



HHPH 520.81E/81W – INFECTIOUS DISEASES EPIDEMIOLOGY COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: David Onchonga, PhD,

Title: Assistant Professor of Epidemiology

Department: Department of Health and Human Performance

Office Location: TBD

Office Hours

Monday–Tuesday: 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Additional appointments are available by request.

Office Phone: 903-886-5549

University Email Address: david.onchonga@etamu.edu

Preferred Method of Communication: University email. Students requesting appointments should contact the instructor by email to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time. Emails will normally be answered within 24–48 business hours. Messages received during weekends, university holidays, or official university closures will be answered on the next business day.

Course Description

This graduate-level course examines the principles, methods, and applications of infectious disease epidemiology in contemporary public health practice. Students explore infectious disease transmission, outbreak investigation, surveillance systems, prevention and control strategies, and the use of epidemiologic evidence to inform public health decision-making.

Through contemporary outbreak investigations, epidemiologic case studies, surveillance data, and emerging public health challenges, students apply epidemiologic methods to characterize

disease patterns, investigate transmission, evaluate prevention and control strategies, and develop evidence-informed recommendations. Attention is given to the biological, environmental, social, behavioral, and policy factors that shape infectious disease occurrence and population-level responses.

The course integrates epidemiologic theory with applied public health practice and emphasizes critical appraisal, epidemiologic reasoning, and effective communication of scientific evidence. Students develop practical skills for investigating infectious disease events and contributing to multidisciplinary prevention, preparedness, and response efforts across local, national, and global public health settings.

Course Information

Course Value: Three (3) Credit Hours

Course Delivery:

Section 81E: Hybrid (Bi-weekly face-to-face sessions; meeting dates and times will be announced prior to the start of the semester.)

Section 81W: Fully Online (Asynchronous delivery with scheduled synchronous activities and virtual meetings as indicated in D2L.)

Required Textbook

Gordis, L. (2019). *Gordis Epidemiology* (6th ed.). Elsevier.

Recommended Resources

In addition to the required textbook, students will engage with contemporary scientific literature and public health resources throughout the semester. Required and supplementary readings will be assigned in D2L and may include peer-reviewed journal articles, governmental reports, surveillance summaries, policy documents, and case studies that reflect current issues in infectious disease epidemiology.

Resources may include materials from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- Texas Department of State Health Services (Texas DSHS)

- Peer-reviewed epidemiology and public health journals
- Current surveillance reports, outbreak investigations, and epidemiologic bulletins
- Selected case studies from recent and emerging infectious disease events

Students are expected to critically evaluate the quality, validity, and applicability of epidemiologic evidence and integrate findings from multiple sources to support evidence-informed public health decision-making.

Required Software and Technology

Students are expected to have regular access to the following software and technologies throughout the semester:

- D2L Brightspace Learning Management System
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Microsoft Excel
- Zoom or Microsoft Teams
- A reliable internet connection
- A current web browser (e.g., Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, or Safari)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (or equivalent PDF reader)

Students are responsible for ensuring that their technology meets university requirements and supports timely access to course materials, participation in online learning activities, and submission of assignments through D2L.

Writing and Citation Style

Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments must be prepared in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

Graduate-level writing is expected throughout the course. Students should demonstrate clear organization, critical analysis, scholarly synthesis, professional writing, and accurate citation of all sources. Assignments should reflect original thought, evidence-informed reasoning, and

adherence to the principles of academic integrity. Specific formatting, submission requirements, and grading criteria for individual assignments will be provided in D2L.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. **Analyze** the epidemiologic principles, determinants, and transmission dynamics of infectious diseases across diverse populations and settings.
2. **Apply** epidemiologic methods to investigate infectious disease outbreaks, interpret epidemiologic findings, and develop evidence-informed recommendations for prevention and control.
3. **Critically evaluate** infectious disease surveillance systems and epidemiologic data to assess disease occurrence, trends, outbreak detection, and public health response.
4. **Appraise** the effectiveness of infectious disease prevention and control strategies, including vaccination, screening, infection prevention, and other public health interventions, using current epidemiologic evidence.
5. **Assess** emerging and re-emerging infectious disease threats within local, national, and global public health contexts, integrating biological, environmental, social, ethical, and policy considerations into epidemiologic decision-making.
6. **Communicate** epidemiologic evidence effectively through professional scientific writing, oral presentations, and evidence-based recommendations tailored to public health and policy audiences.

Course Requirements

Minimal Technical Skills

To participate successfully in this course, students are expected to demonstrate the following technical competencies:

- Navigate and actively engage with the D2L Brightspace Learning Management System.
- Create, edit, save, and submit assignments using Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- Access and communicate regularly through their East Texas A&M University email account.

- Participate in virtual meetings and presentations using Zoom or Microsoft Teams when required.
- Access, retrieve, and critically evaluate scholarly literature using the East Texas A&M University Library and electronic databases (e.g., PubMed and other relevant databases).
- Locate, interpret, and appropriately cite scientific literature using APA (7th edition) guidelines.
- Prepare and electronically submit assignments through D2L in the required file formats.
- Download, organize, and manage electronic course materials and supplementary resources.

Students who experience technical difficulties are encouraged to seek assistance promptly through the appropriate university support services to minimize disruption to their learning.

Instructional Methods

This course employs an active, evidence-informed, and applied learning approach that integrates epidemiologic theory with contemporary public health practice. Students will engage with authentic infectious disease events, surveillance data, epidemiologic investigations, and current scientific literature to develop the analytical skills required for professional practice in infectious disease epidemiology.

Learning experiences are designed to promote critical thinking, epidemiologic reasoning, scientific communication, and evidence-informed decision-making. Throughout the semester, students will apply epidemiologic concepts to contemporary public health challenges by interpreting surveillance data, investigating infectious disease outbreaks, critically appraising scientific evidence, evaluating prevention and control strategies, and developing recommendations for public health practice and policy.

Instruction is delivered through a variety of complementary learning methods, including:

- Interactive lectures and guided discussions
- Contemporary infectious disease case studies
- Applied outbreak investigation exercises
- Epidemiologic data interpretation and analysis

- Critical appraisal of scientific literature
- Student-led discussions and professional presentations
- Applied epidemiology briefs, policy analyses, and portfolio-based learning

Instructional activities are intentionally aligned with the course learning outcomes and are designed to progressively develop the knowledge, analytical skills, and professional competencies required for successful completion of the course assessments and the final Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio.

Because infectious disease epidemiology is a rapidly evolving field, the instructor may incorporate significant emerging public health events, newly published scientific evidence, or updated public health guidance into course discussions, readings, and learning activities throughout the semester.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations for Success

Success in this graduate course requires active engagement, intellectual curiosity, professional responsibility, and consistent participation throughout the semester. Students are expected to take ownership of their learning by preparing for each module, engaging thoughtfully with course materials, and contributing meaningfully to class discussions and collaborative learning activities.

Successful students typically:

- Complete assigned readings and learning activities before each module.
- Engage actively in discussions, case analyses, and applied learning activities.
- Critically evaluate scientific evidence rather than relying solely on textbook knowledge or secondary sources.
- Integrate evidence from multiple sources to support epidemiologic reasoning and public health decision-making.
- Manage their time effectively and submit assignments by the published deadlines.
- Seek clarification promptly when course concepts, assignments, or expectations are unclear.

- Communicate professionally and respectfully with classmates, the instructor, and guest speakers.
- Demonstrate academic integrity and maintain the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.
- Apply epidemiologic principles to analyze contemporary infectious disease challenges and develop evidence-informed recommendations.

Graduate-level learning extends beyond acquiring factual knowledge. Students are expected to synthesize scientific evidence, critically appraise epidemiologic research, interpret public health data, and apply epidemiologic methods to address complex infectious disease problems in diverse population settings.

Time Commitment

Graduate-level learning requires a substantial commitment of time, preparation, and sustained engagement throughout the semester. As a three-credit graduate course, students should expect to devote approximately 8–10 hours per week, in addition to scheduled class meetings, to complete assigned readings, critically evaluate scientific literature, participate in learning activities, prepare written assignments, contribute to discussions, and study course materials. Individual time requirements may vary depending on prior experience, learning style, and assignment complexity.

Students are encouraged to review each week's module at the beginning of the week, establish a realistic study schedule, and begin assignments well in advance of their deadlines. Major assessments, including the Contemporary Outbreak Investigation, Infectious Disease Policy Brief, and Capstone Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio require sustained effort over several weeks and should be approached as progressive learning experiences rather than last-minute tasks.

