

SPPH 527 Course Syllabus (Professor Erica Frank, Winter 2023)

Course Summary

It is well-understood that personal, economic, political, and other realms are key social determinants of health, but our ability to act on these determinants with Efficient Beneficence remains profoundly limited. This course will provide a didactic and a skills-oriented introduction to understanding and effectively acting on the social determinants of health, framed through the lens of the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Some of the essential questions that will be discussed in this course are:

- What are Social Determinants of Health (SDoH), and why are they important?
- How can the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) be a useful lens for addressing the SDoH, and other desirable public health outcomes?
- What didactic knowledge and skills-based competencies should students acquire to best address the social determinants of health in their work?

[This](#) is me (the course professor and author of this syllabus), and [this](#) is a brief *UBCMJ* introduction to what motivates me around the Social Determinants of Health, and why I've spent most of my career as a physician working on various aspects of the SDoH.

The course is intended to be light on didactics, and heavy on capacity building with relevant skills. You will learn through didactic readings, and through synthesizing/integrating that knowledge while gaining skills-based competencies by doing and participating in others' doings. The main sources for reading will be [the descriptions of the SDGs](#) and the [2022 Report on the progress on the SDGs](#). You will practice identifying SDoH issues that motivate you, creating strategies to address those issues, implementing those strategies, and assessing and presenting the outcomes of your efforts.

Lecture Times

Wednesdays from 9:30 to 12:30pm in SPPH B104 with an optional lunch/"office hour" from 12:30pm to 1:30pm following in-person class weeks. SPPH 527 will be offered in-person on 1/18, 2/1, 2/15, 3/1, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12. The course will be in the virtual diaspora on 1/11, 1/25, 2/8 and 3/8, and reading week is the week of Feb 20-24 (so no class 2/22).

Teaching Team

Professor

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Teaching Assistant

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Class structure

Our standard structure for both in-person and remote class sessions will be:

1. Hour 1 – Integrating SDGs-Didactics-Solutions: Every week in the semester’s first two months, two preassigned presenting pairs will do short reviews of the assigned didactics, and lead us through two 20 minute explorations (not lectures, but guided thinking and discussion/action) about some meta-principles from the week’s two SDGs. The purpose is to co-learn about and practice varied engaging ways of presenting, about the next two SDGs, and help everyone see how the SDGs can help frame the SDoHs that the presenters are each addressing. Presenters can use multimedia, have us do an activity, break into small discussion groups, bring in guest speakers, or engage students in other compelling fashions. Then we’ll have 20 minutes of small group (4 person) discussions on “How does your personal project for the class tie into these two SDGs” and of strategizing on how to amplify/strengthen your project to maximally address this week’s SDGs while not compromising other goals (the real world exercise I constantly do as a PH practitioner).
2. Hour 2 – Research Roundtable: Everyone has two minutes to present on their initiative’s progress, provide one question they’d like help on, and get feedback (oral and in chat/written suggestions/note passing).
3. Hour 3 – Lab: Break into teams, discuss projects in more depth, get consultations from me, our TA, and each other.
4. Optional Hour 4+ – Lunch: We have another room we’ve booked to allow additional work time/space to talk with me and with classmates about SDoH, SDGs, your initiatives for the class, and/or other issues in PH. For the 9 weeks we’re together for class, we’ll pass around in hour 1 an order sheet for a lunch delivery, and you’re also welcome to bring food from home to eat and/or share. There’s a lot of literature on breaking bread together to build communities (of practice).

Class/Week #, date (medium, SDGs addressed)

1. The structure of Class 1 (on January 11th) will differ from the above, though. We’ll meet in the virtual diaspora, and I’ll introduce you to the meta-concepts in the class, particularly to the link between the SDoH and the SDGs. Before Class 1, please have read [this 2 page article](#) about the SDoH-SDG link, and have glanced at [the descriptions of the SDGs](#) and the [2022 Report on the progress on the SDGs](#), our framing “textbooks” for the class. I’ll review the goals for and structure of the class, and model presenting how I hope class sessions 3-12 will proceed, including our breaking into small groups to discuss [the 2 page article](#) and our understanding of the SDoH and the SDoH-SDG link. We’ll next review some initiatives that I’m working on and one of your classmates is working on that might interest people as collaborations for their class projects. Then we’ll spend the rest of the first class doing a brief round robin of introductions of this cohort of learner-teachers, and of people’s rudimentary ideas of what kinds of class projects might interest them.
2. Class 2 (January 18, in person) will also be different from other classes. We will have our first two pairs presenting/guiding for hour 1 on SDGs #1 and #2 and on integrating them into the Solutions they’re thinking about for their projects. The rest of Class 2 will be “speed dating” – presenting your ideas about what semester-long achievable initiatives interest you to co-lead, and listening to see if and how you might want to contribute to others’ initiatives.
3. 1/25 (virtual, SDG lens #s 3&4, environmental scan done)

