Special Topics: Health Disparities-Working Towards Social Justice
BIMS 4590
Department of Life Sciences
Fall 2016

A. COURSE INFORMATION
   Course number/section: BIMS 4590.006
   Class meeting time: T 5:30pm-8:30pm
   Class location: CI-112
   Course Website: http://bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
   Instructor: Stacy Lloyd, Ph.D.
   Office location: Baylor College of Medicine
   Office hours: TBA
   Telephone: 713-798-3144
   e-mail: Stacy.Lloyd@bcm.edu
   Appointments: Appointments by email

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION
   Catalog Course Description
   More than thirty years of research demonstrate that there are wide disparities in health throughout America. Health disparities are differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist when specific population subgroups are compared. It is now known that the distribution of health is not at random, but that health is systematically distributed according to different levels of social advantage. This course will examine the social and societal factors that are fundamental in creating disparities in health. In addition, the course will focus on the formulation of public policy objectives to reduce and ultimately eliminate health disparities.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES
   Prerequisites
   None
   Corequisites
   None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES
   Required Textbook(s)
   None

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT
   Assessment is a process used by instructors to help improve learning. Assessment is essential for effective learning because it provides feedback to both students and instructors.
A critical step in this process is making clear the course’s student learning outcomes that describe what students are expected to learn to be successful in the course. The student learning outcomes for this course are listed below. By collecting data and sharing it with students on how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes students can more efficiently and effectively focus their learning efforts. This information can also help instructors identify challenging areas for students and adjust their teaching approach to facilitate learning.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Acquire introductory knowledge and experience related to the complex social, behavioral and medical determinants of populations’ health, which will enable them to understand the origins of health disparities within a population and to conceptualize programs and policies to reduce and eliminate those disparities.

2. Examine and gain an understanding of the latest findings of specific research that demonstrate that there are wide disparities in health among certain populations.

3. Demonstrate awareness of factors that currently contribute to wide disparities in health among certain populations.

4. Identify the role of (various) health professionals in eliminating disparities.

5. Investigate community and state-level resources that can be mobilized for planning, policy development, program interpretation and funding for reduction of health disparities.

6. Develop a global vision of inequalities in health and medical care.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Classes will be held TTVN among several schools. Students will be able to ask questions during class, and the instructor will see who is asking the question.

Alternatively, students can watch a live broadcast of the class on http://ttvn.tamus.edu/ under Live Webcasts. Look for your instructor’s name.

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Quiz and Midterm Exam –

There will be a take home quiz given after the first lecture on August 23, 2016. This quiz will be a take home exam in an essay format to be returned in class on the following week on August 30, 2016. A formal Midterm will be distributed on October 11, 2016. The midterm
exam will be a take home exam in an essay format. The midterm exam should be returned in class on **October 18, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.** at the beginning of that class. Undergraduate and MPH/MS Graduate Students who opt to follow this syllabus will take the Mid-term Exam. If you make an “A” (90 or above) on your Midterm Exam, you will have the OPTION to **ETHIER** take the Final Exam OR write a Research Paper.

**Research Paper –**
Students should select a research topic and have it approved by **Dr. Lovell A. Jones, no later than October 4, 2016.** Submit your research topic with a brief abstract of the subject to Dr. Jones via email. They must be approved by him before you write your research paper. The topic should then be thoroughly researched (the information analyzed, and conclusions drawn.) However, please take into consideration the following requirements in selecting a research topic:

1) provide an adequate background on the disparity.
2) how would you address the disparities with regard to reducing it?
3) if it worked, what would be the expected outcome?
4) if it did not work, what would you change to improve the approach?

A clear, concise research paper should follow the format shown below (8 – 10 pages, double-spaced, Arial or Times 12 pt. font), **not counting the reference page(s).** Only professional literature is to be used and cited, i.e. **no use** of the popular press.

The **Research Paper** is due to Dr. Lovell Jones on or before **November 29th, 2016, at 5:30 p.m.**

**Research Paper Format:**
- 1” margins: Left, right, top, bottom
- Header: Name on every page
- Footer: Number at the bottom of page (centered)
- Spacing: Double Space
- Title Page: Name, Title of Topic, Health Disparities Course, Date
- Statement of Topic
- Introduction
- Research Design and Methods
- Conclusions
- References

**Final Exam –** This will be a comprehensive, take-home exam distributed in class on **November 29, 2016.** It will be due on or before **December 6, 2016 in class at 5:30 p.m. or sent via email to Stacy.Lloyd@bcm.edu (NO EXCEPTIONS).**

**Course Evaluation**
All students begin this course with **A** grade. In order to maintain this grade, the following expectations must be met.

Class Participation  25% or 33% (required with either Option 1 or 2)
Midterm Exam  25% or 33% (option 1)
Research Paper  25% or 33% (option 2)
Final Exam      25% or 33% (required with either Option 1 or 2)

Grading Scale
A+ = 97-100       C+ = 77-79
A  = 94-96        C  = 74-76
A- = 90-93        C- = 70-73 Minimum Passing Grade for UTSPH Students
B+ = 87-89        D+ = 67-69
B  = 84-86        D  = 65-66
B- = 80-83        D- = 60-64
F  = 63 or less

I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE
Power point presentations, syllabus/lecture and course schedule will be available on the
University of Houston-Downtown Blackboard Vista website.

Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class
by the Instructor. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student
Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

J. COURSE POLICIES
Attendance/Tardiness
Class attendance and participation throughout the semester is a requirement for successful
completion of the course as dictated by University policy and the course instructors. Students
are responsible for all information in the lectures and the discussions that follow. If you are
absent for family emergencies or illness please send an email to your institution Instructor of
Record and Stacy Lloyd at Stacy.Lloyd@bcm.edu. All students are responsible for
retrieving any class materials via the Blackboard website. You will be provided two
unexcused absences. However, the same applies to these absences as well in terms of
notification.

Extra Credit
No extra credit will be offered or accepted. A grade of “I” for incomplete is given only when
an emergency prevents a student from completing the work in the course.

Cell Phone Use
Cell phones, pagers, etc. must be turned off before coming to class.

K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES
• Academic Integrity (University)
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the
highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is
subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of
examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or
plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

- **Classroom/Professional Behavior**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

- **Statement of Civility**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

- **Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)**
  The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must submitted. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Please consult the Academic Calendar (http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/) for the last day to drop a course.

- **Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)**
  As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at
http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the Office of the Provost.

- **Disability Services**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call (361) 825-5816 or visit Disability Services in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/

- **Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

L. **OTHER INFORMATION**
- **Academic Advising**
The College of Science & Engineering requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. Meetings are by appointment only; advisors do not take walk-ins. Please call or stop by the Advising Center to check availability and schedule an appointment. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction 350 or can be reached at (361) 825-3928.

**GENERAL DISCLAIMER**
I reserve the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. I will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods.