

SPPH 525 DL: Issues and Concepts in Public Health
Term 1 [Sept 5-Dec 1, 2017]
Course Syllabus

		Office Hours	Phone	Email
Instructor	Rachel Murphy	By appointment or e-mail at anytime	(604) 822-1397	Rachel.murphy@ubc.ca
Teaching Assistant	Matt Shupler	In Person by appointment (through Oct. 15), Skype by appointment or e-mail at any time		mshupler@mail.ubc.ca

Meeting Times	Date	Venue	Time
In Class	Sun Sept 10	SPPH B104	8:30-4:30 PST
In Class	Sun Oct 15	SPPH B104	8:30-4:30 PST
In Class	Sun Nov 19	SPPH B104	8:30-4:30 PST
All other times	Online	Online	Online

COURSE OVERVIEW

SPPH525 is an introductory, graduate-level course that exposes students to key issues and concepts in population and public health. Students will explore strategies, policies and challenges by examining specific topics. This course focuses on health issues at the local, provincial, and national levels. This is a mixed mode, or blended, course. This means that you will be working with the instructor, teaching assistant and fellow students both online and face-to-face in the classroom. It is necessary for you to participate fully in all parts of this course to successfully complete the course. Background material provided and online material, combined with readings, will outline key issues and concepts in population and public health. Both face-to-face and online discussions and assignments will provide an opportunity for application of these concepts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of SPPH 525, students will:

1. Have an understanding of the breadth of the field of public health with an emphasis on Canadian context;
2. Be introduced to the concepts, issues and organizations involved in each of the areas of public health presented;
3. Be able to debate public health issues, considering the challenges of public health, evidence-based decision making and public health interventions;
4. Become familiar with some of the essential skills in public health;
5. Have had an opportunity to investigate a public health program or policy in detail using existing evidence from the literature and from discussion with contacts/experts in

the field; and

6. Have formed a sense of community with classmates as an outcome of interaction in the in-class sessions and on-line discussions of the case studies.

COURSE STRUCTURE

SPPH 525 is a mixed mode, or blended, course. This means that you will be working with your instructor and fellow students both online and face-to-face in the classroom. It is necessary for you to participate fully in all parts of this course to successfully complete the course. Case studies, guest lectures and online material, combined with pre-assigned readings, will outline key issues and concepts in public health. Small group sessions, face-to-face and online discussions, and assignments will provide an opportunity for application of these concepts. The course revolves around case studies on a variety of public health topics, each supported by readings, web links, discussion questions, guest moderators and on-line discussion.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In this course you are directed in your learning through modules/case studies that describe public health issues, accompanied by a series of discussions and assignments. These discussions and assignments are designed so that you can acquire a broad understanding and knowledge of public health concepts, issues, and skills. Part of your final mark for this course will come from a continuous assessment of your contribution to your own learning and to that of your classmates. This will be assessed by your contribution to the discussion or debate, using the 'Discussions' tool located in the Course Tools menu in Canvas.

Readings and Resources

These are suggested optional readings from which you may choose to consult at different times during the course. The purpose is to enrich the course material and provide resources that will be helpful for the course and beyond. None are required.

1. Yassi, A., Kjellstrom, T., Kok, T. de, & Guidotti, T. (2001). Basic Environmental Health (1 edition). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0195135589
2. Porta, M.(Ed.). (2008). A Dictionary of Epidemiology: Oxford University Press. Retrieved 28 Aug. 2017, from <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195314496.001.0001/acref-9780195314496>. An electronic copy is available under 'files' on the course website.
3. David L. Heymann, D.L. (2014). Control of Communicable Diseases Manual [20th Edition]. APHA Press

There will also be references cited in the background section of the weekly modules that I encourage students to access; there will also be one or two designated required readings each week. All required readings will be available on the course website under the respective module. Note that there will be *optional* readings. The goal is to provide an opportunity to expand your comprehension of the material. It is up to you to decide

what to read/view to prepare you to complete your assignments.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

	Points	%	Due Date	Where to Submit
In-class debate	30	10	Sun Sept 10	In Class
Discussion 1	15	5	First post: Fri 09/22, Response: Mon 09/25	Post in Discussions
Discussion 2	15	5	First post: Fri 10/06, Response: Mon 10/09	Post in Discussions
In-class debate	30	10	Sun Oct 15	In Class
Discussion 3	15	5	First post: Fri 11/10, Response: Mon 11/13	Post in Discussions
Briefing Note	45	15	Mon 11/06	Dropbox on Course website
In-class group presentation	45	15	Sun 11/19	In Class
Discussion 4	15	5	First post: Fri 11/24, Response: Mon 11/27	Post in Discussions
Final Essay	30	30	Fri Dec 8	Dropbox on Course website
TOTAL		100		

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

In-class debates-10% each, 20% of overall grade

During the first two in-person classes, students will debate on different topics related to public health in small groups. There will be two debates during each class. You will be assigned to a group and topic in advance of the class to give you time to prepare as a group. You can find your debate group under Discussions on the course website. The performance of each team will be graded by the instructors, but the winning team for each debate will be decided by portion of the class not participating in that debate.

In-class presentation-15% of overall grade

Group presentations will occur during the final face-to-face class. Groups should consist of two to three students. Choose your own group, if you cannot find a group, please contact the instructor/TA for assistance. Presentation grades will be assigned to the group as a whole and all members of the group are expected to participate equally in the preparation and presentation. Please inform the instructor if the responsibility of the work is not being shared. Presentations should be 30-35 minutes with 5-10 minutes for questions. You will be expected to ask questions following presentations. Electronic copies of the presentations should also be sent prior to Sun Nov 19 to the TA.

The goal of the presentation is to speak about a Public Health topic comparing and contrasting the different approaches to prevention and intervention (e.g. voluntary vs. mandatory, technical vs. social, education vs. enforcement, economic vs. altruistic, etc). All presentations should include slides for 'Objectives' and 'Conclusions' and address the follow areas:

1. Epidemiology and/or history of the issue
2. Natural history of the disease if applicable
3. Populations health significance of the issue
4. Economic significance of the issue
5. Medical intervention or treatment if applicable
6. Public Health interventions

Different groups cannot present the same topic. Topics will be assigned on a first come first come basis and should be discussed with the TA. You may come up with your own topic (subject to approval of the instructor) or choose from the list below:

1. Local and global response to Zika
2. SARS and MERS-CoV: Lessons learned
3. Contaminated foods: an international problem
4. Safe drinking water: lessons from the Walkerton E.coli tragedy
5. Health effects of climate change
6. John Snow and the origins of disease mapping
7. Do chronic diseases actually have infectious causes?
8. What does an ideal Public Health information system look like?
9. Malaria: Can an effective intervention be developed?
10. How can obesity rates be reduced?

Online Discussions-5% each, 20% of overall grade

There are four online discussions. For each discussion, initial posts (limited to 250 words) are due by 11:59pm on Friday. You also need to reply to other's students posts (word limit: 150). One reply is mandatory and will be marked, additional comments are appreciated to generate a good discussion. Responses to your peers are due by 11.59pm on the following Monday. After that time, you will not be able to submit any posts. Discussions will open the week prior to the due date. Discussion posts should be clear, succinct and respectful. The instructor and/or TA will moderate the on-line discussion during the week.

Briefing Note-15% of overall grade

The goal of this exercise is to debrief a policymaker on an issue related to this week's material (Social determinants of health) and require the policymaker to agree or disagree with a recommendation to take a position or a course of action. The brief should provide a factual presentation of the evidence and a clear recommendation of future directions. Good briefs are concise, accurate, objective and strategic. Maximum

800 words.

Format (adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the BC Ministry of Health Services). Policy briefs do not require references, but since this is an academic exercise, please include your references at the end (this does not count towards the page limit).

The following sections should be included in your decision brief.

- Title: should be centred and bold
- Summary (1/2 page): describe the issue in 3-4 bullets with key considerations that may affect the Minister's decision including contentious issues, your recommendation and the substantive arguments in its favour.
- Background (2-3 paragraphs): use this section to provide relevant facts about the issue including the history of the issue, past decisions, previous action(s) taken, why the issue evolved, why the issue is being brought to the Minister's attention at this time, and major participants and stakeholders.
- Options and Rationale (3-5 paragraphs): identify two or three options that have been considered and the pros and cons of each. Indicate the rationale for the option/course of action that is recommended. Include the scientific evidence supporting the recommendation.
- Considerations (3-5 paragraphs): use this section to identify the considerations which the Minister needs taken into account in concurring with the recommended course of action such as the unintended consequences, political and financial feasibility, level of expected social acceptance, and probability of successful implementation. This section does not have to draw a specific conclusion, but rather highlights which aspects of the issue will be most important in developing and implementing the recommended policy.
- Summary (1 paragraph): indicate succinctly what your recommendation is and why this option is the preferred approach. This is a critical piece of the brief so ensure that you provide a specific recommendation.

Final Essay (topic of student's choice)-30% of overall grade

The purpose of the final assignment is to provide a written critical analysis of a public health topic. Please discuss your idea with the TA to ensure that your topic is appropriate for the final paper. Select a public health issue that you were exposed to in the course and are interested in, one you work in, or have prior knowledge of. Use the skills and knowledge you have obtained throughout the course to develop your final paper. You may do any of the following:

- Identify a public health issue that requires attention or intervention
- Propose a public health program or intervention in your topic area
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a specific intervention in your topic area

The full paper should be a maximum of 10 pages single-spaced including abstract and any tables/figures/graphs (12 pt font with 1" margins). Your final paper should be submitted to the final assignment drop box.

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Please contact the TA with reason if you cannot turn in an assignment on time. ALL late assignments (online discussions, in-class exercises, and all other assignments) will be marked off on a 10% for each day late unless the course instructor or TA decides otherwise.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR

You are expected to fulfill the course objectives, assignments, and discussions in a timely manner, and to contact us via course mail whenever you need help. We will return your communication within 48 to 72 hours. Spend enough time on the background resources for each session in order to make the most of the face-to-face sessions. It is very important that you have finished the online components of the course prior to attending the workshop sessions.

You will be expected to use the Discussion Forums on the website to discuss the readings and activities in the weekly session. These discussions will provide you with an opportunity to share your knowledge, to seek feedback from your peers as well as your instructor on your ideas, and to ask for help when you need it.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor

Dr. Rachel Murphy is an Assistant Professor in the Centre of Excellence in Cancer Prevention, School of Population and Public Health at UBC. She completed her PhD in Nutrition and Metabolism from the University of Alberta. She received training in population oncology at the Cross Cancer Institute in Alberta before joining the Laboratory of Epidemiology and Population Sciences at the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, where she studied diet, body weight and healthy aging. She worked as Scientific Leader at DSM Nutritional Products in New Jersey before coming to UBC in 2015. Dr. Murphy is interested in health promotion, particularly healthy eating and disease prevention. Her research studies factors associated with healthy/unhealthy lifestyle behaviours, mechanistic factors linking lifestyle behaviours to disease and programs aimed at encouraging healthy choices. Through her research, Dr. Murphy works with fellow researchers, knowledge users in health care settings, NGO's and other stakeholders.

Teaching Assistant

Matt Shupler is a third-year PhD candidate in Population and Public Health at UBC. He received his MPH in Biostatistics from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Matt's Masters thesis was focused on a behavioural intervention, assessing the use of an ethanol cookstove among Nigerian women to reduce their exposure to air pollution due to using biomass (e.g. wood, animal dung, crop waste) cooking fuels. His dissertation at UBC is centered on a multinational cohort study, the Prospective Urban and Rural Epidemiology (PURE)-AIR study. PURE-AIR is examining the cardiovascular health impacts of the air pollution generated from using biomass fuels across 10 countries in Africa, Asia and South America, with different economic and environmental conditions. Matt is interested in social, behavioural (e.g. diet and exercise) and environmental determinants of health and how they can interact to affect our health.