Consistent engagement with course materials, timely completion of assignments, and regular review of instructor feedback are essential for success in this course. Students who actively participate throughout the semester typically gain a deeper understanding of epidemiologic principles and are better prepared to apply them to complex public health challenges.

Late Work Policy

Meeting assignment deadlines is an important component of professional and graduate-level practice. Students are expected to submit all coursework by the published due dates.

Unless otherwise specified, the following late submission policy applies to written assignments:

- **Submitted within 24 hours after the deadline:** A maximum of **50%** of the available points may be awarded.
- **Submitted more than 24 hours after the deadline:** No credit will be awarded.

Students experiencing documented emergencies, university-approved absences, or other exceptional circumstances should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations. Requests for extensions should be made whenever possible before the assignment deadline and will be considered in accordance with university policy.

Expectations for Course Participation

Section 81W (Fully Online)

Although this course is delivered online, it is **not** a self-paced or independent study course.

Students are expected to engage consistently throughout the semester by:

- Reviewing weekly learning materials and announcements.
- Completing assigned readings and learning activities.
- Participating in required discussions and other interactive learning experiences.
- Submitting assignments by the published deadlines.
- Regularly monitoring D2L Brightspace and their university email for course announcements and updates.

Regular engagement with course materials is essential for successful completion of the course.

Section 81B (Hybrid)

Students enrolled in the hybrid section are expected to attend all scheduled face-to-face sessions and actively participate in classroom learning activities. In addition to attending in-person sessions, students are responsible for completing all online coursework through D2L.

Face-to-face meetings will emphasize application of epidemiologic concepts through discussions, case analyses, data interpretation exercises, and collaborative problem-solving.

Meeting dates, times, and classroom locations will be communicated before the beginning of the semester.

Students are expected to arrive prepared by completing assigned readings and online learning activities prior to each class session.

Communication

Effective communication is essential for success in this course. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor with questions regarding course content, assignments, or academic concerns. University email should be used for all official course communication, and students are responsible for regularly monitoring both their university email and D2L Brightspace for announcements, updates, and important deadlines.

Students are expected to communicate professionally and respectfully in all interactions. Early communication regarding academic, personal, or professional circumstances that may affect course performance is strongly encouraged.

Grading

Final grades are determined by the total number of points earned across all course assessments. Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

Table 1:Grading

Grade	Percentage	Points
A	90–100%	900-1000
B	80–89%	800–899
C	70–79%	700–799
D	60–69%	600–699
F	Below 59%	0–599

Grades reflect demonstrated achievement of the course learning outcomes through successful completion of the required assessments.

Students are responsible for regularly monitoring their progress in the D2L Gradebook. If you believe an error has occurred in the recording of a grade, notify the instructor promptly. Questions regarding grades should be raised as soon as possible rather than at the end of the semester. Students who withdraw from the course while not meeting the minimum passing requirements will receive the appropriate grade in accordance with university policy.

Assessment Summary

Table 2: Assessment Summary

Assignment	Points	percent
Applied Epidemiology Briefs (4 × 50 points)	200	20%
Contemporary Outbreak Investigation	150	15%
Infectious Disease Policy Brief	150	15%
Midterm Examination	200	20%
Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio & Presentation	250	25%
Professional Participation and Engagement	50	5%
Total	1000	100%

All assessments are designed to evaluate students' ability to apply epidemiologic principles, critically interpret evidence, communicate scientific findings, and develop evidence-informed recommendations for contemporary infectious disease challenges.

Assignments and Assessments

Applied Epidemiology Briefs – 200 points (20%)

Throughout the semester, students will complete four **Applied Epidemiology Briefs**, each based on an authentic infectious disease scenario encountered in contemporary public health practice. Rather than summarizing the literature, students will assume the role of an epidemiologist responding to emerging public health challenges.

Each brief requires students to interpret epidemiologic evidence, evaluate available data, identify information gaps, and propose evidence-informed public health recommendations. Scenarios may address topics such as disease surveillance, vaccine-preventable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, emerging infectious diseases, outbreak preparedness, or global health security.

These briefs are designed to strengthen epidemiologic reasoning, scientific communication, and evidence-informed decision-making while encouraging students to apply course concepts to realistic professional situations.

