

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

COURSE INFORMATION

ES 210: BEHAVIOR DRIVEN DISEASE – A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC

Dates: Winter Session, 2018

Location: Study Abroad in Jamaica, The University of the West Indies, Mona.

Credits: 3

Global Pathways: This course can be used to partially fulfill the Global Pathways requirement.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This study abroad course will allow student participants to explore how lifestyle choices are linked to obesity and overweight from 2 perspectives – the United States and Jamaica. The U.S. has one of the highest obesity rates in the world – approximately 37% of the adult population is obese. Jamaica's rate is about half that, standing at 20%. The primary objective of this course is to have the students identify and describe factors that contribute to the lower prevalence in Jamaica. To satisfy this objective, students will attend classroom sessions before departure to learn how cultural evolution in the U.S. (as distinct from biologic evolution) has created an environment of abundance and comfort, leading to widespread overconsumption of food and physical inactivity. In Jamaica, participants will interact with faculty and students in health-related disciplines at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, will explore markets and farms in the area to determine the availability and cost of fresh food and will visit various restaurants and other food outlets to assess nutritional value of prepared food. Through observation, immersion, and survey, students will explore daily physical activity patterns among individuals in different settings – city, village/town, and rural – to make comparisons and synthesize conclusions. Students will also engage and interact with obesity practitioners and patients during visits to community health centers and clinics.

A secondary objective is to have students use information they gather to explore mechanisms through which physical inactivity and poor nutrition are linked to high risk for contracting heart disease and diabetes and how adopting an active lifestyle and better eating habits can reduce risk, increase quality of life and delay the onset of debilitating illness later in life.

COURSE RATIONALE

The World Health Organization has identified overweight and obesity as major global health concerns that afflict almost 2 billion adults worldwide. These conditions largely result from poor lifestyle choices and greatly increase the risk of developing heart disease and type II diabetes – two leading causes of death around the world. Treating and managing these diseases costs

billions of dollars each year, creating a huge financial burden on a country's health-care system. But, if we can find a way to get the majority of our world population to make healthier lifestyle choices, a simple and effective way to reduce risk and help manage existing disease, much of this burden can be eliminated. Two behaviors in particular that increase the risk of obesity and overweight are sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition. Obesity (and related behavior driven diseases) is not only a global health concern, it is the number 1 public health problem in the U.S. This experiential learning program will enable students in health related fields to compare lifestyle choices related to food intake and physical activity levels between a culture they would typically not know (Jamaica) and our culture in the U.S. and to transfer these lessons and experience to UB and to their own communities and professions upon their return. The course aligns with the objectives of UB's Global Pathways in that it provides an international experience for participating students. Finally, this program fits into the mission of the School of Public Health and Health Professions which is to *"promote the understanding, prevention and treatment of disease and disability, thereby improving the health of populations, communities and individuals from regionally to globally."*

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Having completed this Study Abroad Course, students will be expected to achieve the following learning outcomes:

Course Learning Outcome	Delivered through the Following Instructional Method(s):	Student Achievement Assessed with the Following Method(s)/Assignments:
1. Distinguish between cultural and biologic evolution describe how this divergence has led to obesity and behavior-driven disease	assigned readings; on-line and in-class lecture; facilitated discussion	Quizzes; meaningful participation in facilitated discussions; group projects; final project; positive in-country participation
2. Enhanced problem-solving and critical thinking skills	assigned readings; immersion in a different culture; facilitated discussion and reflection; planned activities and meetings	Quizzes; meaningful participation in facilitated discussions; group projects; final project; positive in-country participation
3. Develop essential research skills; collect and collate data related to lifestyle and prevalence of obesity.	Immersion in a different culture; observe and interview individuals in different settings (city, small town, rural)	Quizzes; meaningful participation in facilitated discussions; group projects; final project; positive in-country participation
4. Demonstrate proficiency in oral discourse and written communication.	facilitated discussion and reflection; planned activities and meetings	Quizzes; group projects; meaningful participation in facilitated discussions; final project;
5. Enhanced global and cultural competencies	Make comparisons between cultural values, lifestyle and perspectives between Western society and Jamaica; planned activities and meetings; facilitated discussions	Meaningful participation in facilitated discussions; final project; positive in-country participation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Format: This course emphasizes experiential learning through immersion in Jamaican culture. Students will spend 3 days in Buffalo reviewing and discussing basic concepts and theories related to Evolutionary Discordance, obesity prevalence, basic pathophysiology of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 Diabetes, introduction to dietary assessment, and introduction to Jamaican culture and customs. The group will then travel to The University of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica and spend 13 days traveling to different sites in Jamaica, observing and interacting with the population.

The following course requirements are designed to foster reflection, meaningful discussion and to enhance critical thinking skills.

1. Pre-travel readings, on-line and in-class lectures and discussion.
2. Students will be randomly divided into groups of 3 on the first day of class. Two group projects will be assigned and graded.
3. Positive In-Country Participation: Students are expected to be fully engaged in all aspects of the site visits in Jamaica and contribute in a positive and open manner, demonstrating cultural sensitivity and appropriateness.
4. Final Presentations: On the last day in Jamaica, each group of 3 students will make a power point presentation to the rest of the class.

Required Readings: Readings and short animated videos will be posted on UBLearns. These sources of information will supplement on-line lectures and material discussed during the in-class sessions prior to travel to Jamaica.

Student Expectations: Students are expected to attend all classes prior to travel, review on-line material **before** in-class sessions and complete all course requirements as outlined above. All students are expected to read the syllabus and comply with codes of conduct as described. Students should realize that while in Jamaica they will be acting as ambassadors for the University at Buffalo. We will visit many sites around the country including community health clinics. As such, a dress code will be in effect – khakis or slacks and collared shirt or polo for both men and women. Optional for women - skirt with blouse. No yoga pants/leggings or shorts. When interacting with faculty, staff and students at UWI, with clinicians in the field and with the general population, students are expected to be polite, courteous and respectful and demonstrate cultural sensitivity.