Grading (from the UBC Department of Educational Studies, Graduate Course Grading Policy)

- A+ is from 90% to 100%: It is reserved for exceptional work that greatly exceeds course expectations. In addition, achievement must satisfy all the conditions below.
- A is from 85% to 89%: A mark of this order suggests a very high level of performance on all criteria used for evaluation. Contributions deserving an A are distinguished in virtually every aspect. They show that the individual significantly shows initiative, creativity, insight, and probing analysis where appropriate. Further, the achievement must show careful attention to course requirements as established by the instructor.
- A- is from 80% to 84%: It is awarded for generally high quality of performance, no problems of any significance, and fulfillment of all course requirements.
- B Level (68% to 79%). This category of achievement is typified by adequate but unexceptional performance when the criteria of assessment are considered. It is distinguished from A level work by problems such as: One or more significant errors in understanding, superficial representation or analysis of key concepts, absence of any special initiatives, or lack of coherent organization or explanation of ideas. The level of B work is judged in accordance with the severity of the difficulties demonstrated. B+ is from 76% to 79%, B is from 72% to 75%, and B- is from 68% to 71%
- C Level (55% to 67%). Although a C+, C, or C- grade may be given in a graduate course, the Faculty of Graduate Studies considers 68% as a minimum passing grade for doctoral graduate students.

PLAGIARISM

Students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism and that plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. As such, plagiarism is subject to penalty. Please review the Student Discipline section of the UBC Calendar:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

COURSE SCHEDULE

The weekly course activities including links to readings/viewing materials can be found under modules on the course website. An overview is also provided below.

Date and Topic: Week 1 (Sept 4), Overview of the course, Introduction to key public health concepts

Objectives: Understand public health terminology, understand different types of prevention, use frameworks for public health issues, understand social determinants of health and different ways to improve the health of individuals and communities

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 1. Familiarize yourself with the course website, introduce yourself on the discussion board on the course website

(Canvas). Read the core readings (Behrman and Gruben) and expand your learning from the optional textbook readings.

Date and Topic: In Class (Sun Sept 10), Venue: SPPH B104,

Activities: Come prepared to debate in small groups

Date and Topic: Week 2 (Sept 11), Evidence-based Public Health

Objectives: Understand the concept of evidence-based Public Health and how it may contrast with ideology based Public Health, understand population approach, methods to measure population health, assess ways interventions can be implemented and barriers to evidence base for public health practice

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 2. Read the core reading: (Brownson and Kiefer) and optional reading to enhance your learning

Date and Topic: Week 3 (Sept 18), Public Health systems, structures and initiatives in Canada

Objectives: Discuss the provisions of Canada's Health Act, understand the nature of threats to Canada's healthcare system, understand Canadian health law/legislation and health equity

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 3. Read the core reading (AFMC Ch 12), watch the video. Participate in online discussion #1, Initial post due Fri 09/22, Response due Mon 09/25

Date and Topic: Week 4 (Sept 25), Public Health systems, structures and initiatives locally and in British Columbia (BC)

Objectives: Understand the threats to the sustainability of the healthcare system in BC, how transforming primary healthcare services can support sustainability of healthcare, the key points for transforming primary healthcare in BC, understand why little progress has been made and what is required to achieve transformative change

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 4. Read the core readings (Millar 2011 and Laverne et al 2014).

Date and Topic: Week 5 (Oct 2), Aboriginal health and social justice

Objectives: Describe the disproportionate rates of ill health among Aboriginal populations vs. non-Aboriginals, analyze the underlying social processes that predispose Aboriginal populations to higher disease burden, understand the mandate and activities of the First Nations Health Authority and other agencies responsible for Aboriginal health in Canada, explore mechanisms by which the health inequities can be lessened

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 5. Read the core reading (Adelson) and watch the video. Participate in online discussion #2, Initial post due Fri 10/06, Response due Mon 10/09

Date and Topic: Week 6 (Oct 9), Evidence based Public Health in Action

Objectives: To apply your knowledge of evidence-based versus ideology-based Public Health, understand how services for vulnerable populations address health and social inequalities, recognize variability of Public Health goals locally, nationally and internationally in the context of societal norms and values, reflect on the Public Health benefits of Harm Reduction programs and how they can be applied to different settings, discuss public health approaches to addressing opioid overdoses

