

**SPPH 581X Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs):
Identifying approaches to prevent, manage and reduce their impact**

**Term 2, January – April 2023
Wednesdays 10-12 Room B108
3 credits**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the *xwməθkwəy'əm* (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

DESCRIPTION AND APPROACH

In the midst of a lingering pandemic where public health's primary focus has been on addressing infectious diseases, it is easy to overlook the incredible ongoing toll that chronic diseases take in our own families, communities, province, country and globally. NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, diabetes and cancer account for the highest causes of preventable death in Canada and the world; they also constitute the largest avoidable burden on our publicly funded medical care system.

This course will focus on understanding the range of NCDs and their impacts in terms of morbidity and mortality. It will also provide opportunities to become familiar with ways to access data and resources to delve into deeper understanding of these issues. While previous versions of the course have focused primarily on epidemiologic concepts and tools, I have updated course to build on this foundation, with a stronger focus on how we can respond in order to reduce the ever-increasing burden of NCDs.

The course will explore some general principles and challenges inherent in responding to NCDs, and consider a range of approaches that can be deployed to curtail this 'other' epidemic. It will consider issues such as: Which population and public health approaches work to prevent, manage and even reverse the chronic diseases that we face? How preventable are these conditions? Which strategies are most effective for different conditions and for different levels of intervention (e.g., individual, clinical, community, regional, provincial, national and global)?

AUDIENCE

The course will be of interest to students in both thesis-based and applied (MPH) programs, as well as to those with clinical backgrounds, and appeal to those who want to make a difference. Students in all SPPH programs, and graduate students in other UBC programs are welcome to enroll. The course may also be relevant for public health providers, future public health leaders, as well as population health scientists and government advisors. Non-SPPH students will require approval from the course instructor.

OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

I have designed this course and will be offering it for the first time, so I will be learning with you! My hope is that by the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explain the scope, trends and impacts of key NCDs, with a focus on those that are significant nationally and globally
- Explain the impact of NCDs on health care systems, and in terms of economic costs

- Critique key approaches to measurement of NCDs and discuss related controversies in this area
- Demonstrate familiarity with key NCD resources and data sources, understand some of their strengths and limitations, and use them to develop deeper understanding of identified issues
- Evaluate challenges related to mobilizing existing evidence about effective interventions to address NCDs
- Compare and contrast a range of population & public health responses to NCDs and consider their relative effectiveness
- Communicate your ideas both verbally and in writing
- Give, receive and use constructive peer feedback in class activities and in written work
- Work with others to formulate and recommend approaches to address NCDs

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

Instructor:

Dr. Charlyn Black MD, ScD

Professor, SPPH

Faculty, Centre for Health Services & Policy Research

charlyn.black@ubc.ca

Office hours: Wednesday after class, 1:00-3:00 pm in room 136, otherwise by appointment

Bio: I began my medical training in Manitoba with a deep interest in prevention (and even reversal) of illness. Upon completing a rotating internship, I worked in a clinical teaching role; this led to residency training in Community Medicine (now Public Health and Preventive Medicine). As part of that training, I completed my doctorate in health policy at Johns Hopkins University. I then returned to Manitoba where I became part of a team that worked closely with policy makers to conduct health services research aimed at improving health and health care systems. I was recruited to UBC in 2002 to serve as Director of the UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research (CHSPR); to date I have focused most of my research in this area. More recently, I served as SPPH's Associate Director Education. As I approach retirement, I am returning to my deepest passion, to focus on prevention of chronic disease. Based on my recent reading of the literature, I believe that there are multiple approaches to prevent and even reverse chronic disease, and that food and nutrition plays a central role, in addition to other social determinants of health. I therefore bring a personal, clinical, public health and policy approach to this area.

Teaching Assistant:

Promit Chakraborty

MSc Student, SPPH

promitch@student.ubc.ca

Additional guest lecturers will focus on specific areas of expertise:

- Dr. Nizal Sarrafzadegan, Affiliate Professor, SPPH, and Professor, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran (global NCD issues)
- Dr. Hans Krueger, Adjunct Professor, SPPH, and President, H. Krueger & Associates Inc. (health system and economic impacts of NCDs)
- Dr. Geoff McKee, Medical Director, Population and Public Health, BCCDC & Clinical Assistant Professor, SPPH (provincial perspectives)
- Dr. Naomi Dove (clinical, to be confirmed)

PREREQUISITES

None

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course aims to foster discussion and interaction as the basis for understanding and applying the learning. It will be offered using a blended format, relying on both face to face and online components. I

am excited to be able to share some of my recent learning, and together with you, to learn even more in offering this course for the first time. I hope to make the course responsive to student interests and am open to adapting it to enhance your learning as much as possible.

