

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
College of Health Science
Health Science Program
CRN 27833 - HSCI 3317
Occupational Health and Safety and the Health Professional
Spring 2018
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Teaching assistant: Pending

PURPOSE:

This syllabus is considered a contract between you and the professor. It is an agreement that includes the "rules" to be observed during the course, both by students and the instructor. Although this syllabus can change, no changes will be made without a class discussion and agreement.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course addresses the importance of the role of the health care practitioner in promoting positive health and safety culture in the workplace, and although it is mainly intended for students pursuing a health related degree, its multidisciplinary approach can fit most degree plans. It will introduce the student to the general principles and concepts of occupational health and safety and its application for the prevention of injury and disease, as well as the application of public health concepts for the promotion of health and protection of worker populations from environmental hazards.

This course is offered as a full, online course, meaning that no traditional classroom face-to-face meetings will take place during the semester. **Time commitment is essential to complete the course requirements;** you are expected to complete all online materials and assignments. For some this could be convenient since you can access the course either in or off campus, thus you can work on your own. However, if this is the first time you are considering enrolling in an online course, we recommend before making a decision, that first you visit and review UTEP's Instructional Support Services' "Prospective Online Students" website and complete the "Self Evaluation for Potential Online Students" survey which is also directly available at:

<http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/selfEval.asp>

IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU COMPLETE THIS SELF TEST ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS, before making a decision to continue with the course. You do not need to submit the results, they are for you to evaluate and consider.

Even though this is an online course, learning techniques will emphasize a critical thinking approach to learning. A critical thinking approach takes the view that a student's knowledge is not passively absorbed from the instructor. In contrast with other learning techniques, critical thinking assumes students will create knowledge in their own mind by actively thinking about the material. It is going to be crucial that you prepare for each lesson, reading and reviewing the material before engaging in lessons and assignments. Still not quite certain about what critical thinking really is? Visit then the "The Critical Thinking Community", they're website is available at:

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>

Using this, students will apply the gained knowledge to solve common and practical problems related to the research process. **Because the course is designed to challenge you intellectually, you may be required to cover additional materials and conduct activities to complete assessment and assignment.** Additional readings and assignments will be used as a springboard for activities and discussions, and ALL course materials are testable. Additional, but not all resources, course material, readings, etc. will be made available through UTEP's Blackboard's learning management system.

RESTRICTIONS:

There are no restrictions to register for this course except for instructor's authorization. For authorization, send an email with your general information to: gabmejia@utep.edu.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

After completing the course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the scope and nature of occupational health and safety, and the reasons for maintaining and promoting health and safety at the workplace.
2. Identify main workplace hazards, principles and practice of risk assessment, and general principles of controlling hazards and reducing risk.
3. Know about national policy and regulation as well of international bodies of health and safety regulation and the benefits of regulation.
4. Practice his/her skills and abilities to critically review research-based materials related to occupational health and safety.
5. Practice and increase his/hers technical writing skills necessary in future health care professionals.

COURSE OUTCOMES/COMPETENCIES:

After completing the course, the student will demonstrate the following learning outcomes/competencies:

1. Assess needs, assets and capacity for health education (Objectives 1& 2).

2. Conduct evaluation and research related to health education (Objectives 2 & 3).
3. Serve as health education resource person (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5).
4. Work individually and within a group-setting to produce an undergraduate-quality level report based on a systematic literature review (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5).
5. Communicate effectively in written and electronic modes of communication (Objective 4 & 5).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You will need the following required textbook:

Introduction to Occupational Health in Public Health Practice

By Bernard J. Healey and Kenneth T. Walker

Jossey-Bass, 1 edition (September 22, 2009)

ISBN-10: 0470447680

ISBN-13: 978-0470447680

All chapters will be covered, and students will be required to complete read all of them; additionally, students will be required to go over all additional posted materials.

Depending on the number of students registered, groups will be formed during the first week of the course, and will be an integral part of the course. During this time period students will be given the option of freely assembling and joining one until a set deadline; however, if a student does not join a group by the set date, the instructor will assign the student at random to a group. More details on group work can be found in the **Grading Criteria** section.

Additionally, all students are required to:

- Have access to a computer that connects to the Internet and a working e-mail account (miners.edu account). Other e-mail systems should not be used for this course. If you do not own a computer, you can make use of several computer labs on campus.
- Be able and have the means of accessing the online course by way of Blackboard. The course is only accessible online by logging in to your “My UTEP” portal at <http://my.utep.edu> and accessing the Blackboard Learn platform that will show your entire course list. For information on how to log in you can contact the UTEP Help Desk at (915) 747-5257, or check their information page at <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=63402>.
- Have some abilities in using a mouse and keyboarding, and how to use a Web browser to access the internet, email and Blackboard.
- Be able to perform Internet searches, use e-mail, chat, and discussion boards.
- Be able to study independently, be self-disciplined, and have good study and time management skills.
- Have knowledge of how to use word processing, spreadsheet, visual media software, as well as capability to open pdf-type files. Usually, on-campus computers will provide the necessary software and connectivity. However, if you

plan not to work on campus, it is your responsibility to make sure you have the software and connectivity requirements.

- Have the means to store all assignments and if necessary turn them in electronically (disks, flash drives, etc.).

GRADING CRITERIA:

Completion of course will require that the student fulfills the following:

- a) Attendance (see correspondent sections for details).
- b) On-line examinations: 1 comprehensive-final exam (see correspondent sections for details).
- c) Completing quizzes (see correspondent sections for details).
- d) Completing one main writing assignment – Writing assignment based on Literature Review - (see correspondent sections for details):
- e) Extra-credit: content and high-quality discussion entries (see correspondent sections for details).

Attendance

The student must comply with at a minimum of 80% attendance translated as weekly participation in asynchronous online discussion. Refer to the attendance criteria on “COURSE POLICIES” section for details. **This policy will be strictly enforced.**

Online examinations

One (1) final comprehensive examination will be given for the spring’s 2018 Semester. Examinations will consist of combination of multiple-choice, true/false and matching columns, and will be available through Blackboard on the scheduled dates. The exam is conceptual in nature. It is designed to test your ability to think about the material, not your memory. The examination is worth **100 points**. **No extensions, re-scheduling or re-taking** of examinations will be allowed without a University approved excuse.

Examination Schedule		
Examination type	Point value	Available - Due Date
Final comprehensive examination	100	3/2
Total	100	

Important:

- *Exams availability is limited. Exams will open at 8:00 MTN on the scheduled day, and close at 23:59 MTN on the due day. For example, if it opens on Monday at 8:30 hours, it will then be available until midnight of the same day.*

Writing assignment: Report Based on Literature Review

This could be an individual or pair-up with a colleague to complete it. It will be required to complete and submit a **written report based on a literature review** report, which will be worth 0-100 points. The deadline to complete and submit the project is **Wednesday**

11/30 at midnight. However, please refer to Appendix “Writing Assignment #1: Reflective Paper Based on Literature Review” for further instructions.

The report is mandatory and it cannot be substituted. Students, individually or as pair, will be required to complete a review paper based on at least ten (10) peer-reviewed journal articles on an occupational health topic of importance to the US-Mexico border regions and included in Healthy People 2020 objectives and/or . Find the objectives and potential topics of interest by visiting:

(<http://healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=30>).

To complete it, students will search from resources available at UTEP’s library, or other valid academic resources. Selected research articles should have been published after 2011. Take note that a reflective paper is not a summary of the papers you have read. Completing the paper can give a student a maximum of 100 points. Refer to the “Reflective Paper Based on Literature Review Guide and Scoring” section for more details.

Quizzes

Ten quizzes will be scheduled during some course weeks, and worth 0-5 points each, thus you can obtain from 0-50. All quizzes and will be available through Blackboard® Learn platform on the scheduled dates (see Course Module Schedules). You will usually be given a limited time (not to exceed 60 minutes) to complete them depending on the number and type of questions. Scores will be automatically posted on Blackboard® Learn Grade Center once graded. **No** re-scheduling or re-taking of quizzes and other assessments will be allowed without a University approved excuse.

Important:

- *Quiz’s availability is limited. Quizzes will open at 8:00 MTN on the scheduled day, and close at 23:59 MTN on the same day. For example, if it opens on Tuesday at 8:30 hours, it will then be available until that same day at midnight.*

Extra credit:

Extra credit will be awarded based on the number, content and quality of the weekly’s discussion posted comments. See “**Discussion Participation Rubric**” for further details.

- *Important: Total cumulative extra-credit points are not to exceed 30 points, which is the equivalent to one full grade. For example, if you accumulate 40 total extra-credit points, this will be reduced to 30 which is the maximum allowable.*

Final grading

The total that can be earned taking on account the three examinations and group project in this course is **300 points** plus **30 potential extra-credit** points for content and quality of weekly entries in the discussion forums:

Type	Point value
Quizzes and/or assignments (10 at 10 points max each)	0-100

Writing assignment (literature review)	0-100
Final examination	0-100
Extra credit (quality comments on weekly discussion)	0 - 30
Total	0 - 330

The translation of points earned to a letter grade is defined as follows:

271 points and above	A
241 – 270	B
211 – 240	C
181 – 210	D
180 or less	F

Student progress

Grades and feedback will be available through Blackboard ®’s Learn Grade Center; additional feedback may be sent from the instructor or TA by e-mail.