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 6. Watch the video lecture by Dr. Mark Haden; a Public Health approach to the regulation of currently illegal drugs

Date and Topic: In Class (Sun Oct 15), Venue: SPPH B104

Activities: Discuss (informally) Harm Reduction programs and services and come prepared to debate in small groups

Date and Topic: Week 7 (Oct 16), Health promotion and health protection

Objectives: Understand the origins of health promotion and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, understand the role of advocacy and health policy for health promotion and health protection, describe examples of building healthy public policy

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 7. Listen to the podcast (e-cigarettes), read the core reading (Srinivasan et al.). Start writing a Briefing Note on an issue related to this week's material, Due Monday Nov 3 11.50pm

Date and Topic: Week 8 (Oct 23), Social determinants of health

Objectives: Understand the impact of social determinants on health, discuss current issues in Canada related to the social determinants of health, describe examples of programs/policies for vulnerable populations

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 8. Watch the video 'The Social Determinants of Health'. Read the core reading (Bryant).

Date and Topic: Week 9 (Oct 30), Immunization and vaccines-preventable diseases

Objectives: Understand the importance of vaccines in public health, understand why there is controversy regarding vaccinations, discuss the concerns about the current BC Influenza Policy of "Mandatory Vaccination or Mask" for healthcare workers, discuss the impact of politics and economics on public health policies

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 9. Read the core reading (Helms et al.)

Date and Topic: Week 10 (Nov 6), Environmental health protection

Objectives: Understand the interplay between science, economic interests and politics in public health, explore the "precautionary principle" and its role in environmental and population health, develop familiarity with concepts in risk assessment, management and communication, begin to appreciate the nature of environmental health concerns within the context of competing interests and trade-offs in development projects

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 10. Read the core reading (Finley et al.). Read the background provided in the Basic Environmental Health text.

Date and Topic: Week 11 (Nov 13), Obesity, lifestyle and chronic disease

Objectives: Understand the burden of chronic diseases and common risk factors in BC, Canada and worldwide, discuss the process of developing an obesity prevention program, identify the roles that academic, non-governmental and governmental institutions play in chronic disease prevention, understand the natural history, epidemiology, risk factors and health burden of obesity

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 11. Read the core reading (Global Burden of Disease). Participate in online discussion #4, Initial post due Fri 11/10, Response due Mon 11/13

Date and Topic: In Class (Sun Nov 19), Venue: SPPH B104

Activities: Come prepared for Group presentations

Date and Topic: Week 12 (Nov 20), Responses to outbreaks and Public Health emergencies

Objectives: Understand the processes contributing to the emergence of disease outbreaks, understand the general principles and concepts involved in outbreak investigation and response, understand the general principles and concepts involved in emergency management, discuss the roles and responsibilities of local, provincial and federal governments as well as international agencies in health emergencies and the prevention and response to outbreaks

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 12. Read the core readings (AFMC, Boggild et al. and Learning from SARS). Participate in online discussion #4, Initial post due Fri 11/24, Response due Mon 11/27

Date and Topic: Week 13 (Nov 27), Diet, Food policy and Public Health

Objectives: Appreciate the magnitude of health problems attributable to lack of food security/food sovereignty, begin to understand various pathways to health equity related to the food system, appreciate the complexity of health eating policies/programs

Activities: Read the background provided in Module 13. Read the core readings (Jones et al., and Stop Marketing to Kids). Final Essay, Due Friday December 11, 11.59pm

Debate Rubric (30 points)