I believe that our most profound learning takes place when we apply new understanding to specific issues and are challenged bring our own perspective and creativity to this process. The approach will therefore involve: i) focused learning on your own, to review key resources in order to to gain understanding of key background issues; ii) time in class with interactive lectures, and activities to apply the learning; and iii) assignments that build on, and generate creative application of the learning. In this format, I will expect you to review materials, including readings, podcasts or videos, **prior to class**; I anticipate that this may require up to 2 hours of work each week. You will be expected to come to class prepared to question, critique, and expand on fundamental concepts introduced in the materials provided. In class, we will rely on interactive lectures, as well as activities designed to deepen your understanding and ability to apply this learning; these may include for example, facilitated class discussion & exercises, debates, small group work and student presentations.

Typical timing for class:

10-10:45: Interactive lecture

10:45-11: Break

11-12: Small group discussion and report back

Two hours of weekly in-person attendance is required, as this is the most effective way to engage in the activities that form a critical part of your learning in the course. Should you have to miss a class, please notify me and our TA Promit, as it will be possible to record the first section of the class. The second hour will not be recorded, due to the nature of the conversations we will be engaging in during this component.

LEARNING RESOURCES

There is no textbook for this course. Readings, with or without videos, will be available on Canvas for each session and *will be required to be reviewed prior to each class*. We will also make use of materials available on the Internet, in particular, data and resources from various international, national and provincial sources.

MODULES

The course includes 13 modules which are tentatively structured as outlined below. The timing and specific focus of some of these modules may change, depending on the availability of external speakers and class interests.

Week number	Topic
1	Intro to the course, to NCDs & understanding student interests
2	Scope of NCD problems and trends over time
3	Measurement issues
4	Resources and data sources for deeper understanding
5	Responding to NCDs: What are some of the challenges? What is the range of approaches?
6	Impact of NCDs: health care system and economic costs

MID-TERM BREAK	
7	P&PH responses: Global
8	P&PH responses: Individual & health promotion
9	P&PH responses: Clinical
10	P&PH responses: NCD prevention in the BC public health system: Opportunities and challenges
11	P&PH responses: Programs & community
12	P&PH responses: Policy National & Canada
13	Student presentations

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

As graduate students, I feel that it is important to learn content – in this case about NCDs, but also to learn to work in teams, and to communicate effectively, both in discussion settings and in written documents. The learning assessments are designed to support and assess these deeper aspects of learning, and are aligned with the course format and learning objectives.

Class participation 30%

Given the interactive nature of the class, students will be assessed on class participation, based on evidence of preparation, critical thinking, active learning, constructive engagement in discussions, presentations of small group work, and feedback to peers.

Mid-term paper 20%

Details will be provided, but it is anticipated that this assignment will focus on submitting a plan for the final paper, to be conducted by teams who agree to focus on a topic of interest. You will also provide peer feedback to one or more other teams.

Presentation 20%

Student teams will be expected to develop a presentation of their work to date on the final paper.

Final paper 30%

The final paper will be submitted by students who agree to work in teams to focus on a shared topic of interest. Guidance will be provided as the course progresses, and the final project will be shaped by student interests (e.g., developing a paper for publication, developing a report to make program or policy recommendations to a specific agency, etc.).

LEARNING ANALYTICS

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. This course will be using tools available on Canvas, many of which capture data about your activity and provide information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this course, I plan to use analytics data to:

- View overall class progress
- Review statistics on course content being accessed to support improvements in the course

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

Note about plagiarism

From: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/student-responsibilities/dealing-plagiarism>:
*Plagiarism is intellectual theft. It occurs when an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. This applies to draft work and oral presentations as well as to final submissions. Failing to properly cite the work of another also constitutes plagiarism, even if it is accidental. Plagiarism by graduate students will be reported to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Your department or Faculty may have additional information about plagiarism. **You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism, and for ensuring that you do not commit any act of plagiarism under any circumstances.***

Download the complete document “Dealing with Plagiarism by Graduate Students”:

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/dealing-plagiarism-graduate-students>

Note about disability accommodation

Students who face barriers to participation in any aspect of the course are encouraged to contact the [Centre for Accessibility](#) as soon as possible in order to request accommodation. The Centre provides guidance about how UBC accommodates students with disabilities, as well as information about accommodations that can be made to remove barriers to learning.

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