

Course Syllabus

Environmental Health

PUBH 3025

UNT Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services

Instructors

Professor: Julia Heck, PhD, MPH

Teaching Assistant: Priya Ravinuthala

Communication with the Instructor and TA: Personalized communication between instructors and students is important in enhancing the learning experience. The primary means to contact us will be via e-mail or via the Canvas inbox email.

Instructor Response Time:

- Questions via email will be answered within 24 hours during the work week, and 36 hours on weekends and holidays
 - Feedback/grades will be posted within 7 days after the item's submission due date
 - Final grades will be posted by the due date listed in the Academic Calendar.
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Course Description

Environmental health is a branch of public health concerned with how both the natural and built environment affect human health by looking at the impact of physical, chemical and biological factors external to humans. This online course is designed to teach public health undergraduate students the fundamental concepts of environmental health including topics on environmental justice, air and water pollution, solid waste, built environment and occupational health. This course will also examine the sources, exposure routes, regulation and health outcomes associated with biological, chemical, and physical agents in the environment, both naturally occurring and man-made.

Course prerequisites: None.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the history and definitions of environmental health, highlighting major historical events and milestones that have shaped the field.
- Describe concepts related to national and global environmental justice issues, with a focus on the unique environmental challenges faced by marginalized communities.
- Describe methods used in epidemiology and toxicology to assess environmental exposures and hazards.
- Recognize and describe the breadth of environmental agents and hazards that impact public health, and how these transcend national borders.

- Describe specific applications of environmental health concepts to fields such as water quality control, food safety, and occupational health.
 - Evaluate how different countries and cultures perceive and address environmental challenges.
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Required Text

Friis, R. H. (2019). Essentials of environmental health (3rd ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning. ISBN: 978-1-284-12397-5

Supplemental text: Howard Frumkin. Environmental Health: From Global to Local (Public Health/ Environmental Health) 3rd Edition ISBN-13: 978-1118984765.

Student Evaluation

1. Environmental health in the news (2% each for a total of 20%): To incorporate active learning and application of course objectives to real-world analyses, students will be required to read a **current news article** that focuses on an issue relevant to any area of Environmental Health. There will be 10 total in-the-news submissions. **Out of the 10 in-the-news summaries, students must select at least 5 that focus on international issues.** For each, submit at least a 100-word summary of the article. Acceptable sources (easily available to the general public) are official news media websites, standard newspapers or their web versions, magazines, government reports, non-profit or advocacy groups. Personal blogs and professional publications are not acceptable sources. I recommend the [Environmental Health News](http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/about.html). (<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/about.html>) website which provides a daily annotated listing of links to news stories related to environmental health, newly published scientific articles of interest, and new reports. **Submissions are due on Fridays of the assigned week at 11:59pm.**
2. Quizzes (2.5% each for a total of 15%): To help ensure that students have reviewed and understood the online materials, quizzes (**six**) will be assigned as shown in the schedule below. These quizzes are meant to be learning opportunities, giving you the chance to see how much of the material you understand, and where you may need to spend more time. All materials in lectures, videos and assigned readings are fair game. You have only one attempt for each quiz, remembering that these are meant to be learning opportunities. **The quiz will be open on Wednesdays at 12:00am and close on Fridays at 11:59pm.**
3. Discussions (5% each for a total of 30%): **Six** discussion question sets will be posted. These discussions should enable students apply a broad-picture perspective to environmental health. Students are required to integrate lecture materials with specific current or historical issues. This will include ethical considerations, critical appraisals of specific issues, and integration with other public health disciplines. The specific discussion question(s) will be released at the start of the relevant module. You are required to first POST in your comments, read all of the posts of your classmates, and reply to at least two of the posts that you read. NOTE: You have to post your discussion FIRST before you see the posts of your classmates. **Discussions are due every Friday at 11:59pm.** Replies are due **two days** after the discussion post (i.e., Sundays at

11:59pm). More instructions for the discussion, including a rubric will be provided on canvas.

4. Environmental Movie Review (5% each for a total of 15%): Students will prepare **three** separate movie reviews of their own preference from a list of environmental movies posted on canvas, or select from other relevant environmental movies. **Out of the 3 movies to be completed, students must select at least 2 international films.** Students are required to submit at least a one-page **typed-written (font size =12)** reaction paper of the movie (300 words). More instructions for the movie evaluation including a rubric will be provided on canvas. Due dates for the movie review are listed on the course schedule (**Fridays at 11:59pm on assigned dates**).
5. Exams (10% each for a total of 20%): To provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge of the course material, **two** non-cumulative exams will be given. For all two exams, students are responsible for lecture materials and their corresponding reading assignments. You have a 3-day window for the exams. However, you will have a certain amount of time to take the exam once you begin. Also, you will have only ONE attempt once you begin the exam. Lock-down browser may be used for all exams. **The exams will be open on Wednesdays at 11:59am and close on Fridays at 11:59pm on the dates shown in the schedule below.**

Grading Scale: Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

- A: 90.0 -100.0
- B: 80.0 - 89.9
- C: 70.0 - 79.9
- D: 60.0 - 69.9
- F: <60.0

Schedule

Week	Readings	Lecture topics	Activities/Due dates
1	Friis Chapter 1	Introduction and history of environmental health	
2	Friis Chapter 2	Environmental epidemiology	In-the-news #1
3	Friis Chapter 3	Environmental toxicology	In-the-news #2 Discussion #1 Quiz #1

4	Frumkin Chapter 10,11	Ethics and environmental justice and vulnerable populations	In-the-news #3 Movie review #1
5	Friis Chapter 6	Toxic metals and elements	In-the-news #4 Discussion #2 Quiz #2
6	Friis Chapter 7	Pesticides and other chemicals	In-the-news #5 Discussion #3 Quiz #3
7	Friis Chapter 8	Radiation	
8	Exam #1		
9	Friis Chapter 9	Water quality	In-the-news #6 Movie review #2
10	Friis Chapter 10	Air quality	In-the-news #7 Discussion #4 Quiz #4
11	Friis Chapter 11	Food safety	In-the-news #8 Discussion #5 Quiz #5
12	Friis Chapter 12	Solid and liquid wastes	In-the-news #9 Discussion #6 Quiz #6
13	Friis Chapter 13	Occupational health	In-the-news #10
14	Friis Chapter 14	Injuries/Unintentional injuries	Movie review #3
15	Friis Chapter 4	Environmental policies and regulations	
16	Exam #2		

Time Requirements/Commitment

In order to be a successful online student, you should plan to log in to the course at least twice per week, possess excellent time management and organization skills, and avoid procrastination (risk of technology failure increases as the deadline for an assignment approaches).

Technology/Internet issues are not an excuse for missed assignment.

There are weekly readings that you need to keep up with in order to do well in this class. Make note of due dates for the quizzes, discussions, movie evaluations, and exams.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments should be submitted through Canvas by the specified due date. Each assignment will have a submission link/dropbox. Movie evaluation papers will be checked by Turnitin, and lockdown browser may be used for the exams, all within the Canvas system. The times used in this syllabus are all Central Standard Time. Modules open every Sunday at 11:59 pm. You will still have access to material after the end of the module.

Late Assignments

Late assignments are accepted with a penalty of 5% of the points for the assignment for each day or part thereof late, up to a maximum of 4 days late. After 4 days, the assignment will no longer be accepted and the student will receive a score of 0. (This is not applicable to exams and quizzes. Appropriate documentation must be provided for missed exams and quizzes).

Incompletes

In general, students will not be allowed to take an Incomplete in the course. If you find you have a legitimate reason for needing to take an Incomplete (refer to UNT policy on requesting incompletes), please discuss with me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. You are encouraged to become familiar with the university's [Student Standards of Academic Integrity policy](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf): (https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf.)

Students will receive no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic misconduct.

Academic Honesty Policy: You are encouraged to become familiar with the University Student Code of Conduct maintained by the Dean of Students in the Office of Student Affairs: Student Conduct Operations | Dean of Students. You are encouraged to become familiar with the University Student Code of Conduct maintained by the Dean of Students in the Office of Student Affairs: [Student Conduct Operations | Dean of Students](#)..

Add/Drop Policy: The department adheres to add/drop schedule established and published by the UNT office of the registrar. See the [registration calendar for information](https://registrar.unt.edu/regISTRATION/fall-regISTRATION-guide). <https://registrar.unt.edu/regISTRATION/fall-regISTRATION-guide>..

AI Statement

Intellectual integrity is essential in both our academic community and this course. All submitted work must be your own and adhere to the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity. The use of ChatGPT or any other generative AI applications is strictly prohibited in this class. Any assignment found to involve AI will receive a score of zero. AI is not a replacement for your own thinking and research.

Online Course Technology Requirements & Skills

Technology Requirements: Please familiarize yourself with the technical requirements to complete this online course:

Canvas

Please familiarize yourself with the technical requirements to complete this course:

1. [Hardware and Software requirements for Canvas.](#)
2. [Canvas Browser Check.](#)

Technology Competencies/Skills

Students enrolled in the course must be prepared to perform the basic tasks below.

1. Send and receive email
 2. Attach files to an email message
 3. Use of basic Microsoft Office programs
 4. Save files to an external device (e.g., flash drive, CD, or DVD)
 5. Post and reply to discussion forums
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Student Support Services

Also known at the University of North Texas campus as SSS. All activities and services provided by SSS are intended to help students progress through their degree to an *on-time graduation*. Please refer to the student support services website (<https://trio.unt.edu/sss>) for detailed list of services. More student support information is also available on Canvas.