Perspectives in Rural Health

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Rationale for Course

South Carolina is a rural state with well-documented health disparities across the lifespan.

Inadequate access to care exacerbates disparities in rural parts of the state.

HSPM 709 takes a practical approach to cultivating expertise on rural health disparities and policy in future leaders.
Course Purposes

- Enhance students’ knowledge of demographic, economic, and political forces affecting access to care and community health in rural America and;
- Impart communication, analytical, and decision-making skills necessary to provide leadership in rural community health settings.
Course Objectives

- Identify key policy issues & historical factors that distinguish rural populations from urban.
- Describe national infrastructure and resources for rural health programs.
- Describe state infrastructure for facilitating rural health programs and policies.
- Identify essential components of rural community healthcare systems.
- Describe opportunities and barriers for recruiting healthcare providers to rural.
- Identify rural safety net providers and describe their contributions to the local system of care.
- Describe the complex issues faced by special populations rural communities.
Teaching Methods

- Readings
- Group discussions
- Lectures by national and state rural health leaders,
- Field trips
- Writing assignments
- Group projects
Readings

- Journal articles, policy briefs, and governmental publications.
- Pat Conroy’s *The Water is Wide*, a personal account by a young school teacher in the newly desegregated South. While the story centers on education, there are stark parallels to addressing the healthcare needs of rural, minority populations.
Learning Assessments

- Midterm examination
- Classroom participation
- Assignments:
  - *Rural Culture Paper* – Students examine the role rural cultures play in the health status of communities, using Conroy’s book as a basis from which to frame the paper.
  - *Scholarship* - Students select one rural policy, program, or health challenge on which they develop a scholarly poster to be presented at the Annual SC Rural Health Conference.
Student Outcomes

- Many students go on to choose practicum and residencies in rural settings or begin their careers serving rural communities.
- The 2007 HSPM 709 class worked under the direction of the USC Media Department to develop “Rx,” a film about rural health issues which has one several independent film awards. The trailer can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoszCb4ZB8w.
Thank you to Delta Omega!

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