Criteria	5 points	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Respect for other team	All statements, body language, and responses were respectful and used appropriate language	Statements and responses were respectful and used appropriate language and body language except for 1-2 times	Most statements and responses were respectful and appropriate in language	Statements, responses and/or body language were borderline appropriate	Statements, responses and/or body language were consistently not respectful
Information	All information presented was clear, accurate and thorough	Most information presented was clear, accurate and thorough	Most information presented was clear and accurate but was generally not thorough	Some information was accurate, but there were some minor inaccuracies	Information had major inaccuracies OR was not clear
Rebuttal	All counter-arguments were accurate, relevant and strong	Most counter-arguments were accurate, relevant and strong	Most counter-arguments were accurate and relevant, but several were weak	Some counter arguments were weak and irrelevant	Counter arguments were not accurate and/or irrelevant
Use of Facts/Statistics	Every major point was well supported with several relevant facts, statistics and/or examples	Every major point was adequately supported with relevant facts, statistics and/or examples	Every major point was supported with facts, statistics and/or examples, but the relevance of some was weak	Some points were well supported, others were not	All points were not supported
Organization	All arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion	Most arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion	Most arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight logical fashion	Most arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) but not organized in a tight logical fashion	Arguments were not tied to an idea (premise) and not organized in a tight logical fashion
Understanding of Topic	The team clearly understood the topic in depth and presented the information convincingly	The team clearly understood the topic in depth and presented the information with ease	The team seemed to understand the main points of the topic and presented those with ease	The team seemed to understand the main points of the topic, but didn't present with ease	The team did not show an adequate understanding of the topic

Presentation Rubric (45 points)

	9 points	6 points	3 points	0 points
Visual Appeal	No errors in spelling, grammar and punctuations. Information is clear and concise. Visually appealing/engaging	Some errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Too much information on two or more slides. Significant visual appeal	Many errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Too much information on many slides. Minimal visual appeal/distracting information	Many errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Slides were difficult to read, too much information. No visual appeal
Comprehension	Extensive knowledge of topic. Members showed complete understanding of assignment. Accurately answered all questions posed.	Most showed a good understanding of topic. All members able to answer most of audience questions.	Few members showed good understanding of some parts of the topic. Only some members accurately answered questions.	Presenters didn't understand the topic. Majority of questions answered by one member or majority of information was incorrect
Presentation Skills	Regular/consistent eye contact. Audience was engaged, and presenter's held the audience's attention. Appropriate speaking volume and body language	Most members spoke to the majority of the audience; consistent eye contact. Audience was engaged by the presentation. Majority of presenters spoke at a suitable volume. Some distracting body language	Members focused on only part of the audience. Sporadic eye contact by more than one presenter. The audience was distracted. Speakers could be heard by only half the audience. Body language was distracting.	Minimal eye contact by more than one member focusing on small part of the audience. Audience was not engaged. Majority of presenters spoke too quickly or quietly making comprehension difficult. Inappropriate/disinterested body language
Content	The presentation was a concise summary of the topic with all questions answered. Comprehensive and complete coverage of information	The presentation was a good summary of the topic. Most important information covered; little irrelevant information	The presentation was informative but several elements went unanswered. Much of the information irrelevant, some major points omitted	The presentation was a brief overview of the topic. Many questions left unanswered. Majority of information irrelevant and major points omitted
Preparation/ Participation/ Group Dynamics	All presenters knew the information, participated equally and helped each other as needed. Extremely prepared and rehearsed	Slight domination of one presenter. Members helped each other. Very well prepared	Significant domination by some members with one minimally contributing. Some preparation but with dependence on reading slides	Unbalanced presentation or tension from over-helping. Multiple group members not participating. Lack of preparation and dependence on reading slides

Discussion Rubric (15 points)

		3 points	1-2 points	0 points
Initial Post	Relevance	Thoughtful discussion of the question topic	Discussion has some relevance to the question/topic	Discussion has no relevance to the question/topic
	Content and/or argument	States a clearly defined position and provides evidence to support the argument	Position is somewhat defined and some evidence is provided to support the argument	No substantive discussion
	Word count and reference	Adheres to the word count and provides at least 2 credible references to support argument	Does not adhere to the word count or does not provide credible reference to support argument	No substantive response
Response to Peer	Relevance and content	Thoughtful follow-up of classmate's post. Provides additional perspective	Response is not thoughtful. Restatement of original post with minimal unique thoughts	No substantive response
	Word count and reference	Adheres to the word count and provides at least 1 credible reference to support argument	Does not adhere to the word count or does not provide credible reference to support argument	Does not adhere to the word count nor provide credible reference

Briefing Note Rubric (45 points)

	9 points	6 points	3 points	0 points
Background information	Relevant facts about the issue are identified including the history of the issue, past decisions, previous action(s) taken, why the issue evolved, why the issue is being brought to the Minister's attention	Some relevant facts about the issue are provided	Relevant facts about the issue are provided but they are not adequate. Justification for bringing the issue is clearly made	Does not provide adequate information or facts to communicate the relevance of the information
Thesis/organization	Well organized and structured briefing note. All elements are present	Missing one element of the note	More than one element is missing	The briefing note lacks a defined structure
Considerations	Identifies considerations the Minister needs to take into account to concur with the recommended course of action. E.g. unintended consequences, political and financial feasibility, level of expected social acceptance, probability of successful implementation	Considerations are somewhat identified	Considerations identified are not adequate	No considerations are identified
Summary and Recommendation	Brief states succinctly the student's recommendation and explains why this option is the preferred approach	Brief states the student's recommendation but does not provide strong justification for the recommendations	Little or no explanation is given for stated recommendation	Brief does not state any recommendation nor provide any explanation why this is preferred
General Style	Style free of typographical errors, avoids jargons and technical terms. Letter format is followed. Follows assignment instructions. Within page limit	General style relatively free of typographical errors, grammar errors, technical jargons.	Somewhat organized. Incompletely follows assignment instructions.	Letter has many typographical errors, poor grammar, technical jargon or abbreviations. Does not follow assignment instructions. Exceeds page limit.

Final Essay Rubric (30 points)

	9 points	6 points	3 points	0 points
Introduction	Provides a clear background of the public/population health issue that underlies the program/policy and supports this background by citing the appropriate literature	Background is provided and somewhat supported by appropriate literature	Background is not well supported with appropriate literature	No background is provided
Content/Argument	Addresses with an exhaustive analysis all the issues referred in the thesis. The provided information is necessary and sufficient to discuss these issues, and a strong and convincing argument is made	Addresses with an in depth analysis all the issues referred in the thesis. The provided information is necessary and sufficient to discuss these issues, and a strong argument is made	For the most part addresses with an in depth analysis most of the issues referred in the thesis. The provided information is, for the most part, necessary and sufficient to discuss these issues	Poorly addresses the issues referred in the proposed topic. The provided information is not necessary or not sufficient to discuss these issues
Quality of Writing	The essay is extremely well written from start to finish, without spelling, grammar or use of English errors. The essay is well organized, clear and presents ideas in a coherent and compelling way	The essay is well written from start to finish, without spelling, grammar or use of English errors. The essay is well organized, clear and presents ideas in a coherent way	The essay is well written for the most part, without spelling, grammar or use of English errors. The essay is for the most part well organized, clear and presents ideas in a coherent way	The essay is not well written, and contains many spelling errors, and/or grammar errors and/or use of English errors. The essay is badly organized, lacks clarity and/or does not present ideas in a coherent way
Format	Exactly follows all the requirements related to format and layout	Closely follows all the requirements related to format and layout	Follows, for the most part, all the requirements related to format and layout. Some requirements are not followed	Follows poorly the requirements related to format and layout
References	All the references used are important, and are of good/scholarly quality. All	All the references used are important, and are of good/scholarly quality.	Most of the references used are important, and are of good/scholarly	Most of the references used are not important, and/or are not of

	<p>the references are effectively used, correctly cited and correctly listed</p>	<p>There is a minimum of 8 scholarly resources that are used effectively in the essay. All the references are effectively used, correctly cited and correctly listed in the reference list according to APA style</p>	<p>quality. Scholarly resources are for the most part used effectively in the essay. Most of the references are effectively used, correctly cited and correctly listed in the reference list</p>	<p>good/scholarly quality. Scholarly resources are not used effectively in the essay. References are not effectively used, and/or correctly cited and/or correctly listed in the reference list</p>
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