4. 2/1 (in-person, SDG lens #s 5&6, project description draft done)
5. 2/8 (virtual, SDG lens #s 7&8, refined project description with individual deliverable id'd)
6. 2/15 (in-person, SDG lens #s 9&10)
7. 2/22 Reading week – no class
8. 3/1 (in-person, SDG lens #s 11&12)
9. 3/8 (virtual, SDG lens #s 13&14)
10. 3/15 (in-person, SDG lens #s 15&16)
11. 3/22 (in-person, SDG lens #17)
12. 3/29 (in-person, reviews of questions about didactics/principles/skills, final presentations of class projects/initiatives, and integration of didactics/principles and initiatives)
13. 4/5 (in-person, reviews of questions about didactics/principles/skills, final presentations of class projects/initiatives, and integration of didactics/principles and initiatives)
14. 4/12 (in-person, reviews of questions about didactics/principles/skills, final presentations of class projects/initiatives, and integration of didactics/principles and initiatives)

Course objectives

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

- explain SDoH
- frame SDoH in the context of the UN SDGs
- identify SDoH that compel them and that they have knowledge and skills to address
- create strategies to address those SDoH
- implement those strategies
- assess the outcomes of their efforts and
- present the outcomes of their efforts.

Evaluation

Your metrics for this class will reflect the varied competencies that we are trying to promote. So we can all keep up, late assignments will be penalized 5% of the possible grade for each calendar day it's past due.

- Weekly class participation (16%): For the 8 weeks of SDG presentations (other than their own week), each student can receive 1% for participating in Hour 1, and 1% for participating in Hour 2. Makeup substitute activities can be scheduled for <=3 classes if attendance is difficult.
- Presentation to / organization of class activity re SDGs (5%, please sign up soon for a presentation slot in Canvas during the 2nd-12th weeks)
- Final class presentation of your initiative, *Creating, implementing, evaluating and documenting the effects of strategies to address the social determinants of health using an SDG lens*, in course's last several weeks (5%)

- Initiative/Project, *Creating, implementing, evaluating and documenting the effects of strategies to address the social determinants of health using an SDG lens*, (individual score 40%, group score 10%)
- Final exam (Multiple Choice Questions 17%, narrative responses 7%)

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all zoom and in person meetings. Meetings will begin promptly at 9:30AM PST, please make every attempt to be there on time, and if you have special circumstances that prevent you from joining, please email the instructor and TA. The expectation is that students join the face-to-face meetings having read and reflected on that week's assigned SDGs for class. Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions in larger and smaller groups. The purpose of the face-to-face meetings is to discuss, integrate, and deepen the learning from course materials, reflect on concepts in a group setting, ask questions, and share ideas and comments about the course content and the initiatives being implemented.

Additionally, please complete this [attendance sheet](#) each week, confirming whether you are attending the class virtually or in-person and if you are an SDG presenter that week, as well as answering the week's question outlined at the top of the attendance sheet.

Preparing for Remote Meetings

- test your connection, video and audio settings ahead of time
- turn on your cameras especially during smaller group discussions to get to know each other
- use real names or provide information on your Zoom username so that we can check attendance
- join the discussions and contribute actively, while allowing everyone to share their thoughts in discussions
- be patient with and sensitive to each other

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](#).

Academic Integrity

To help you learn about your responsibilities as a student in this course, please read and understand UBC's expectations for academic honesty outlined in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Resources such as the Chapman Learning Commons, "[Understanding Academic Integrity](#)" can be reviewed to ensure that you meet these expectations. Please see the [Centre for Writing and Scholarly Communication](#) for more information on plagiarism and academic citations, and/or [this excellent SFU resource](#) or [this one from UBC](#) on avoiding plagiarism.