**HSC 6506**

*Epidemiology*

**Spring 2025 ~ 3 credits**

Professor Information

**Professor Name & Title**

Marilyn E. Wende, MSPH, PhD

Assistant Professor

**Email & Canvas Contact**

Marilyn.wende@ufl.edu

Canvas Inbox

**Office Hours**

Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00pm

By appointment, via Zoom or in person (FLG 73)

General Course Information

**Description & Prerequisites**

Epidemiology is one of the basic disciplines of public health. One of the tasks of epidemiology is to unravel the risk factors of disease at the population level. The course will teach how to evaluate relationships between potential risk factors and health outcomes and how causal relationships are interpreted for public health decision making. This course will also provide a comprehensive understanding of sources of population data in terms of morbidity, mortality, and other vital statistics. Scientific methods for approaching population data and identifying public health problems and empirical analysis of data will be emphasized.

Instructional Methods & Materials

**Instruction Methods & Class Format**

This in-person course includes a variety of learning modalities – lectures, applied activities, discussions, and quizzes. The course is conducted in a synchronous format with pre-set weekly assignment deadlines. This means you will attend in-person classes (including lectures and interactive activities) and complete weekly assignments on your own time by a designated due date, as listed in the online Canvas course schedule summary.

**You should use your Canvas account to access course materials (**[**http://elearning.ufl.edu/**](http://elearning.ufl.edu/)**).**

**Required Text**

Celentano, David; Szklo, Moyses; and Farag, Yousef, *"Gordis Epidemiology, 7th Edition"* (2024). Elsevier.

Physical or electronic copy.

**Additional Resources**

Supplemental readings and materials may be assigned throughout the course of the semester. These readings and materials will be made available within the Canvas course module for which they are assigned.

Active Epi is a great resource for students to use to learn class concepts:

<https://activepi.herokuapp.com/signup>

Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor(s). The instructor(s) is only responsible for these instructional materials.

Learning Outcomes

**Course Objectives**

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

* Identify key sources of data for epidemiologic purposes.
* Identify the principles and limitations of public health screening programs.
* Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, time and place.
* Explain the importance of epidemiology for informing scientific, ethical, economic and political discussion of health issues.
* Outline basic ethical and legal principles pertaining to the collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of epidemiologic data.
* Apply the basic terminology and definitions of epidemiology.
* Calculate basic epidemiologic measures.
* Communicate epidemiologic information to lay and professional audiences.
* Draw appropriate inferences from epidemiologic data.
* Evaluate the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic reports.

**Success Defined**

You will have multiple assignments due each week. You are expected to adhere to the course calendar and timeline. For this reason, I highly recommend you schedule specific times and days devoted to study hours for the course. According to UF, students should plan to spend nine to 10 hours a week studying and completing assignments for a three-credit course.

I want to see you succeed! Here are additional suggestions on what you can do to be successful in this course and maximize your grade:

* Participate in class discussions and activities.
* Look over the chapter in the textbook BEFORE the class lecture.
* Please communicate with the instructor if you have any questions about the class lectures, or your assignments. There are no silly questions!
* Keep track of assignment due dates! It may help to write the assignments down in your calendar or set a reminder that every week, quizzes are due on Monday and other assignments are due on Friday.
* Check in to the course website two times a week to make sure you don’t miss important announcements.
* Use in-class and at-home assignments as an opportunity to learn more about your field and advance your understanding of health promotion. You can make them relevant to your context or area of interest!
* Ensure you have reliable high-speed Internet access. This may mean scheduling time to work on your class assignments every week at the library.
* Please proofread your work, double-check the document you submitted, and use spellcheck (e.g., Word, Grammarly) to avoid unnecessary typos and grammatical errors.

Assignment Policies

**Assigned Work & Late Assignments**

You are expected to do your own original and best work. All assignments should be submitted before the stated deadlines. If you experience medical, family, or other emergencies or other circumstances that make it impossible to complete assigned work, please email the instructor to communicate about any delays it might cause in submitting class assignments. I understand that life happens, so students also have the opportunity to drop their lowest-scoring assignments as a way to compensate for anything that happens throughout the semester.

**Makeups & Alternative Assignments**

If an emergency arises that causes you to miss an assignment deadline, you should contact me within 24 hours of missing the deadline.

I encourage you to talk with me immediately if you miss a submission deadline, or beforehand if you know you will be unable to meet a submission deadline. The longer you wait to communicate a difficulty, the less likely a makeup or alternative assignment will be possible. Decisions to allow makeups or provide an alternative assignment will be made by me after consulting the university policies specified in the UF Undergraduate Catalog and in accordance with course policies outlined in this syllabus.

**Excessive Missing Assignments**

If you are missing assignments for any reason, please reach out to me immediately. Communication is one of the keys to success in this course.

Grading Policies

**Course Assessments**

You will be graded based on your performance on weighted assignment groups:

1. **Attendance & Engagement** (15% of final course grade)
	1. During the first week of class, students will be expected to introduce themselves on Canvas. This assignment will be due at 11:59pm on January 14th.
	2. Students will be expected to attend class regularly. Attendance will be graded regularly. A total of four classes (~10%) can be missed with no penalty.
2. **Weekly Quizzes** (25% of final course grade)
	1. Brief, open-book assessments based on the module reading assignments. These quizzes entail five to ten multiple-choice questions related to the textbook chapter. Readiness Assessment Quizzes are designed to be completed \*before\* the corresponding lecture and assignments so your comprehension of the readings and lectures will be demonstrated in your assignments. Readiness Assessment Quizzes are due at 1:55 p.m. on Tuesdays of the week the module opens. There will be a total of 14 Weekly Quizzes, but three of the lowest-scoring quizzes will be dropped (including those students missed). Each quiz will be worth 12 points.
3. **In-class presentations** (20% of final course grade)
	1. *Midterm presentation*: Students will be asked to present on the progression of their class project as the midterm assignment for this course. This will include a summary of the project elements they have completed thus far, as well as a summary of the relevant class topics we have covered that apply to their health topic. This midterm presentation will be worth 50 points.
	2. Final presentation: Students will be asked to present on their class project in the final week of classes. This will include a summary of the project components from the midterm to the final week of class. Class presentations should incorporate input from the professor, and will also be an opportunity to seek input from their peers and the professor for their final project submission. Students should display proficiency with class topics when presenting, and think carefully about how to help their peers better understand topics in epidemiology in relation to their specific health topic. This final presentation will be worth 50 points.
4. **Class Project** (40% of final course grade)
	1. The class project will allow students to apply material they are learning in class and in the textbook to a specific health topic. This application of class material will be an important opportunity for students to understand the importance of epidemiology for advancing health promotion in their specific field. This project will be submitted in parts throughout the semester (14 parts, 15 points each), and the final submission at the end of the semester (100 points) should incorporate feedback from the professor. Students are encouraged to work with others in the class on project parts, but individual submissions should be distinct and not plagiarized.
	2. Project parts are generally due at 11:59 p.m. on Fridays. See Canvas Course Schedule for due dates and times. Note: Late submissions will receive a 10% grade penalty if less than 2 days late, and a 25% grade penalty after that.

**Breakdown of Weighted Assigned Groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Assignment Group*** | ***Total Possible Points*** | ***Weighted Percent of Final Grade*** |
| Attendance & Engagement | 140 | 15 |
| Weekly Quizzes  | 168 | 25 |
| In Class Presentations | 100 | 20 |
| Class Project | 310 | 40 |

**Grading Timeline and Concerns**

My goal is to return graded assignments in a timely manner, meaning within 72 hours of assignment due dates. If you believe a grading error exists, you should first review the assignment instructions and rubric carefully. Then, you should check relevant policies on the syllabus. If, after doing these two things, you still believe an error exists, you should (1) state the problem in detail in writing and (2) follow up with me during office hours.

If you have questions following the posting of final course grades at the end of the term, you should present your concerns in person by phone or via Zoom during finals week or at the beginning of the next semester, as appropriate. Per UF policy on protected student information, no emails regarding final grades will receive a response. No emails will be responded to regarding final grades.

**Grading Scale**

Assignment of final course grades will be made based on the grading scale that follows. No extra credit assignments or points will be given. Note: UF grades and grading policies may be accessed online at Grades and Grading Policies < University of Florida (ufl.edu).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Letter*** | ***Percentage*** | ***Letter*** | ***Percentage*** |
| A | 100.0 – 93.0 | C | <77.0 – 73.0 |
| A- | <93.0 – 90.0 | C- | <73.0 – 70.0 |
| B+ | <90.0 – 87.0 | D+ | <70.0 – 67.0 |
| B | <87.0 – 83.0  | D | <67.0 – 65.0 |
| B- | <83.0 – 80.0 | D- | <65.0 – 60.0 |
| C+ | <80.0 – 77.0 | E | <60.0 |

Additional Policies & Information

**Office Hours and Best Practices for Students**

**Regular office hours are available Mon & Wed 2-3 pm.** Office hours are an important part of supporting you in your learning throughout this course. Even if you do not have specific questions, needs, and concerns, I would love to meet with you at least once during this semester. I am open to meeting with you Monday through Friday by appointment in person or via Zoom. To schedule a time to meet, please email me at least 24 hours in advance to arrange a specific time to meet.

The following tips comprise a set of “best practices” to help you get the most out of office hours:

* Ask questions! All questions are welcome! There are no “bad” or “silly” questions.
* Listen and take notes during classes. I may give you valuable additional information.
* Share your perspective and any stories you have! It is helpful for the class to hear applications of the material and it’s great for getting to know one another!

**Name & Pronouns**

Everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns they use for themselves. You can indicate your preferred/chosen first name and pronouns on Canvas, which appear on class rosters. I am committed to ensuring that I address you with your chosen name and pronouns. Please let me know what name and pronouns I should use for you if they are not on the roster. Please remember: A student’s chosen name and pronouns are always to be respected in discussions.

**Course Communication**

You should make a point to regularly check for course-related notices via the Announcement tool on the Canvas course website. To “regularly check” means at least two times a week. If you fail to keep up with posted announcements, you risk missing essential information related to the course, including changes in assignment due dates. Also, announcements may be made that offer feedback on assignments to help you improve your grade and your understanding of epidemiology.

Outside of office hours, the best way to reach me directly is to email me or use the Inbox tool on the Canvas course website. I typically respond within 24 hours to emails received Monday through Thursday. Messages received after 5 p.m. on Thursday and/or during the weekend will receive a reply the following Monday. All email correspondence to me must originate from your ufl.edu account, have your full name in the body of the e-mail.

If you have a question specifically related to the course – for example, assignment instruction clarification – you should raise your hand and ask it during class time (as opposed to only emailing questions). If you have a question, chances are one or more of your classmates may be wondering about the same thing! My response could benefit everyone in the class. Do not be shy about asking questions in the class.

**Participation & Engagement**

Participation is my first recommendation for successfully completing this course and the means to receive optimal benefit for your time and money. Strong participation means being actively engaged in discussions, asking questions, and demonstrating that you read and have thought about the material. Participation also translates through being alert, showing curiosity about your own and others’ perspectives on an issue, demonstrating respect for others’ opinions and ideas through acknowledging their view, and asking for clarification when you aren’t sure.

**A Note About Participation & Difficult Moments**

Sometimes class discussions can be difficult. You might feel triggered by course content or by something said in a discussion. You might find it difficult to communicate with others across differences. Or, you haven’t had practice talking about a difficult and/or controversial topic in public settings. I suspect as we practice talking about difficult topics, we may make missteps, embarrass ourselves, or even hurt one another’s feelings. Such occurrences are part of the learning process and may occur with this class as well.

I also hope that when such situations arise, we can talk about them. I know we will all get better at these “difficult moments” in time, and I urge you to stay with the process. Refusing to speak or missing a discussion may bring relief in the short term, but eventually, these behaviors tend to curtail learning, and we all lose an opportunity to gain more experience in communicating with and across all our differences.

