional research needed prior to developing the task force report. The goal is to get ideas on the table and encourage critical thinking and analysis related to the information gathered.

Task Force Report: Using research from the annotated bibliography, information from the text and task force discussions, the task force will develop a report including recommendations. Generally the report would be 6 to 8 pages in length excluding reference list and appendices (if any). The task force report should be organized as follows:

- Introduction including the problem statement/topic (1 – 2 pages);
- literature review, research/information from the individual selected articles (3 – 4 pages);
- task force conclusions and recommendations (1 – 2 pages).

Book Chapter Review and Lecture/Presentation: Each of you will be assigned a chapter in the text to review and develop a lecture for presentation to the class. Attached are the guidelines for this presentation; dates and chapter will be assigned no later than the 2nd week of class.

Exams: You will have three exams during the course of the semester. Dates will be confirmed in class. Please note that the scheduled final exam date is Tuesday, December 14, 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm in Florida Gym 265, (usual classroom).

EVALUATION 100%

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|--------------------------|-----|
| Task force (TF) report | 25% |
| Annotated bibliography | 20% |
| Chapter Review/present | 10% |
| Exams | 30% |
| Other assignments | 5% |
| TF member & self eval | 5% |
| Evaluation by instructor | 5% |

Grading Scale (percent minimum)

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|----|--------------------------|
| A | = 92%; A- = 90% |
| B+ | = 88%; B = 83%; B- = 80% |
| C+ | = 78%; C = 73%; C- = 70% |
| D+ | = 68%; D = 63%; D- = 60% |
| E | = LESS THAN 59% |

Academic Honesty: Every student that is admitted to the University of Florida has signed a statement of academic honesty committing him/her to be honest in all academic work and understanding that failure to comply with this commitment will result in disciplinary action.

This statement is a reminder to uphold your obligation as a student at the University of Florida and to be honest in all work submitted and exams taken in this class and all others.

To ensure that we have a really great class some things to remember --

All transactions and relationships are enriched by courtesy:

Be considerate of one another during group work, all ideas have merit.

Be considerate of your classmates and the professor during lectures by being attentive, power-off cell phones or pagers and come prepared to fully participate in each class.

Laptops may not be used during lectures.

Tentative Course Outline

- I. Overview of obesity as a public health concern (Ch 1,2 in text)
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Epidemiology
- II. Epidemiology
 - a. Analysis (Ch 3 in text)
 - b. Interpretation (Ch 4 in text)
- III. Assessments
 - a. Body composition (Ch 5 in text)
 - b. Diet and physical activity (Ch 6,7 in text)
 - c. Fit and fat?
- IV. Consequences of Obesity
 - a. Metabolism (Ch 8 in text)
 - b. Diseases (Ch 9,10,11 in text)
 - c. Quality of life (Ch 12 in text)
 - d. Economic impact (Ch 13 in text)
- V. Research into the determinants of obesity
 - a. Diet and physical activity (Ch 14,15 in text)
 - b. Sleep, stress and socialization (Ch 16, 17, 18 in text)
 - c. Origins, predictors (Ch 19, 20, in text)
 - d. Genetics; gene + environment (Ch 21,22 in text)
- VI. Prevention and early intervention strategies
- VII. Behavioral change interventions
- VIII. Medical/surgical interventions
- IX. Ecological approach to addressing obesity

Important Dates:

September 6 – no class, Labor Day Holiday

September 22 – exam 1 (tentative)

October 13 – Annotated Bibliography deadline

October 15 – Homecoming, no classes

October 22 – exam 2 (tentative)

November 12 – Task Force report deadline (submit electronically to jvarnes@hhp.ufl.edu)

class will not meet

December 3 – exam 3 (tentative)

December 8 – will not meet as a class

December 14 – final exam scheduled, 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm