

University of Florida
College of Public Health and Health Professions
PHC 6940 – Master of Public Health Capstone (3 credits)
MPH Online Asynchronous Section
Spring 2021

Instructor: Julia R. Varnes, PhD, MPH, MCHES®
Office Hours: Thursdays, 8:30am-10:30am; other times by appt.
Virtual Office: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99118004225>
Use this Zoom link when visiting my virtual office hours, or for any appointments we make.
GroupMe: Capstone-S21A --- be on the lookout for an invite the first week of classes!
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- For quicker response, include 'PHC6940' OR 'MPH Capstone' in your email subject line

I. Course Overview

This course serves as the required integrative learning experience (ILE) for MPH students. Through their work in this course, students will demonstrate synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies through an individual project that addresses a public health need. Students will produce several project deliverables including a professionally written report. During the course, students will also become proficient in competencies related to leadership and professionalism.

Relation to Program Outcomes

CEPH Criterion D7. MPH Integrative Learning Experience

MPH students complete an integrative learning experience (ILE) that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. Students in consultation with their faculty advisor and/or instructor select foundational and concentration-specific competencies appropriate to the student's educational and professional goals; and identify a suitable Capstone project addressing the identified MPH competencies.

Course Objectives

- Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resources management (D2-2.10)
- Apply principles of leadership, governance, and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making (D2-2.16)
- Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges (D2-2.17)
- Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors (D2-2.18)
- Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation (D2-2.19)
- Create a project for a public health agency by applying public health knowledge gained in core and concentration-specific coursework
- Develop a presentation to disseminate the results of the project
- Compose a written report of the project results

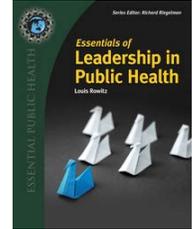
Course Materials

This course will use the Canvas CMS. If you experience technical difficulties, please contact the UF Help Desk (learning-support@ufl.edu; 352-392-HELP – select option 2).

UF Internet (eduroam) is available at thousands of locations worldwide!

[UF students can access eduroam](#) (highspeed WiFi) for free with their GatorLink log-in credentials. The eduroam network is fast and secure and has more than 10,000 wi-fi hotspots in 106 countries and territories worldwide. Many of these locations are in open spaces and/or large communal rooms, so you can get online while physically distancing and following CDC guidelines in an air-conditioned space. Access is available in rural areas, too! [Here's a link to all the eduroam sites.](#)

Required Text: Rowitz, L. (2017). *Essentials of Leadership in Public Health*. Jones & Bartlett. ISBN-10: 1284111482. (Available in paperback, as an e-book, and through UF All Access).



Articles will be added throughout the semester as well (provided through Canvas Modules).

II. Course Requirements & Expectations

Overview of Assignments & Deadlines

ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	DEADLINE
Peer Introductions	2%	January 18
Capstone Project Deliverables		
1. Project Proposal	6%	January 25
2. Work Plan	4%	February 2
3. Project Introduction/Background (Final Draft)	8%	February 24
4. Progress Update #1	5%	March 10
5. Progress Update #2	5%	March 23
6. Final Project Presentation	25%	April 2, 2021
7. Final Capstone Report	30%	April 16, 2021
Professionalism and Other Module Activities	15%	varies
Total	100%	

Grading Scale

Points Earned	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	Below 60
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0

Please be aware grades of C- (or below) is not acceptable for graduate students. Graduate students' GPA must be at least 3.0 in all graduate courses (≥ 5000 level). A grade of C will count toward the graduate degree only there are sufficient credits in graduate courses been earned with a B+ or higher.

Information on current UF grading policies can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/>

Description of Course Assignments

- **Overview of the Capstone Project:** Each student will identify a project that has a scope of work that can be completed in one semester. To optimize the student's public health experience in our program, we strongly recommended that the project be related to, emanate

from, or culminate the efforts and work of the Applied Practice Experience. Projects should be specific to the student's MPH track, but they may take on several different structures and formats based on the specific experiences. Completed projects should demonstrate acquisition of MPH general and track-specific competencies. There are several project deliverables required through the semester (see 1 through 7 below). Examples of projects include but are not limited to:

- **Program project grant** for a public health program, such as a disease prevention or health promotion intervention. The proposal will include background on the public health problem; needs assessment; theoretical foundation for and description of the intervention; implementation plan; and evaluation plan.
- **Empirical manuscript** using existing data. Students would research background information, develop the research question(s) and study design, develop an analysis plan, perform the analyses, interpret the results, and discuss the results with specific attention to implications for the field.
- **Community (needs, context, or situation) assessment** describing the social, economic, and environmental status of a community. Such a project would provide a description of the local and national data resources, as well as social indicators; development of tools to collect information from the community; implementation of the data collection methods; analysis and synthesis of the data collected; and implications.
- **Program evaluation** of an existing health program. Students would identify the primary evaluation questions and evaluation methods, collect the data, analyze the data and justify conclusions, and write a final evaluation report.
- **Training manual/curriculum** for an existing program that serves a public health need. Training curricula can address a variety of topics. A typical manual will include an introduction (purpose, audience, outline, who uses the manual and how), learning objectives, instructional methods, educational content (typically divided into modules or sections), assessment methods.
- **Health policy statement assessment.** This project could involve analysis of the public health implications of a current or proposed health policy or advocacy plan. The project could include perspectives on economics and financing, need and demand, politics/ethics/law, or quality/effectiveness.
- **Capstone Project Deliverables:**
 1. **Project Proposal:** this is a summary of the defined project. Submission should include:
 - Project Title
 - Type of project/product
 - Brief, but thorough, summary that includes the purpose, primary question(s), the public health issue, and the priority population.
 - Proposed methods
 - Identification of addressed competencies
 - MOU if working with outside organization.
 2. **Work Plan:** Contingent upon approval of the proposal, the student will develop a work plan that includes the tasks to be completed and deadlines for their completion, with consideration given to the course deadlines.
 3. **Project Introduction:** This professionally written paper should be a near final draft of the introductory section of your Capstone Report. Content of this section will depend on the chosen format. More guidance will be given after all project proposals have been reviewed.
 4. **Progress Update #1:** Using your own workplan (timeline, tasks, scope of work), you will provide an update on your progress, via discussion board, to your instructor and peers. This is also an opportunity to ask questions and solicit input or ideas.

5. **Progress Update #2:** Refer to #4 above.
6. **Final Project Presentation:** Students will provide an audio-visual oral presentation of their Capstone project during the planned Public Health Day (April 2, 2021). The Zoom presentations will be open to all faculty and students. Individuals should plan to present for 15 minutes with an additional 5-minute question and answer session.
7. **Capstone Report:** Students will create a high-quality written report (using APA formatting) detailing the Capstone project. All written reports will include:
 - Cover page
 - Table of contents
 - The written project. Formatting (including page length suggestions) should follow the template provided in a separate document (“Capstone Project Final Paper Templates”).
 - Appendices, which will include (at a minimum):
 - A. The originally approved project proposal;
 - B. A written assessment (1-2 pages) of how the project met the terms of the original proposal, with special attention to the student-identified competencies.
 - C. A personal reflection (~2 pages) of the project experience, including challenges and lessons learned.
- **Professionalism and Other Activities:** All students are expected to make informed contributions through class activities. To do this, students will need to prepare appropriately by viewing all assigned video presentations, completing weekly readings, and completing other weekly activities. The majority of these points will come from activities embedded within the weekly modules. A small portion of these points will be assigned by the instructor based on your quality of interactions on discussion posts (going above and beyond vs. satisficing the requirements), making timely posts, and positively contributing to the overall learning environment.

Expectations & Classroom Ground Rules:

- Complete all work as assigned.
- Take responsibility for the quality of the learning experience.
- Build on one another’s comments/ideas; seek to understand others’ perspectives.
- Respectfully provide and receive specific, solution-oriented feedback.
- Communicate with your instructor.

III. CLASS POLICIES

To ensure that we have a great semester, 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 class meetings by being attentive, power-off technology, and be prepared to fully participate in each class.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protections for persons with disabilities. Among other things, it requires that all students with documented disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability (or different-ability) that affects your learning, please reach out to the [Disabilities Resource Center \(DRC\)](#). And then share your accommodation letter with your instructor as quickly as possible to ensure you have access for the full semester.

If you did not register formally, but you know you have different learning, behavioral, or other need that might affect your performance in the course, tell me and I will help you.

Assignment Policy: Be sure to review assignment descriptions in the course syllabus and in Canvas, and take note of any additional in-class guidance that is given for each assignment. Please note that important and helpful information about your assignments will be provided in class. Students are expected to do their best work and to turn in work on time. Some “deadlines” are self-imposed and will be determined by the specific assignment.

- Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due at 11:57pm on the date indicated. Please make efforts to turn assignments in early. **Make back-up copies of all your work**, as some assignments may not be returned and Canvas access may expire after the semester ends. All written work must be typed, unless otherwise indicated.
 - *Late submitted assignments are subject to a 10% deduction in grade for every day it is late.*
 - I do recognize that personal circumstances arise (life happens) that may interfere with your ability to meet a deadline. If these unanticipated events do occur, please let me know as soon as possible. I will not be receptive to retrospective requests for extensions without a compelling rationale for why these requests are being made.

Attendance: Students should be aware that online learning can present significant challenges, particularly to those who are not ‘self-starters’ or those who do not possess good time management skills. The online classroom is available to you 24 hours a day. Unlike traditional instructional settings in which each student gets the same class, the online setting means that every student will participate in the course that he/she chooses to experience. In theory, this type of instruction should be more adaptable to a variety of learning styles. The reality is, however, that some students seem unwilling (we believe all are able) to create and actively participate in their own virtual classroom. This often results in procrastination and low quality performance. Recognizing that everyone learns differently, I will not prescribe the ‘best way’ to approach the course. You should note, however, that this course is not self-paced. You are expected to adhere to the class calendar and timeline I have developed for you (see Course Schedule below). I do recognize that personal circumstances arise (life happens) that may interfere with your ability to meet a deadline. If these unanticipated events do occur, please let me know as soon as possible. I will not be receptive to retrospective requests for extensions without a compelling rationale for why these requests are being made.

Course Evaluations: I value your professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. Please complete the evaluation for this course via the Canvas ‘GatorEvals’ tab or through <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. You will be notified when the evaluation period opens. UF provides [guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). You can also view [public summaries of course and instructor evaluation results](#).

Extra Credit Policy: There is no extra credit and there are no extra credit assignments. Additionally, no points will be “given” at the end of the semester. University Policy: Asking for extra points after your course is completed is an **HONOR OFFENSE**.

Make-up Policy: If a student fails to submit either a quiz or exam on-time, they will be provided an opportunity to submit after the deadline provided that they have an acceptable reason for

missing the deadline. Decisions to allow students to make-up quizzes/exams after the deadline will be made by the course instructor after consulting the university-wide attendance policies specified in the UF Undergraduate Catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>).

Netiquette, Communication Courtesy: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. I expect that students will show respect to their peers and instructor in all online communications. I will not tolerate improper language and disparaging comments; these actions will result in disciplinary action. See the following link for information on behaviors that are expected when students communicate with their peers and instructors using all available online communication features: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>.

Personal Integrity: I expect and assume that you will be honest with me in all aspects of your conduct regarding our course. In return, I will do the same with you. By formally registering for coursework at the University of Florida, you are bound by the Honor Pledge which states:

"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

[The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action.

Property of Course Content: The content presented in this version of PHC 6940 is the property of your instructor and the College of Public Health and Health Professions. Course content may not be duplicated in any format without the expressed written consent of the College of Public Health and Health Professions and the instructor, and may not be used for any commercial purposes. Students violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the UF Conduct Code.

Title IX: University of Florida has zero tolerance for sexual discrimination, harassment, assault/battery, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking. Students are encouraged to report any experienced or witnessed occurrences to law enforcement and/or one of UF's Title IX Coordinators. Students can [report incidents](#) or learn more about their [rights and options](#) here. Or contact Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at 202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

IV. HELPFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES

- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#)
Individual counseling, group counseling, and online resources are available to UF students at no charge. Visit the website or call 352-392-1575. If you are having a crisis, you can call anytime and request to speak to the counselor on call.
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
Do you need help resolving a conflict or would you like access to the student code of conduct? Visit the UF Dean of Students website for more information.
- [Disabilities Resource Center](#)
If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability, please visit the UF Disabilities Resource Center website for more information.
- [GatorWell Health Promotion services](#)

GatorWell provides health-related resources, information, and individual services to students. Recommended services: Wellness Coaching for Academic Success (virtual appointments available).

- [Online Library Help Desk](#)
The help desk is available to assist students with access to all UF Libraries resources.
- [UMatter, We Care](#)
Available for students who are experiencing personal life disruptions that may affect their academics. U Matter can help you identify resources and communicate with instructors on your behalf. 352-294-CARE (2273), umatter@ufl.edu
- [Alachua County Crisis Center](#)
Visit the website or call the hotline - 352-264-6789
- [Meridian Behavioral Healthcare](#), 352-374-5600

V. Tentative Course Outline (additional guidance to be provided on the Weekly Module pages of Canvas)

Week	Date	Module Title	Module Activities	Module Activities Deadline
1	Jan 11-17	Introduction to the Course	Read "Start Here" Section, Syllabus, & Using APA Review supplemental materials as assigned M1 Video Lectures M1 Discussion: Peer Introductions (2pts)	Due: 1/17 by 11:57pm
			Begin working on your personal leadership philosophy (draft due Wk 3).	
2	Jan 18-24	Leadership in Public Health: An Overview	Chapter 1 & 2 Review supplemental materials as assigned M2 Video Lectures M2 Discussion: Influential Leaders (1pt)	Due: 1/24 by 11:57pm
3	Jan 25-31	The 6 Levels of Leadership	Chapter 3 Review supplemental materials as assigned M3 Video Lectures M3 Review Quiz (1 pt)	Due: 1/31 by 11:57pm
			Personal Leadership Philosophy, Draft (0.5 pt)	2/03 by 11:57pm
4	Feb 1-7	Capstone Project Development	Check Canvas for Resources Finalize your Work Plan; Develop your Introduction	
5	Feb 8-14	Personal & Professional Growth in Leadership	Chapter 4 & 5 Review supplemental materials as assigned M5 Video Lectures M5 Discussion (1 pt)	Due: 2/14 by 11:57pm
6	Feb 15-21	Professionalism & Careers in Public Health	Review supplemental materials as assigned M6 Video Lectures M6 Discussion: Develop your professionalism (1 pt)	Due: 2/21 by 11:57pm
			Develop your Elevator Speech (to present M8)	
7	Feb 22-28	Communicating Inclusively & Accessibly	Chapter 13 Review supplemental materials as assigned M7 Video Lectures M7 Discussion (1 pt)	Due: 2/28 by 11:57pm
8	Mar 1-7	Professionalism & Presenting	Review supplemental materials as assigned M8 Video Lectures M8 Discussion: Share & watch Elevator Speech (1.5 pt)	Due: 3/07 by 11:57pm

9	Mar 8-14	Building & Leading Teams	Chapter 6 Review supplemental materials as assigned M9 Video Lectures Submit your draft abstract (0.5 pt)	Due: 3/14 by 11:57pm
10	Mar 15-21	Adaptive Leadership at the Organization Level	Chapter 9 Review supplemental materials as assigned M10 Video Lectures Quiz to cover Modules 9 & 10 (1.5 pt)	Due: 3/21 by 11:57pm
11	Mar 22-28	Evidence-Based Practice	-Submit your final abstract (0.5 pt) -Submit presentation draft (failure to do so may result in inability to graduate this semester)	Due: 3/25 by 11:57pm
			Review supplemental materials as assigned M11 Video Lectures M11 Discussion (0.75 pt)	Due: 3/28 by 11:57pm
12	Mar 29-Apr 4	Public Health Day Presentations	Practice, practice, practice! M12 Activity: Attend a peer's presentation (0.75 pt)	3/31 to 4/2
			Discussion: Debrief with your peers about Public Health Day (2 posts; 1pt)	Due: 04/06 by 11:57pm
13	Apr 5-11	Communities, Coalitions, & Collaborations	Chapter 7 & 10 Review supplemental materials as assigned M13 Video Lectures M13 Quiz (1 pt)	Due: 4/11 by 11:57pm
14	Apr 12-18	Project Discussions/Reflections	Review supplemental materials as assigned M14 Video Lectures M14 Final Debrief Discussion (0.5 pt)	Due: 4/18 by 11:57pm
15	Apr 19-25	Wrap-Up	Review supplemental materials as assigned M15 Video Lectures M15 Activity: Personal Leadership Philosophy (Final; 1 pt) MPH Exit Survey	Due: 4/25 by 11:57pm