



HHPH 430: 81W Health & Healthcare Disparities

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Rachel Aumann, MSW, MPH

Office Location: NHS #144

Office Hours: T/Th 12:30-3:00 pm or by appt

Drop-in Office Hours: 5-6 pm on Zoom: <https://tamuc.zoom.us/my/professora>

University Email Address: Rachel.aumann@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **Email (please)**

Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours (if you don't get a response, email again, please)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required: Text: Braveman, P. (2023). The Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities. (First Edition). Oxford University Press. [\(You will have this as an e-book, no need to purchase\)](#)

Software Required: Microsoft Word/Google Docs, PowerPoint/Google Slides, Canva (free version)

Other Texts and/or Materials: Provided for you in D2L (no need to purchase)

Course Description

This course provides an interdisciplinary perspective on key challenges and proposed solutions to health disparities that impact health and wellbeing. The course covers the relevance of politics, economics, health systems, culture and society, and the health beliefs and practices that lead to global health disparities.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Define key terms and concepts relating to health disparities, including theoretical underpinnings of health inequity, bias and discrimination.
2. Explain the role of implicit bias in perpetuating health disparities and how cultural humility can be used to mitigate disparate health outcomes.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how health disparities are studied in healthcare and public health settings.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how policies, procedures, guidelines and mandates can lead to barriers to access, care and adherence and other systemic inequities in healthcare and public health.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods

Each week is a new module. Each module contains the same format on the module landing page: Overview, Quote of the Week, Questions to Consider, Learning Outcomes, Assigned Reading and Activities, Graded Assessments (what is due for points), and KEY CONTENT (where I highlight the most essential terms and concepts for that week's material). You will also find any additional material (slides, lectures, hyperlinks) on the landing page and/or nestled under the module landing page. All assignments and discussions will also be nestled beneath the module.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Simple:

- Check email and D2L DAILY, respond to communications from your instructor, ask questions EARLY and often, keep up with the reading, do your own work and invest in yourself.
- Check D2L module content on Mondays so you can plan your week. This holds true for ALL of your classes.
- It is okay to decide you don't have the time or energy to do an assignment one week. But acknowledge that this is your choice and accept that it comes with a consequence, like anything else.
- Lastly, please recognize that when you ask for an extension or don't turn in work that you did yourself, you are creating additional work for your instructor.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assignment	Points	Total
Intro Video	1 x 50 points	250
Group Discussions	4 x 50 points	
Key Terms Activity	1 x 25 points	25
Syllabus Quiz	1 x 25 points	25
Module Assignments	8 x 50 points	400
Experiential Learning Reflection	1 x 100 points	150
Final Project (2 parts)	1 x 100, 1 x 50 points	150
Peer Reviews	1 x 50	50
Total Points		1000

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Assessments

Module 0 (Syllabus Quiz [25 pts, 2.5%] & Intro Video [50 pts, 5.0%]) is to be completed prior to gaining access to the remaining course content. This is due Wednesday, January 14th @ 11:59 pm.

Assignments (400 pts, 40%): There are eight (8) assignments worth 50 points each. These may be in the form of videos, audios, environmental scans, mapping, infographics, reflections, etc. Assignment # 5 is a “Lightning Talk” which will be a group activity presented at the Public Health Showcase on Friday, 3/27 in Dallas. The Key Terms Activity is worth 25 pts and is not part of the 400 pts discussed above.

Discussions (200 pts, 20%): There are four (4) group discussion activities worth 50 points each. You will be assigned a small group at the beginning of the semester. This is also the group you will work with on the “Lightning Talk” for Assignment # 5. Discussions include an original post, a peer reply AND a reply to the person who gave you a peer reply. This allows for a more robust conversation.

Experiential Learning (100 pts, 10%): You will attend the Public Health Showcase in Dallas on Friday, March 27th, 9:00-12:00 pm (lunch and transportation are provided). You are also encouraged to stay for the networking session in the afternoon. You will get points for your attendance and the completion of a reflection activity. Yes, online courses can require in-person attendance if it is announced in advance.