Group work

Nowadays, collaboration is a highly regarded skill. However it is not mandatory and you may select to work on your own. Pair groups will be formed during the first week of the course. During this time period students will be given the option of freely assembling and joining one until a set deadline; however, if a student does not join a group by the set date, it will be interpreted as a decision to work independently and thus assigned as a single-member group. Single-member groups are expected to comply with the same amount and level of work as paired-member groups. The maximum number of members allowed in each group is 2 (2). Blackboard’s group sign-in section is set to not allow going over this number.

Although group work should be equally distributed, each pair will appoint a “Group Leader” who will be the liaison between the group and other groups and the instructor. This does not apply to single-member groups. When completing a group assessment, the score will be the same for all members; however, at the end of the course, each group member may complete a peer evaluation in which students will evaluate, and rank member’s participation to receive proper merit in the form of extra credit points.

- *Changing groups, dropping or joining others are allowed only until the end of the second week of the course. **NO CHANGES WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER 1/28.***

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

The course week goes from Monday through Sunday. Attendance is mandatory and an important component of this course. In this regard, online courses are no different than other face-to-face traditional courses; however attendance must be considered differently. For this course attendance will be comprised of active participation during the course which will be directly monitored by login on and completing other activities in the

course's UTEP's Blackboard® Learn management system shell. The requirement for weekly attendance can be documented by any or all of the following methods: **participation and entering comments in weekly discussions**, tracking records in Blackboard® Learn; submission/completion of assignments; and communication with the instructor. If a student does not log on to the course within the drop/add period for the course he/she will be dropped from the course.

The instructor and/or TA can tell if students are visiting the course site. Failing to maintain active weekly participation in this online course (not login on, not completing and/or submitting assignments, not participating in posted activities, no contact with the instructor) can and will be also defined as an absence.

In order to get attendance, students **MUST** actively participate in the scheduled discussion/question forum (available at Blackboard® Learn platform). Each student will be required to enter a **minimum** of three (3) comments related to the topic at hand, according to the following:

- First entry comment: 150 word-minimum
- Second entry comment: 50-word minimum response to colleagues posting
- Third entry comment: 50-word minimum response to colleagues posting

Important for entries in discussion forums:

- ***Availability to enter comments is limited. Forums will open at 8:30 MTN on Monday and will close at 23:59 MTN on Friday. NOT AVAILABLE DURING WEEKENDS.***
- ***Complying with the above entries will only grant you attendance for the specified week period.***
- ***NOT complying with at least the minimum required entries as specified, will be translates as an ABSENCE for that discussion and the week.***
- ***Extra credit will be granted to all those entries in the discussion forum that comply with the minimum and observe quality criteria as specified in the "Discussion Participation Rubric".***

Absences will affect your final score/grade. You required at least an 80% attendance (5 out of 7), including the first week of class. Furthermore, for each absence you will be deducted approximately a third of a grade (10 points). **You are allowed one excused absence; having three absences means that you will receive an "F" grade regardless of performance and scores on tests, quizzes and assignments, even if the absence occurs in the final week of class. Excused absence requires the need to provide adequate, written proof of the justified reason for absence.** Such exceptions will be made in the case of University excused absences (sponsored activities approved by the Dean of students). You will only be able to make up for activities, exams, or assignments (scheduled or unscheduled) in the case of University excused absences (sponsored activities approved by the Dean of students). No attempts to provide proof of absence will be accepted after 3/2/2018.

Remember that this course requires you to make a time commitment, so plan ahead because you will need additional time to learn and practice your skills. It is estimated that you will at least commit 18 to 24 hours per week to this course, mostly to be spent working with your computer. It is your responsibility to cover all materials and assignments while working online. **Assignment due dates are subject to change**, so check the online schedule in Course Materials frequently. If you miss a due date, complete missed assignments as soon as possible to lessen its impact on your scores.

Communication and Feedback Plan

This section includes how you and your students are expected to communicate during the course. When can students expect feedback from you? (I.e. within 24-48 hours) What tools can they use to contact you? UTEP email is the preferred method; send all emails to gabmejia@utep.edu. Additionally, emails can be sent to the courses' appointed teaching assistant at echaib@miners.utep.edu. Occasionally, a Skype® session can be scheduled – if set up with previous time. Your instructor's Skype® ID is gabboim61. If the student can attend the University's main campus, a meeting can always be scheduled during instructor's office hours. Additionally, there is the option to communicate with your instructor through Facebook® (look up as Gabriel Mejia), or Twitter® (Gabriel Ibarra or @gabbomejia); however this is voluntary since you will be sharing some personal information.

Being successful in an online class.

Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple rules to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

- Ask questions: If you do not know the answer, someone else will.
- Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link or other item that can help others learn.
- Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will usually subject to disciplinary action, as well.
- Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, make sure you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before re-reading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.
- Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.
- Take advantage of all the resources given to you to succeed in the class.

A "Discussion Board" area will be set up in the courses Blackboard shell to allow students to ask questions to each other. Make use of it, since your instructor can monitor your questions and provide feedback.