Evaluation

Quizzes: (*each quiz is worth 10% of the final grade*) Two short quizzes will be administered – one pre-trip, based on readings and on-line material and in-class discussions. Another will be administered while in Jamaica and will cover material related to obesity, accompanying behavior driven disease and how exercise and nutrition can be effective in prevention and management.

Small group projects: Students will be randomly divided into groups of 3 on the first day of

class. During the course 2 small group projects will be assigned and graded (*each worth 10 % of the final grade*).

Positive In-country Participation: (*worth 30% of the final grade*)

Final Presentation: (*30% of final grade*). Each group will be assigned different topics, all related to the major themes of the course.

Primary Theme: lifestyle factors that underlie increasing prevalence of obesity and the link to behavior driven disease.

Secondary Theme: Prevention and management through exercise and diet.

Peer Evaluation: Each individual will anonymously rate all of the other members of their groups at the end of the course. Individual peer evaluation scores will be the average of the points they receive from the members of their group. A peer evaluation factor will be calculated from the scores and used to determine the final grade for each individual for **group work** only (in-class group projects; final group presentations).

TENTATIVE Course Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Location	Activities	Assignments/Expectations
Thurs Jan 4	UB	Intro to Evolutionary Discordance, lifestyle and obesity, behavior driven disease	Assigned readings, class discussion
Fri Jan 5	UB	Intro to Dietary Assessment and Jamaican Culture and Customs	Assigned readings, class discussion
Sat Jan 6	UB	Pre-trip prep	Group Project
Sun Jan 7	Depart	Arrive at Kingston Airport – transport to UWI campus. Get settled in dorm rooms.	
Mon Jan 8	UWI Campus	Logistics and meals; Heritage Tour – campus and surrounding area; Interact with faculty and students at UWI; Visit local market.	Make a meal plan for breakfasts
Tues Jan 9	On-campus community health clinic, city obesity clinic, Coronation Market	Observe and interact with clinic staff and patients. Insight into types and nutritional value of foodstuff sold at a typical open air market. Short tour of Kingston.	Gather data and start to form opinions about lifestyle, diet and physical activity (PA)
Wed Jan 10	Travel to Black River	Heritage Tour. Observe and interact with local population.	Lifestyle of locals different here than in the city?
Thurs Jan 11	Travel to Port Royal and Lime Key	Visit UWI Institute of Marine Biology. Boat Tour. Gather information about the decline in fish/seafood population related to overfishing and pollution. Snorkeling on a reef, lunch on the key!	Does the decline in availability of seafood affect diet/nutrition? Group project.
Fri Jan 12	Travel to a coffee plantation in the Blue Mountains	Observe and interact with staff and workers regarding lifestyle (diet, PA). Visit a Community Health Clinic	Continue to gather data and form opinions about lifestyle, diet and PA. Rural vs city

Sat Jan 13	UWI Campus	Reflections, Facilitated Discussion	Short Quiz
Sun Jan 14	Day off		
Mon Jan 15	Travel to Mandeville Community Health Clinic	Observe and interact with clinic staff and patients. Have lunch in a shipping container restaurant!	Continue to form opinions about lifestyle, diet and PA. Rural vs city
Tues Jan 16/Wed Jan 17	Travel to St Mary, then to Port Maria (overnight stay). Return Jan 17	In St Mary, observe and interact with owners and workers at a Rastafarian Farm; enjoy a vegetarian meal. In Port Maria enjoy ocean-side/beach activities!	Continue to gather data and form opinions about lifestyle, diet and PA. Rural vs city
Thurs Jan 18	UWI	Work on Presentations	
Fri Jan 19	UWI	Final Presentations	
Sat Jan 20	Return to Buffalo		

GRADING POLICY

A +/- grading system will be used. The course grade is based on the grading scheme outlined below.

Final Grades:

Grade	Quality Points	Percentage
A	4.0	91.5 -100
A-	3.67	87.5 – 91.4
B+	3.33	83.5 – 87.4
B	3.00	80.5 – 83.4
B-	2.67	77.5 – 80.4
C+	2.33	74.5 – 77.4
C	2.00	71.5 – 74.4
C-	1.67	68.5 – 71.4
D+	1.33	64.5 – 68.4
D	1.00	60.5 – 64.4
F	0	< 60.5

Incomplete Grades

A grade of incomplete (“I”) indicates that additional course work is required to fulfill the requirements of a given course. Students may only be given an “I” grade if they have a passing average in coursework that has been completed and have well-defined parameters to complete the course requirements that could result in a grade better than the default grade. An “I” grade may not be assigned to a student who did not attend the course.

Prior to the end of the semester, students must initiate the request for an “I” grade and receive the instructor’s approval. Assignment of an “I” grade is at the discretion of the instructor.

The instructor must specify a default letter grade at the time the “I” grade is submitted. A default grade is the letter grade the student will receive if no additional coursework is completed and/or a grade change form is not filed by the instructor. “I” grades must be completed within 12 months. Individual instructors may set shorter time limits for removing an incomplete than the 12-month time limit. Upon assigning an “I” grade, the instructor shall provide the student specification, in writing or by electronic mail, of the requirements to be fulfilled, and shall file a copy with the appropriate departmental office.

Students must not re-register for courses for which they have received an “I” grade

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas. Please refer to the following link to view examples. <https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html>

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES

If you have any disability which requires reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources, 25 Capen Hall, 645-2608, and also the instructor of this course. The Office of [Accessibility Resources](#) will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations.