

DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION
GILLINGS SCHOOL OF GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

NUTR 735 – NATIONAL NUTRITION ISSUES

Friday, September 25, 2009, 1-1:50pm during NUTR 720

Friday, November 6, 2009, 2-4pm in Rosenau 235

Wednesday, January 6 to Friday, January 8, 2010

Meeting places in Washington, DC as indicated on Agenda (to be finalized in Nov. 2009)

Instructors: Ms. Nancy Chapman
Ms. Kelli Dieterich
Dr. Shu Wen Ng (shuwen@unc.edu)
Dr. Kristine Kelsey (kristine.kelsey@cdl.unc.edu)
Guest Faculty from various offices and agencies

A. Course Description

This one-credit course provides graduate students in Public Health Nutrition with the opportunity to meet with legislative staff, executive branch personnel, directors of government agencies and staff of public interest and industry groups to obtain current policy information on food, nutrition, and health issues. By conferring with key personnel in small interactive groups, students will be able to ask pertinent, in-depth questions and to make contacts to build future working relationships. This course is conducted through lecture, discussion, and small group conferences.

B. Objectives of the Course

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

1. discuss current national issues in food, nutrition, and health from various political, administrative and advocacy perspectives.
2. discuss roles of legislative, executive, and public interest groups in developing and implementing food, nutrition, and health programs and services.
3. discuss legislative and regulatory processes and how to be an effective advocate for nutrition and health at the national level.
4. become familiar with professional opportunities on the national and international scene.
5. become familiar with available resources for consultation, training, funding, and nutrition education materials from federal/national agencies.
6. meet key personnel in agencies/departments that could be future contacts.

C. Course Requirements

1. Required reading **before** the Washington trip:
 - Nutrition in Promoting the Public's Health; Strategies, Principles and Practice by Mildred Kaufman, Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2007, chapters 6 and 7 (pages 117-161). On electronic reserve at HSL. Password: nutrition
 - You will have an assignment based on this reading due by **Sept 25, 2009** (send by email).

2. Completion of the “fact sheets” – due by **November 5, 2009** (send by email).
3. Attendance and active participation in the seminars in Washington DC from **January 6-8, 2010**.
4. Written course evaluation due by **January 18, 2010** (send hardcopy to CB#8120 Shu Wen Ng).
5. Advocacy letter to Congressperson due by **February 8, 2010** (send a copy by email).
6. Nutrition Issues Paper due by **February 8, 2010** (send by email).
7. Late paper policy: deduct 5 pts if one day late; after that, deduct 5 pts for each 5 days late.

C1. Additional information for the Reading assignment:

Complete the assignment posted on blackboard.unc.edu based on this reading by September 25, 2009.

C2. Additional information for the Fact sheet and Poster assignments:

Fact Sheet Topics:

1. US International nutrition programs
2. US Farm Bill, food exports and trading on International nutrition
3. Health care reform and preventative nutrition programs
4. Food Safety (including Food Safety modernization Act of 2009, FDA’s responsibilities vs. funding)
5. Food Labeling & Nutrition (not food safety)
6. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
7. Child Nutrition Reauthorization - School Breakfast and School Lunch
8. Child Nutrition Reauthorization - Child Care and Out-of-School Time (Summer, afterschool, weekend)Programs
9. Child Nutrition Reauthorization Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (implementing the new WIC food packages)
10. Dietary Guidelines
11. Public-Private Initiatives (such as Alliance Healthcare Initiatives)
12. Urban farming and sustainability

Each pair will take one of the topics listed above and write a 1-2-page fact sheet. Outline format is fine. The fact sheets are due November 5, 2009 (via email). The fact sheet will be used to help focus the seminar series and the discussions at each presentation. Please read over all of the fact sheets before the seminar in Washington, D.C. to become familiar with these topics before we get there. These fact sheets will also be useful for you when completing the two course assignments. The fact sheet should contain the following information:

1. A short background or overview of the nutrition topic including history, current concerns and status
2. Detailed information on the policy issue at hand – not statistical information as much as the policy implementation barriers, stakeholders and their position, cost to implement, role of the media, and public perception.
3. Identify the legislation or regulation or both that directs the program/policy.
4. Who is for this program and who is against it? What are their arguments and/or points of leverage?
5. What are the political realities that surround this program or policy?
6. Web sites or other materials that are useful in understanding the subject
7. Important questions (at least 3) that should be asked during the seminar at the session

In class on November 6, each team will have a poster based on their fact sheet ready to present. Students will take turns to stand by their posters and look at other teams’ posters. The posters should fulfill the following requirements:

1. Dimensions: 24-36 inches by 36-42 inches. Posters can be printed at the SPH Student Affairs Office (263 Rosenau) – sign up for a time slot outside that office.

2. Contain the most important information from the factsheet (if space is a problem, focus on the most important issues).
3. Be visually appealing, easy to read and understand, and engaging. Do not just enlarge your fact sheet and paste it on a poster board.
4. Discuss your poster with your classmates and hand out your fact sheet then (bring 25 copies of your fact sheet).

If you have problems/questions that come up as you work on the Fact Sheets or Posters you can email Shu Wen Ng (shuwen@unc.edu).

C3. Additional information for Trip to Washington, DC:

1. Dates: January 6, 8:00 am to January 8, 12:00 noon. Plan to arrive in Washington D.C. by 9:00 pm Tuesday evening, January 5.
2. Lodging: You may stay over at friends/relatives but make sure to be at the assigned meeting venues on time. Alternatively, it is highly recommended that you stay at Holiday Inn Georgetown <http://www.higeorgetown.com/> (\$139 per night if you reserve your room in time to get Advance Purchase price. You should also check the “specials and packages” for any new deals that might be offered http://www.higeorgetown.com/specials_and_packages/). Two double beds can accommodate 4. There is free Wi-Fi access, and a fitness room, but breakfast at their café is additional, as is parking (\$20/night). Please plan accordingly.
3. Transportation from Hotel: The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle service, within a 1.5-mile radius, to the Metro (Woodley Park, Red Line). Alternatively, you can catch the [Eastbound 32 or 36 buses](#) to the Capitol (it will take 35-45 mins), or the [DC Circulator](#) to various parts of DC.
4. Hotel Information: Holiday Inn Georgetown
 [2101 Wisconsin Ave NW, Washington DC 20007](#)
 Telephone: 202-338-3120
 FAX: 202-338-4458
5. Directions from Route I-95 South (Richmond): Take I-95 North to I-395 North onto Route 1 North to the 14th Street Bridge. Continue north on 14th Street to K Street, and turn left. Continue on K Street until you reach Wisconsin Avenue. Turn right, and go approximately 10 blocks. The hotel will be on the right side.
6. Transportation: Please determine on your own how you will travel to Washington DC. It is recommended that you carpool with classmates (3-4 per car) to minimize cost. Parking at the hotel is \$20/day
7. Budgeting:
 - a. Hotel room is \$139/night before tax (if book in time to get Advanced Purchase rate). If shared by 4 people, 3 nights, total = \$105/person
 - b. 6 meals - average \$15 each meal = \$90/person
 - c. Metro ticket - \$15/person
 - d. Parking - \$20/day. If 4 people carpooling, it will be \$20/person
8. Dress: You will be doing a great deal of walking, so bring comfortable shoes. Dress should be professional, but comfortable. Please keep in mind that there might be snow or ice in January.
9. Contact information: Make sure to exchange cellphone numbers with those you are traveling or staying with.
10. Options of places to go (if you have time / opt to extend your stay):
 - a. Tour of the Capitol: We are working on booking a tour for Thursday, Jan 7th starting at 3:20pm (last guided tour of the day) that will last 1 hour.
 - b. [Around the Capitol](#):
 - [United States Botanical Gardens](#) (free admission, open 10am-5pm daily)
 - [US Supreme Court](#) (open 9am - 4:30pm, M-F)
 - [Library of Congress](#) (see www.loc.gov/visit/hours.html)

- c. The Mall, Washington Monument and various museums around it <http://www.nps.gov/NAMA/> and <http://www.si.edu/>
- d. Tidal Basin and various monuments around it
- e. [National Building Museum](#)
- f. [National Portrait Gallery](#) and the [American Art Museum](#)
- g. Around Holiday Inn Georgetown:
 - Dumbarton Oaks Park (free admission) www.doaks.org/
 - Safeway at 1855 Wisconsin Ave NW
 - Wholefoods at 2323 Wisconsin Ave NW
 - Lots of restaurants along Wisconsin Ave heading towards Georgetown (M St.)

C4. Additional information for the Course Evaluation:

There will be a course evaluation sheet on blackboard.unc.edu. Please complete this and turn this in via hardcopy to Shu Wen Ng (CB#8120 campus mail) by January 18, 2010.

C5. Additional information for the letter to Congressperson assignment:

Submit (via email to shuwen@unc.edu or CB#8120 campus mail) by February 8, 2010) a copy of a letter you have written to your federal congressperson, senator, or state legislator stating your viewpoint on a current legislative issue in nutrition/food/health of interest to you. Send your letter to the congressperson, senator or state legislator.

Current food and nutrition issues in Congress are reported in the news media, included in the public policy news section of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, and APHA Newsletter – The Nation’s Health. You will also learn about food and nutrition issues at the seminars in Washington, D.C.

Prepare your letter to clearly state:

- a. **Your viewpoint** on the selected issue.
- b. Scientific documentation for your viewpoint.
- c. Support of professional colleagues and/or consumers who share your concerns.
- d. Awareness of the Congressperson’s interest, stand on issues, and how this issue fits with his/her interests.
- e. Your “power base” (e.g. as a health and nutrition professional, a voter in his/her jurisdictional area, long-term resident in the community, a member of influential organizations, personal contacts with community leaders).
- f. References used to document your views. You must include at least one reference from a Journal and not rely only on information found on the web.
- g. See the grading sheet for more information on what to include in your letter.

C6. Additional information for the Nutrition Issues Paper assignment:

Issues paper must be typewritten, 3 pages (double spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt font) and turned in (shuwen@unc.edu or CB#8120 campus mail) by February 8, 2010. Select any nutrition policy or program that you heard about in Washington. This is like a briefing paper and is not meant to represent your personal viewpoint.

- a. Background summary and history of issue, policy or program – what it is, why it is important, how it arose, how it developed over time and where it is now (focus on the current controversial issues). Keep this brief (~ ½ page).
- b. Give an account of the political (legislative, lobbying, etc.) actions taken or solutions proposed to influence the issue by the various stakeholders. Describe how these actions or proposed solutions changed over time as the issue proceeded.
- c. Provide a critique (pros & cons) of these actions or proposed solutions. Consider both sides of the argument and think of yourself as a hired consultant/ outside expert for each side.

- d. Provide recommendations for future actions to move the issue forward.
- e. See the grading sheet for more information on the Nutrition Issues paper assignment.

D. Course Grading

You will be graded for each assignment based on the matrix below. However, note that the late paper policy (deduct 5 points from grade if one day late; after that deduct 5 points for each 5 days paper is late) applies to each assignment.

Assignment (pts)	Dimensions (pts allocated)	Due
Reading (40 pts)	Points will vary by question	Sept 25, 2009
Fact Sheet (40 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Background of issue, policy or program (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, concise writing about the policy issue (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate and appropriate use of data/information (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies appropriate stakeholders (proponents and opponents) and their arguments (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation (references) (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Insightful questions (at least 3) discussed (5 pts) 	Nov 5, 2009
Poster presentation (40 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, concise writing about the policy issue (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Visually appealing, good use of graphics and pictures (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged with classmates in explaining the issues (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in classmates' posters (10 pts) 	Nov 6, 2009
Washington, DC seminars (50 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Timeliness to events (20 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in seminars (30 pts) 	Jan 6-8, 2010
Course Evaluation (20 pts)	20 pts so long as this is done by January 18, 2010	Jan 18, 2010
Letter to Congressperson (50 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, concise statement of issue and your viewpoint and "powerbase" (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate/appropriate use of data or scientific information (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive presentation with tactful, diplomatic tone (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity/awareness of addressee's interest, positions (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Support of other consumer groups or professional peers organizations who share your views (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation (references) to support your viewpoint – at least one reference from a journal (5 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Use appropriate letter format; attractive presentation (5 pts) 	Feb 8, 2010
Nutrition Issues Paper (60 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Background summary & history of issue/policy/program (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Account of political actions taken or solutions proposed to influence the issue by various stakeholders (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Critique of these actions or proposed solutions (15 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendations for future actions (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and concise writing (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> References (5 pts) 	Feb 8, 2010
Total Possible (300 pts)	H : ≥ 275 pts H- : 260 - 274 pts P+ : 245 - 259 pts P : 230 - 244 pts P- : 210 - 229 pts L : < 210 pts	