Let’s keep the lines of communication open. I invite you to talk to me personally or email to let me know how the course is going for you at any time. Your feedback is important to my teaching and your classmates’ learning.

**Technology**

This course uses the Canvas course management system, which employs tools to facilitate individual and group communication within the course, as well as management of the submission and grading of assignments. Proficiency in using Canvas is important. Video tutorials on how to use the various tools within Canvas are available through the Help Center in Canvas. Video guides may be accessed at https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Video-Guide/tkb-p/videos#Students. Non-video guides may be accessed at https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/tkb-p/student. Note: If you experience technical difficulties using course technology, you should contact the UF Help Desk (352.392.4357) before reaching out to me. Canvas resources also may be accessed under the heading “How to Use Canvas” on the Technical Requirements page in the Canvas Orientation (Start Here) Module.

**Quiz Administration & Questions**

If you have a question about a quiz or an exam after submitting, you may send me an email (Marilyn.wende@ufl.edu or Canvas Inbox) in which you should describe your concern(s) to include any justification and/or documentation (from lecture and/or readings) to support your concern, for example a page number of the textbook or slide number or slide title from video lecture and a statement of your understanding of the material. You must send an email expressing your concern within 24 hours of completing the quiz. I will evaluate the validity of each concern and take appropriate action as needed (e.g., respond with clarification, modify the grade as warranted).

**Disability Accommodation & Inclusive Learning Statement**

Your success is important to me. The University of Florida is committed to making reasonable, effective, and appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and help create a barrier-free campus. If you require accommodations, please register with the Disability Resource Center (https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/) to have an accommodation letter sent to me. Note: Accommodations cannot be made retroactively, so please contact me immediately, or as soon in the term as possible to ensure proper application of accommodations.

We all learn differently and bring different strengths and needs to the class. If there are aspects of the course that prevent you from learning or make you feel excluded, please let me know as soon as possible. Together, we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus. Please also see the heading Getting Additional Help at the end of this Syllabus.

**Academic Honesty**

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course.

The Honor Pledge: *We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by Students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.*

Plagiarism is any attempt to take credit for work done by another person. Yet, all scholars rely on the work of others to shape their own knowledge and interpretations. This means that in your writing you must acknowledge the importance of other works through direct textual references to influential books, articles, media texts (including Internet resources) and ideas. You need to use quotation marks and/or cite your source(s) when you:

* Use other people’s sentences, words, or concepts.
* Summarize or paraphrase ideas or opinions.

Collaborating with a professor, tutor, or friend to clarify your ideas and organization for a paper or presentation is not plagiarism. Using an outline or thesis given to you by someone else without substantial modification is plagiarism. If you have any questions about what may constitute plagiarism, please consult with me.

**Course Evaluation**

You are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing the online course evaluation via GatorEvals. Please visit https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/ for guidance on how to give feedback in a respectful manner.

You will receive an email from GatorEvals containing information on when the course evaluation period starts. Course evaluations may be completed using the link provided in the email from GatorEvals. Alternatively, you may complete course evaluations via https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results. Note: UF policy does not allow students to be given extra credit for completing course evaluations. Any professor who offers points for course evaluation submissions is violating UF instructional policies.

**Getting Additional Help**

*Canvas & Computing*

For computing issues or technical difficulties using Canvas, contact the UF Help Desk at:

* https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/
* 352-392-4357
* helpdesk@ufl.edu

**Academic Resources**

Academic resources include:

* Career Connections Center (https://career.ufl.edu/), Reitz Union, Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
* Library Support (https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask). Several ways to receive help with respect to using libraries or finding resources.
* Teaching Center (https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/), Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
* Writing Studio (Writing Studio – University Writing Program (ufl.edu)), 2215 Turlington Hall, 325-8461138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and drafting papers.
* Students Complaints On-Campus (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-studentconduct-code/).
* Online Students Complaints (https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/).

