

Public Health Management Online Certificate Program



PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: METHODS, ETHICS AND POLICY HPA 446

Course Description: This online course equips students to analyze, evaluate and address the relationships among budgets, resources, forces of change, and organizational and professional values as they pertain to managerial choices and decisions.

Course Overview: A key assumption in this course is that managers in public health organizations (PHO) are simultaneously presented with two main types of challenges as they undertake the four basic management functions of Planning, Organizing, Controlling and Leading. The first set of challenges includes operational issues related to getting the job done. The second set of challenges has to do with what are variously termed environmental, contextual or external factors. The course predicate is that in the practice of public health, these challenges are not dichotomous. That is, PHO managers must make and carry out decisions mindful of 'the operational AND the policy'; 'the now AND the then'; 'the unit AND the organization'; 'the internal AND the external'; 'the practical AND the theoretical'; and 'the expedient AND the values-consistent'. The course is intended to equip you to recognize and define these complexities, and to increase your ability to act on this knowledge. The consistent thread throughout the course is that public health is fundamentally rooted in, and temporally reflective of, the ongoing pursuit of social justice.

The course blends a solid conceptual framework with contemporary applications. It is grounded in the assumption that public health managers must develop familiarity and competence in routinely considering values and ethics in decision making. While practical tools will be discussed and/or referenced, the course's purpose is education, not training for specific activities. During this course, students will analyze, evaluate and address the relationships among budgets, resources, forces of change, and organizational and professional values as these pertain to significant public health managerial choices and decisions. The general course theme is: Resources are limited; there are conflicting interests; decisions have ethical import; difficult choices must be made and the public health manager must help the organization thrive in this context.

The assumed context in this course is the PHO and public health systems. We will reference important public health issues and will apply public health perspectives to how resource management decisions occur. As covered in HPA 400, a basic defining element of a PHO is that its stated reason for being is the protection and improvement of the health of populations. The return on investment (ROI) of public health programs, policies and organizations is expressed as a function of epidemiologic indicators. A course about 'health resource management' offered within the context of education about medical care administration, for example, would emphasize different endpoints. The point here is that, although this public health-based course includes content which is usefully employed in non-PHO management contexts, the public health enterprise is the default location of most examples, sources, materials, and analyses.

Prerequisites: HPA 400 and graduate or professional standing.

Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the multiple resource domains within which public health managers must make choices.
- Identify and measure organizational and environmental resources and assets (human, technological, communication, financial, and social/ethical capital).
- Illustrate the relevance to public health resource management of concepts of justice including: distributive justice, equality of effect, accountability for reasonableness, stewardship and integrity, health equity, and socially determined and influenced disparities.
- Understand historic and emerging models for resource allocation within complex organizations, systems, and society.
- Consequent to evaluating and critiquing selections from literature on social justice, ethics, and managerial epidemiology, recognize and interpret dilemmas concerning moral leadership in public health, corporate responsibility and ethical decision making.
- Describe the roles of informatics, business process engineering and decision analysis in resource management, including common barriers to adequate decision support faced by managers in public health organizations.
- Compare and contrast economic evaluation methods used to analyze public health interventions: cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), cost-benefit analysis (CBA), cost-minimization analysis (CMA), and cost-utility analysis (CUA).
- Analyze the policy implications of additional methods and metrics that organizations use to manage and deploy resources, including epidemiologic metrics (e.g., DALY/QALY), quality assurance and performance improvement measures, management standards and practice guidelines, values identification audits, and measures of the strength of constituency support for decisions.
- Define the Value Proposition of Public Health as a field, and argue for strategies which can enlarge multiple constituencies' understanding of the value proposition of specific public health interventions.
- Evaluate claims and analyses of structural underfunding and resource scarcity. Review and develop plans to prevent and ethically address conflicts in resource allocation and deployment.
- Critique historic and contemporary examples of business, institutional and governmental leadership with respect to key dimensions of public health resource management; i.e., investment in workforce development, rationing of services or benefits, and efficiency of service delivery.