Final Project (150 pts, 15%): There is a two-part final project that you will present at the conclusion of the semester. You will select a public health topic of your choice related to health disparities. You will also select a target-population (the population impacted).

Part 1: Policy Analysis paper (guided by the CDC POLARIS guidance document)

Part 2: Public Service Announcement OR Message-to-policy-makers video

You will also complete a peer review sheet for TWO of your peer's videos. This is worth an additional 50 pts (5%).

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

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Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). Be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Mrs. Aumann OR Professor Aumann OR Professor A)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance. I will post any changes to the Announcements in D2L and I will send out an email detailing the change.

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Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) is described in detail online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#). For attendance in OUR class, I check D2L engagement (I can see who access what and when and for how long), participation in discussions and timely submission of assignments.

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence (SEE MY POLICY)

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources

MY AI POLICY: AI is set to take many of our jobs. The only reasonable way to combat being looked over for a bot is to develop and maintain **STRONG** writing and critical thinking skills. Using AI only proves why one should be replaced by AI. Don't prove why you should be replaced. Do the work yourself!!!

If I suspect AI is used, even for formatting, I will ask you to redo the assignment. I will only give this warning once. When I say that it is obvious when AI is used, I mean it. It is obvious. The most telling sign is when I receive 5 papers that look identical because ChatGPT spit out the same content and used the same formatting. Just do the work. I tend to give **MORE** credit for papers that I can tell are original work to the student even if it doesn't read like a literary novel. You can use AI to help understand concepts and terms and if it is explicitly stated in the assignment instructions that it is okay to do so.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC)

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46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



Department and Accrediting Agency Statement:

N/A

Spring 2026 Proposed Course Calendar

Module & Dates	Topic	Graded Assessments (Sundays @ 11:59 pm)
0 & 1 (1/12-1/18)	Course Intro What are health disparities? What are the social determinants of health?	Syllabus Quiz Introduction Discussion Video Key Terms Activity
2 (1/19-1/25)	Chapter 1 “What Influences Health?”	Assignment # 1: Health Influences Mapping
3 (1/26-2/1)	Chapter 2 “Income and wealth”	Assignment # 2: Implicit Bias Reflection
4 (2/2-2/8)	The Economy & the Election	Discussion # 1 Final Project Topic Selection
5 (2/9-2/15)	Chapter 3 “Education”	Assignment # 3: Education, privilege and health literacy
6 (2/16-2/22)	Chapter 4 “Stress” Part One	Assignment # 4: Stress Tracking
7 (2/23-3/1)	“Stress” Part Two (“Why Zebras Don’t Get Ulcers”)	Discussion # 2
8 (3/2-3/8)	Chapter 5 “Racism”	Assignment # 5: “Lightening Talks” (Draft)
SPRING BREAK (3/9-3/15)	REEEESSSSSTTTTTT & do something fun	NOTHING
9 (3/16-3/22)	Chapter 6 “Early Childhood” (ACEs)	Assignment # 6: ACEs Aware Webinar Key Takeaways Infographic
10 (3/23-3/29)	Practice your “Lightening Talks” in group Public Health Showcase in Dallas 3/27	Experiential Learning Reflection from “Lightening Talks”
11 (3/30-4/5)	Chapter 7 “Places”	Assignment # 7: Built Environment Map
12 (4/6-4/12)	Chapter 8 “Housing” Extra Credit: Health Fair 4/8	Work on Final project
13 (4/13-4/19)	Chapter 9 “Work”	Discussion # 3
14 (4/20-4/26)	Chapter 10 “Behaviors”	Assignment # 8: Health Behavior Assessment (Socioecological)
15 (4/27-5/1) SHORT WEEK	Presentation Showcase	Final Project Video Presentations Final Project Policy Analysis Due 5/1 (must be uploaded) Start reviewing peer video presentations 5/2-5/7
FINALS WEEK (5/2-5/7) SHORT WEEK	Presentation Showcase Review peer videos (use rubric)	DUE Wednesday, 5/7 Discussion # 4 (Peer Feedback on video presentations)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.