**Health & Wellness Resources**

Health and wellness resources include:

* UMatter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-3921575, or visit https://umatter.ufl.edu to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the person in distress.
* Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit https://counseling.ufl.edu or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crises services.
* Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit https://shcc.ufl.edu/ .
* UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: Call 352-733-0111 for immediate medical care or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville. The website is accessible at https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.
* GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website at gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu | GatorWell Health Promotion Services or call 352-273-4450.

**Course Schedule**

*Readings, Lectures, and Assignments by the Week*

The following course schedule is subject to change to accommodate unforeseen circumstances.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Weeks***Dates* | **Module No.***Topic* | **Assignments**  | **Due Dates** |
| **1** | **1**Introduction to Epidemiology | Read: Class SyllabusChapter 1-2Assignments: -Introduce Yourself on Canvas-Quiz #1- Project Part 1 | **Jan 14 (Tues):** Introduce Yourself on Canvas by midnight**Jan 16 (Thurs):** Quiz #1 by 2pm**Jan 17 (Fri):** Project Part 1 by midnight |
| **2** | **2**The Occurrence of Disease | Read: Text Ch 3-4Assignments: Quiz #2Project Part 2 | **Jan 21 (Tues):** Quiz #2 by 2pm**Jan 24 (Fri):** Project Part 2 |
| **3** | **3**Diagnosis, Screening, & Survival | Read: Text Ch 5-6Assignments: Quiz #3Project Part 3 | **Jan 28 (Tues):** Quiz #3 by 2pm**Jan 31 (Fri):** Project Part 3 |
| **4** | **4**Observational Studies | Read: Text Ch 7-9Assignments: Quiz #4Project Part 4 | **Feb 4 (Tues):** Quiz #4 by 2pm**Feb 7 (Fri):** Project Part 4 |
| **5** | **5**Randomized Trials | Read: Text Ch 10-11Assignments: Quiz #5Project Part 5 | **Feb 11 (Tues):** Quiz #5 by 2pm**Feb 14 (Fri):** Project Part 5 |
| **6** | **5**Estimating Risk to Inform PreventionPart 1 | Read: Text Ch 12-13Assignments: Quiz #6 | **Feb 18 (Tues):** Quiz #6 by 2pm**Feb 20 (Thurs):** In class Risk Activity |
| **7** | **6**Estimating Risk to Inform PreventionPart 2 | Read: Text Ch 12-13Assignments: Quiz #7Project Part 6 | **Feb 25 (Tues):** Quiz #7 by 2pm**Feb 28 (Fri):** Project Part 6 |
| **8** | **7**Midpoint Review | Read: Review Chapters 1-13Assignments: Quiz #8 | **March 6 (Thurs):** Quiz #8 by 2pm |
| **9** | Midterm Presentations | Assignments: Midterm Presentations  | **March 11 (Tues):** Midterm Presentations **March 13 (Thurs):** Midterm Presentations |
| **10** |  |  | **SPRING BREAK**March 17-21 |
| **11** | **8**Causal Inference  | Read: Text Ch 14-16Assignments: Quiz #9Project Part 7 | **March 25 (Tues):** Quiz #9 by 2pm**March 28 (Fri):** Project Part 7 |
| **12** | **9**Epidemiology for Evaluation  | Read: Text Ch 17-18Assignments: Quiz #10Project Part 8 | **April 1 (Tues):** Quiz #10 by 2pm**April 4 (Fri):** Project Part 8 |
| **13** | **10**Public Policy & Ethical Considerations | Read: Text Ch 19-20Assignments: Quiz #11 | **April 8 (Tues):** Quiz #11 by 2pm |
| **14** | Final presentations | Assignments: Final Presentations | **April 15 (Tues):** Final presentations**April 18 (Thurs):** Final presentations |
| **15** | Final presentations | Assignments: Final PresentationsCourse Evaluations | **April 22 (Tues):** Final presentations**April 25 (Fri):**Course evaluations due!  |
| **16** | Finals Week | Assignments: Final Project | **April 29 (Tues):** Final Project Due at 11:59 pm |