



**HSERV 590 / EPI 590  
Health Needs Assessment  
Spring Quarter 2009**

**Mondays 12:30 – 3:20 pm (3 credits)  
Room T- 478**

**Instructors**

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**Course Description**

Needs assessment is a process that draws on multiple methods to collect, analyze and prioritize information to support the three public health core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance. Results of needs assessment can influence resource allocation, program planning, legislative policy, program policy, and clinical guidelines.

This course covers the principles and practice of health needs assessment: What is needs assessment? Why is it conducted? Who should be involved? How are the relevant data identified, collected, analyzed, and communicated effectively?

Students will learn about and practice methods used in health needs assessment through assigned reading, homework assignments, discussion, take-home and in-class exercises, oral presentations, and written reports.

The course is designed for students whose future work is likely to include monitoring and measuring the health of populations, planning for health services, or making decisions about the distribution of health resources. Prior coursework in epidemiology or biostatistics is recommended.

**Course Objectives**

As a result of this course, students should have adequate information and experience to:

1. Describe the rationale, processes, and use of needs assessment in public health
2. List the main sources of information that can inform a health needs assessment and describe the strengths and limitations of each type of data.
3. Use quantitative and qualitative methods to identify, measure, and prioritize health risks, health problems, or health care needs for defined communities, health service areas, and populations.
4. Synthesize information collected from multiple sources to create brief reports and graphical presentations of key findings.

## Format of Course

Class sessions include:

- **Lectures.** Didactic sessions provided by course instructors or guests to introduce key concepts and methods.
- **Panels.** Discussions led by experienced researchers or practitioners on practical aspects of needs assessment.
- **Discussions.** Large and small group discussion of key concepts and methods.
- **Exercises and Student Presentations.** Structured opportunities to practice data collection and analytic methods, data summarization, and to give and receive constructive feedback.

## Required Textbook

Gilmore GD, Campbell, MD. *Needs and capacity assessment strategies for health education and health promotion.* Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers; 2005.

## Recommended Textbooks (Optional)

Petersen D & Alexander G. *Needs assessment in public health: a practical guide for students and professionals.* New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers; 2001.

Soriano FI. *Conducting needs assessments.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.; 1995.

## Posting Assignments

To receive credit, all course assignments including homework and the final exam must be submitted via the course website:

<https://hserv.washington.edu/courses/course/category.php?id=37>

## Final Exam

The final exam will be a take-home test worth 30% of the final grade. It will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions drawn from all aspects of the course (eg, lectures, readings, guest lectures, class discussion, homework). The answers are expected to reflect synthesis of content and methods presented throughout the course. The exam will be available on the course website on May 27, 2009 and due no later than 12:30 pm on June 8, 2009.

## Student Responsibilities

Maximum benefit from this course will be achieved if you:

- Complete the assigned readings in advance of the corresponding in-class session
- Complete the assignments in advance of the corresponding in-class session
- Work effectively to complete group assignments
- Actively participate in the class discussions

## Disabled Student Services

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz Hall, 206-543-8924 (V/TDD). If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the instructor so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for class.

### Course Schedule At-a-Glance

DATE & FACULTY LEAD	WHAT TO EXPECT	ASSIGNMENTS TO BE POSTED BEFORE 12:30 ON THE CLASS DAY (DQ =discussion question)
<b>March 30 Bell, Huebner</b>	Introductions, syllabus review Lecture: What is needs assessment? Exercise: Is it needs assessment, program evaluation or both?	
<b>April 6 Bell</b>	Lecture: Where do Questions come from? Discussion: HW#1 Lecture: When existing data aren't enough: sports injuries in girls (Schiff)	Homework #1 Existing Data for HNA DQ due in class (Schiff)
<b>April 13 Huebner</b>	Lecture: In-person assessment methods Discussion: HW#2 Panel: Interviews and focus groups with hard-to-reach individuals (Eisinger, Spigner)	Homework #2 Windshield Survey DQ due in class (Eisinger or Spigner)
<b>April 20 Huebner</b>	Small Group Exercise: HW#3 Small Group Exercise: Focus group practice Lecture: Photovoice (Ly)	Homework #3 Questions for a Focus Group Guide DQ due in class (Ly)
<b>April 27 Bell</b>	Lecture: Collecting and using survey data: types, strengths, limitations Exercise: Extracting, summarizing information from datasets and tables	Homework #4 Preparation for Working with Survey Data
<b>May 4 Bell</b>	Lecture: Making sense of data and communicating it to others Discussion: Critique examples of visual presentation of information Exercise: Analysis, summary of raw data from focus groups and tables	Homework #5 Focus Group Code Book and Coded Data
<b>May 11 Huebner</b>	Student Presentations: Reporting needs assessment findings to stakeholders Discussion: Nominal group process to prioritize needs Exercise: Practice in prioritizing needs	Homework #6 Presentation to Stakeholders
<b>May 18 Bell</b>	Panel: Rapid Needs and Capacity Assessment (Allan) Lecture: Executive Summary Exercise: Writing an Executive Summary Preview: Expectations for final exam	DQ due in class (Allan)
<b>May 25</b>	<b>Holiday – No Class</b>	
<b>June 1 Huebner</b>	Course Evaluation and Discussion with CIDR (Freisem) Lecture: Large Scale Needs Assessment: Title V in WA State and Nationwide (Yun, Peters) Course synthesis	Homework #7 Facilitating Discussion and Synthesis of Information  <b>Final Exam due by June 8th</b>