PHS/PHR 5320: Principles of Health Behavior and Promotion
3 credits
Fall 2026

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Gloria Hudson
Schedule: Asynchronous
Office Hours: Virtual by Appointment
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DESCRIPTION

This course will explore theories of human behavior within public health. We will examine social behavioral theories, individual health behavior theories, sociocultural and environmental theories and multi-level theories to investigate why people and populations make health decisions or experience health outcomes. We will also learn how to utilize these theories and frameworks as the foundations of informed interventions that impact positive change.

This is an accelerated eight-week course.

This class is asynchronous and will require online participation in Blackboard and completion of readings each week. Students participate in online discussions and group work. Live meetings are not required. Virtual office hours are available by appointment. Please read the syllabus and Blackboard instructions carefully to understand the course requirements.

OBJECTIVES

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

1. Discuss key theories, models, and frameworks in public health.
2. Understand the difference between theories that examine individual behavior, interpersonal influence, community and cultural dynamics, and multi-layered frameworks.
3. Explain the importance of theory to public health and health behavior.
4. Conduct a situational analysis across a range of cultural, economic, and health contexts.
5. Design context-specific health interventions based upon the situational analysis that incorporate appropriately aligned health behavior theories.
6. Propose strategies to identify relevant communities and individuals and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.
7. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, in both writing and through oral presentation, to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as health literacy.

REQUIRED READINGS

Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K. (2008) Health behavior and health education: Theory, research and practice (4th or 5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Additional required and recommended readings are listed in the course schedule and references, and they will be available in Blackboard.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Participation (10%)

Attendance and participation in class is the most effective way to learn and to demonstrate that you are learning. The ability to convey enthusiasm, motivation, and communication skills during our class time, as well as support for and engagement with other students in the class will maximize your participation grade and will ensure that you benefit personally and academically from the course.

Participation is worth 10% of the course grade. Weekly check-ins have been removed and are not required. Refer to Blackboard for participation activities and grading information.

Article critiques (30%)

The article critiques are critical essays that analyze a scientific journal article selected by the professor and posted to Blackboard. An evaluation form that will be used to grade the essay is also available on Blackboard, and should be used to answer questions regarding the content of the essay. In brief, the essay should critique the article, including a statement of the study's hypothesis, the methods used in the study, any psychosocial or behavioral theories applied in the study, the constructs from that theory, the major findings summarized, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the article, including a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the study, the construct operationalization, and the conclusions made.

PBL Participation (30%)

Problem-based learning is interactive group work that simulates a real public health problem. A case study will be assigned, with students working in roles within a team to assess and solve the health problem. The goal of the team is to propose a solution. Students participate in the assigned PBL roles as directed in Blackboard.

The graded PBL solution is a recorded group slide presentation. Presentations should remind the class of the case, detail the research used to prepare the solution, present the solution, and explain why the group thinks the solution would work. Include a references and/or acknowledgements slide. Your slides should have a few reminder cues or phrases; elaborate as you speak rather than reading the slides. Every member of the PBL group should speak during the presentation. No separate written paper is required.

The group may create one PowerPoint and record narration on assigned slides at different times, or record a video of the presentation. Live meetings are not required. One designated member submits the completed presentation through the appropriate Blackboard assignment link. Follow the posted assignment instructions and rubric.

Group Project & Presentation (30%)

Students will work collaboratively to design a Public Health intervention project around the principles of Community-Based Participatory Research. Roles will define each student's contribution to and interaction with the group. Over the last four weeks of class, students will work together to research their public health problem and design a solution using one of the health behavior theories or models covered in class. Live meetings are not required.

Solutions should be clear as to why that particular health behavior theory or model was used over others, how the constructs will be defined, operationalized, implemented, and measured. Solutions should discuss how implementers would know if their plan was successful (a measurement and evaluation proposal). Refer to the group project instructions and rubric in Blackboard. Submit the recorded group presentation through the designated assignment link.

8. Grading Policies and Practices

Late assignments: Points will be deducted for late work at a rate of 10%/day, unless an arrangement is made with the professors in advance. Extensions for projects or assignments will only be granted in emergency situations and determined on a case-by-case basis.

Assignment Weights – Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Assessments	**Points**	**Due Date**
Class Participation	10	Throughout term
HBM PBL	10	November 1, 2026
Article Critique 1: HBM	10	November 4, 2026
TTM PBL	10	November 11, 2026
Article Critique 2: TTM	10	November 8, 2026
SCT PBL	10	November 22, 2026
Article Critique 3: SCT	10	November 15, 2026
Group Project & Presentation	30	December 11, 2026
Total	100	

Major Course Deadlines

Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. Central Time. Week 8 deadlines occur earlier because the course ends Friday, December 11, 2026.

Assignment or Milestone	**Due Date**
PBL Group Agreement	October 25, 2026
HBM Article Critique	November 4, 2026
HBM PBL Solution	November 1, 2026
TTM Article Critique	November 8, 2026
TTM PBL Solution	November 11, 2026
SCT Article Critique	November 15, 2026
SCT PBL Solution	November 22, 2026
CBPR Preparation and Group Milestone	November 29, 2026
CBPR PBL Solution	December 6, 2026
Final CBPR Group Project and Presentation	December 11, 2026
Peer Evaluation and Final Requirements	December 11, 2026

Blackboard Weekly Checklists

A detailed Start Here checklist is provided at the beginning of each weekly Blackboard module. Students should complete all Part A and Part B activities in the order listed. The syllabus identifies major graded deadlines; students remain responsible for reviewing the complete weekly checklist, assignment instructions, and announcements in Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1a	What is Health Behavior? What is Health Promotion?	Read article critique assignment sheet and rubric; PBL group explanation and article. See your PBL groups in Blackboard.
WEEK 1b	Health Belief Model	Read Chapter 3 of Glanz; review lecture PPT; read HBM article. HBM Article Critique due Wednesday, November 4, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 2a	Health Belief Model PBL	Read PBL case on Blackboard.
WEEK 2b	HBM PBL	Complete PBL group work. HBM PBL Solution due Sunday, November 1, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 3a	Transtheoretical Model	Read Chapter 5 of Glanz (Chapter 7 in the 5th edition); review lecture PPT and TTM article. TTM Article Critique due Sunday, November 8, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 3b	TTM PBL	Read PBL case on Blackboard.
WEEK 4a	TTM PBL	Complete PBL group work. TTM PBL Solution due Wednesday, November 11, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 4b	Social Cognitive Theory	Read Chapter 8 of Glanz (Chapter 9 in the 5th edition); review lecture PPT and SCT article. SCT Article Critique due Sunday, November 15, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 5a	SCT PBL	Read PBL case on Blackboard.
WEEK 5b	SCT PBL	Complete PBL group work. SCT PBL Solution due Sunday, November 22, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 6a	CBPR	Read CBPR assignment and article; review lecture PPT. Complete CBPR preparation and group milestone by Sunday, November 29, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 6b	CBPR PBL	Read CBPR PBL case.
WEEK 7a	CBPR PBL	Complete PBL group work. CBPR PBL Solution due Sunday, December 6, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
WEEK 7b	CBPR Group Project	Read CBPR Group Presentation sheet and rubric.
WEEK 8a	CBPR Group Project	CBPR Group Assignment.
WEEK 8b	CBPR Group Project	Complete the CBPR Group Assignment. Final CBPR Group Project and Presentation due Friday, December 11, 2026. Peer evaluation and final course requirements due Friday, December 11, 2026.