Effective electronic communication.

It is important to share a word of caution, so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

- For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

- More information on Netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, can be found at www.albion.com/netiquette.

Active participation

Students are encouraged to actively participate in the learning process during online discussions. A second component of active participation is asking questions for clarification of confusing information and expressing opinions by making use of email, chat, or online discussion groups for these purposes.

Policy on examinations

Exams will be accessible online using Blackboard® Learn platform and will be available on the scheduled day from 8:00 AM MTN and until midnight of due day. You may access it at any time; however, once you begin the exam you will have a time limit to complete it. You will not be able to start the exam, stop, and then re-start again. You will usually have a maximum of 60 minutes to complete a quiz depending on the number of questions, and up to 3 hours to complete the partial and final comprehensive examinations. There will be no retaking of missed quizzes and examinations unless proven Blackboard® platform failures. If a student misses the final exam, a written make-up exam may be taken only if the student has informed the instructor of the absence *prior* to the beginning of the examination, and only if the absence is approved by the instructor (University excused absences only, i.e. sponsored activities approved by the Dean of students). Only in rare instances will a student be excused from the examination.

Policy on late assignments

Attendance assignments must be turned in when scheduled in order get credit. No extensions are granted for scheduled discussions, quizzes or tests. A 10% deduction on graded score will be applied for every 24 hours an assignment is overdue, including weekends. No assignments will be accepted if submitted more than 1 week after the due date.

Notice on dropping the course, withdrawals, and incomplete.

Students may drop individual courses or completely withdraw from the University as described below. Refer to the on-line Academic Calendar at www.utep.edu/calendar or to the *Class Schedule* to identify the dates during which adds, drops, withdrawals, and pass/fail registration changes may occur.

a) Student-initiated Drops

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop a course that s/he no longer wishes to take. Failure to do so may result in a grade of "F" on the student's academic record. Athletes must receive permission from the Miner Athletic Advising Center before dropping a course. International students with F or J visas must receive permission from the Office of International Programs before dropping a course.

b) Administrative Drops

During registration periods for upcoming semesters, students will be dropped from registered courses for failure to meet prerequisites or co-requisites after final grades have been posted for the current semester and before the beginning of late registration for next semester. A student may petition the department chair of the course in question for a prerequisite or co-requisite waiver.

At the discretion of the instructor, a student may be dropped from a course because of excessive absences or lack of effort. Students may also be administratively withdrawn from a course during the semester for other reasons, with the concurrence of the academic dean or department chair. A grade of "W" will be assigned before the course drop deadline and a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline. A grade of "F" received due to disciplinary action imposed by the University overrides a grade of "W" received through a student-initiated or faculty drop. Students will be notified of their drop through their UTEP e-mail account.

c) Grade Assignment for Drops and Withdrawals

Grades will be assigned as follows when a student drops a course or completely withdraws from the University:

1. If a student drops a course before the official census date of a semester, neither the course nor a grade will appear on the student's academic record.
2. If a student drops from a course after the census date but before the student-initiated course drop deadline listed in the *Class Schedule*, a grade of "W" will be assigned.
3. If the student drops after the student-initiated course drop deadline, instructors will determine a grade of "W" or "F" for each course. A grade of "W" is considered only under exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the instructor and department chair for the course. A student may petition for a grade of "W" in writing with the necessary supporting documentation.

d) Incomplete course work

If eligible, the student may receive a grade of Incomplete (I) that will appear on the academic transcript; an "I" (incomplete grade) can only be considered only if by the

student in advance of the conclusion of the course and only for legitimate, documented emergencies. Failure to request and negotiate the terms of an “Incomplete” grade before the conclusion of the course will result in a denial except in the most extraordinary circumstances.

Notice of Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University’s educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected the UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student’s own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Copyright and fair use requirements

The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

Notice on Students with Disabilities & American Disabilities Act

If you have or suspect a disability and need accommodations, you should contact the Disabled Student Support Services Office (DSSO) at (915) 747-5148. You can also email the office at: dss@utep.edu or go by Room 106 Union Building East. For additional information, visit the DSSO website at: www.utep.edu/dsso

COURSE ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT:

Course related: Your instructor is available to assist you online, by phone, and by email throughout the semester.

Technical support: Click on the “Help” hyperlink in Blackboard platform after logging in to your “My UTEP” portal at <http://my.utep.edu>. Furthermore, The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and help desk support at: <http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/>.

Important dates:

Event	Date	Notes
Course starts	1/16 (8:00 AM)	Course open on Blackboard
Census date	1/22	Last day to drop without penalty
Auto-W	2/26	Last day to withdraw with a “W”
Final exam	3/2 (midnight)	Final exam must be completed by this date
Course ends	3/14 (midnight)	Course closes on Blackboard