Special Topics--Health Disparities in America
BIMS 4590.006
Department of Life Sciences
Fall 2017

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: BIMS 4590.006
Class meeting time: T 5:30-8:30 pm
Class location: CCH-249; through TTVN
Course Website: N/A

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Stacy Lloyd, PhD, MPH
Office location: Department of Molecular & Cellular Biology
Baylor College of Medicine
Houston, TX
Office hours: Since the instructor is located in Houston, office hours are by appointment only
Telephone: (713) 798-3144 – Cell Number (214) 514-1352
e-mail: stacy.lloyd@bcm.edu
Appointments: Preferred method is by e-mail

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.

Extended Course Description
This course focuses on the differences in disease burden in the United States. This course differs from Global Health Disparities in that we look at why, in the richest nation on earth in terms of GDP per capita, this country ranks high in infant mortality, maternal death during childbirth, access to healthy foods, and terms of suicide rate. (Meyer et al., MMWR 62 (03): 3-5, Nov. 22, 2013, www.cdc.gov, accessed 30 July 2015). This course differs from Medical Sociology in that the latter class will look at specific determinants of why such disparities exist.
D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES

Required Textbook(s)
None—handouts will be provided by instructor during group meetings.

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

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

1.) Understand the origins of health disparities within a population and conceptualize programs and policies to reduce and eliminate those disparities.
2.) Identify and explain research that demonstrates the breadth of disparities in health among specific populations.
3.) Recognize factors that contribute to health disparities
4.) Identify the role of health professionals in eliminating disparities.
5.) Recognize community and state-level resources that can be mobilized to reduce health disparities.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Learn by observation, discussion, reading, and application.

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

All portions of the course are weighted equally.

Course Requirements:

1. Students must arrive to class on time and sign in and out upon their departure at the end of class.
2. Students are expected to participate in class discussions.
3. Students are required to complete a quiz for evaluation
4. Students are required to complete a midterm examination
   a. For all students who score a 90 or above, they have the option of completing the final exam OR writing the research paper.
5. Students are required to complete a final examination
   a. The final exam is optional ONLY for students who score a 90 or above on the midterm examination. For all other students, the final exam is a REQUIREMENT.
6. Students are required to write a research paper on a health disparity topic of their choosing
a. The research paper is **optional ONLY** for students who score a 90 or above on the midterm examination. **For all other students, the research paper exam is a REQUIREMENT.**

Specific Method of Evaluation
All components are based on 100 total points:

Class attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-16 classes</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 classes</td>
<td>75 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8 classes</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 classes</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;4 classes</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Class participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Participation</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor (0-20pts)</td>
<td>25 or 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair (21-40pts)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (41-60pts)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Good (61-80pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent (81-100pts)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>25 or 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Exams</td>
<td>25 or 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>25 or 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 or 33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Grade assignments:
A=90-100 pts  B=80-89 pts  C=70-79 pts  D=60-69 pts  F=< 60 pts
### I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overview of course/requirements and Sir Michael Marmot “Inequalities in Health from Research to Policy”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Media and Health Inequities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3       | “Genes, History and the Development of Autoimmunity”  
          | “Population Substructure and Health Disparities: Insights from Biological Anthropology” |
| 4       | “Neurocognitive and Health Disparities in Congenital Heart Disease.”  
          | “Improving Generational Equity Through Investments in Early Childhood Development” |
| 5       | “A Focus on the ‘B’ in LGBT: Exploring health disparities among non-monosexual populations”  
          | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Behavioral Health Disparities |
| 6       | “An Excuse or Humanizing: Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System”  
          | “Eliminating Mental and Physical Health Disparities Through Culturally and Linguistically Centered Integrated Health Care” |
| 7       | “Population Change in the United States and Texas: Implications for Health and Health Care”  
          | “Public Health & Well-being in Harris County, TX” |
| 8       | “Implementation and Dissemination Research to Reduce Health Disparities”  
          | Using Cultural Tailoring to Improve Access and Community Resource Utilization for Chronically Ill Racial/Ethnic Minorities |
| 9       | Early Life Environmental Exposures, Epigenetics, and Health Disparities  
          | “Place and American Indian Health” |
### Topics

| 10 | “American Indian (Dis)Engagement in Genetics Research” – “The Role of Diverse Populations in Precision Medicine” |
| 11 | “A Primer on Stroke and Evidence for Disparate Outcomes: How to Study A Disease in Complex Populations” |
|     | “Exploring Video Teleconference and eHealth Strategies to Address Disparities and Scarcity in Stroke Prevention: The VSTOP Project” |
| 12 | Implicit Bias in Medicine |
|     | Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities |
| 13 | “How to Market the Most Dangerous Consumer Product in the World to Minorities” |
|     | ”Using Technology to Prevent Smoking Among Underserved Youth” |
| 14 | Equity in Palliative Care: Challenges Faced by Ethnic Communities |
|     | “Incorporating and Evaluating Culture Within The Pillar of the Community: Community-Based Organizations” |
| 15 | **FINAL EXAM** |

Topics may change at the discretion of the instructor.

Research Paper TOPICS due: October 3, 2017  
Midterm exam distributed: October 10, 2017  
Midterm exam due: October 17, 2017  
Research Paper due: November 28, 2017  
Final Exams distributed: November 28, 2017  
Final Exams due: December 5, 2017  
Final Grades due: December 12, 2017

### J. COURSE POLICIES

**Student Conduct**

Each registered student **must sign-in** at the beginning and the end of each class. You still will be responsible for signing out at the end of class. So if you leave early, please do not ask about signing out early. Class time will start promptly at 5:30 p.m. Please be courteous to Visiting Professors, fellow students and faculty by being on time for class. Cell phones, pagers, etc. must be turned off before coming to class.
Policy of Academic Honesty
All students are subject to the UHD Academic Honesty Policy (PS 03.A.19) and to all other university-wide policies and procedures as set forth in the UHD University Catalog and Student Handbook. Plagiarism and cheating will be treated as academic misconduct. Plagiarism consists of taking and/or using the ideas, work, and/or writings of another person as one’s own. For this class, this means you are expected to do your own work. Copying each other’s work or getting someone else to do your assignments for you is considered both plagiarism and cheating. Your grade will be based on your performance. This means: (1) all work you hand in to be graded for this class must be your own, and (2) no unauthorized materials or resources may be used as “aids” on exams. The penalty for an academic honesty violation on a significant course requirement such as a term paper/project or final examination shall be an “F” for the course.

Attendance Policy
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 Faculty Advisor and Stacy Lloyd at Stacy.Lloyd@bcm.edu. All students are responsible for retrieving any class materials via the Blackboard website.

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)**
  I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please consult the Academic Calendar [http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/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](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](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.