General Student Behavioral Goals:

Upon completion of the course, students who analyze the required focal readings, consult the readings listed for context, background, overview and depth, participate actively in online dialogue, and complete all assignments, projects and exams, will be able to:

1. Write effective and convincing explanations concerning the ethical dimensions of public health managerial decision making.
2. Interpret and propose solutions to problems which involve both the principles of resource allocation decisions and methods of resource allocation within the public health context.
3. Formulate arguments and plans which address conflicting interests and priorities, incorporating an understanding of relevant issues and methods pertaining to accountability, information management, and organizational and systems performance.
4. Formulate realistic and defensible arguments concerning the value proposition of public health interventions, within the contexts of managerial epidemiology and public policy.

Course Management System: The course content will be delivered via UIC’s Blackboard Learning System. Students will be enrolled into the Blackboard course site each semester after registering. The Blackboard course site is the primary content area for instructors to post lecture notes and articles, post and update grades, and make announcements. Students are expected to log into their course site regularly to learn about any developments related to the course. Learn more about Blackboard at <http://blackboard.uic.edu>.

Textbooks:

Daniels, N., and Sabin, J.E. (2008). *Setting Limits Fairly: Learning to Share Resources for Health* (2nd Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

GOAL/QPC and Public Health Foundation. (2007). *The Public Health Memory Jogger II: A Pocket Guide of Tools for Continuous Improvement and Effective Planning*. Salem, NH: GOAL/QPC.

Other Learning Resources: Additional required readings available through eReserves.

Course Expectations:

At minimum, all students are expected to read all required (FOCAL and some others) materials, complete all written and online discussion assignments on time, initiate and respond thoughtfully to discussion questions and issues presented by the instructor and by enrolled peers, and to collaborate with other learners, when appropriate, to address class assignments. Students should expect to review and work in the Blackboard environment at least three times per week. (Resources will be added as indicated by performance on assignments and by interaction on the Discussion Board, clarifications may be posted, etc.)

Outline*:

*Outline configured for a 12-week summer session course

Weeks	Theme(s)	Topic(s)
2-3	Foundations of Inquiry	Ways of Seeing & Knowing: Scientist and Manager
2-4	Conceptual Bases for Priority Setting	Why Do RA? Review Frameworks
3-5	Conceptual Bases for Priority Setting and Decision Making	How good is 'A for R'? PH Approach and Settings from medical care (prevention, protection)
5-6	Conceptual Bases for Priority Setting in RA	Operationalizing Ethical Awareness: From 'I' to 'We'
6	Structures of Accountability A.	What Does 'Evidence-Based' Really Mean? Is it Proof or Guidance? Can/should it be Determinative?

7-8	Structures of Accountability B.	Performance Management & Quality Improvement in PH - Emphasis on Systems as units of analysis and Systems' Output Measures
MIDTERM EXAM POSTED		
7-8	Structures of Accountability C.	Managerial Epidemiology and Service Quality Improvement: PDCA/PDSA, RCI Equity
8-9	Structures of Accountability D.	PH Informatics and Data Mgmt/Use Overview
9-10	Accountability & Policy	Economic Analytics: Methods & Measurements- CEA, CBA, QALY, DALY, etc.
10-11	Practice & Policy A.	Values Value Rationing Alliances
FINAL EXAM POSTED		
12	Practice & Policy B.	Cutbacks Pain Make the Community Whole Help Constituents Value ROI

Purpose, Organization, and Availability of Course Materials - FOCAL and CBOD and REC (*Section added for 6.21.10 release*): Students approach this course content having widely varying academic and professional backgrounds; this variety is positive and enriching for us all. In order to teach and to learn as described on this document's Page 1, third paragraph - resource management within the contemporary public health context - all participants must be familiar with certain core information. The syllabus section "Course Segment Themes, Weekly Course Topics and Schedule" has two rubrics: FOCAL and Context, Background, Overview and Depth (CBOD). The FOCAL Readings for each week are required of everyone and are fair game for discussion and weekly assignments. The CBOD materials' content is recommended if you already know it, required if you don't. That is, for the Midterm and Final examinations, I will assume your general familiarity with these items (a specified subset of them, iterated within the exam questions). I suggest that as you organize yourselves to prepare for these exams, you consult these CBOD links and documents, available on Blackboard under Course Documents or on electronic reserve. Resources which are recommended but not required are indicated by REC on the Course Materials list of this syllabus.