Contemporary Outbreak Investigation – 150 points (15%)

Students will conduct a comprehensive investigation of a recent infectious disease outbreak that occurred within the past five years. Using publicly available epidemiologic data, surveillance reports, and peer-reviewed literature, students will critically examine the epidemiology of the outbreak from its emergence through the public health response.

The investigation should describe the outbreak using person, place, and time; evaluate transmission dynamics and surveillance strategies; assess the effectiveness of public health interventions; and identify lessons learned for future outbreak preparedness and response. Students are expected to demonstrate critical appraisal of scientific evidence and support their conclusions with current scholarly literature.

Infectious Disease Policy Brief – 150 points (15%)

Effective epidemiologists must translate scientific evidence into practical recommendations for decision-makers. In this assessment, students will prepare a professional policy brief addressing a contemporary infectious disease issue relevant to local, national, or global public health.

Students will synthesize epidemiologic evidence, analyze the public health implications of the issue, compare alternative policy options, and recommend feasible, evidence-informed actions for a specified audience (e.g., public health officials, policymakers, healthcare leaders, or government agencies). The brief should demonstrate concise scientific communication, analytical thinking, and consideration of public health impact.

Midterm Examination – 200 points (20%)

The midterm examination will assess students' understanding and application of core infectious disease epidemiology concepts through a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and case-based questions.

Rather than emphasizing factual recall alone, the examination will require students to interpret epidemiologic data, analyze outbreak scenarios, evaluate surveillance information, calculate and interpret common epidemiologic measures, and recommend appropriate public health interventions. Students will be assessed on their ability to integrate epidemiologic principles with evidence-informed decision-making.

Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio and Presentation – 250 points (25%)

The capstone assessment for this course is the **Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio**, which demonstrates students' ability to integrate the knowledge and skills developed throughout the semester. Students will investigate a contemporary infectious disease issue and prepare a comprehensive portfolio that includes an epidemiologic profile of the disease, descriptive epidemiology (person, place, and time), transmission dynamics, surveillance analysis, risk factor assessment, prevention and control strategies, and evidence-informed recommendations for public health practice.

Students will also deliver a professional oral presentation summarizing their investigation and responding to questions regarding their findings, methodological decisions, and recommendations. The presentation is intended to simulate a professional briefing to public health stakeholders and provides an opportunity to demonstrate epidemiologic reasoning, critical thinking, and scientific communication skills.

Professional Participation and Engagement – 50 points (5%)

Graduate education depends upon active participation and professional engagement. Students are expected to complete assigned readings, contribute thoughtfully to discussions, participate in course activities, collaborate effectively with peers, and demonstrate professionalism in all interactions. Participation is evaluated based on the quality of contributions rather than attendance alone.

Assignment Submission Requirements

Students are responsible for obtaining all required course materials, assigned readings, and additional resources provided through D2L.

Unless otherwise specified:

- All assignments must be submitted electronically through the designated D2L assignment folders in Microsoft Word or PDF format.
- Assignment instructions, grading rubrics, and submission deadlines will be provided within the corresponding D2L course modules.
- Assignments submitted by email will not be accepted unless prior approval has been granted by the instructor.
- All assignments are due by **11:59 p.m. (Central Time)** on the dates indicated in the course schedule.
- All written coursework must conform to the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th edition**.
- Students are responsible for reviewing assignment instructions and grading rubrics before submitting their work.

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

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

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 ETAMU 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>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Students should use university email for course-related communication and allow 24-48 business hours for a response. Questions submitted on weekends or holidays may not receive a response until the next business day. The instructor reserves the right to address questions of broad interest through course announcements for the benefit of all students.

Course Organization

The course is organized into four integrated instructional units that progressively develop students' knowledge and applied competencies in infectious disease epidemiology. Each unit combines foundational epidemiologic concepts with contemporary public health applications through lectures, guided readings, case studies, data interpretation exercises, and evidence-informed discussions. Learning activities are intentionally sequenced so that knowledge and skills acquired in earlier units are applied to increasingly complex infectious disease problems throughout the semester.

Each instructional unit includes clearly defined learning objectives, required readings, supplementary resources, and applied assessments aligned with the unit's learning outcomes. Students will engage with authentic public health scenarios that require epidemiologic reasoning, critical appraisal of scientific evidence, interpretation of surveillance data, and development of evidence-informed public health recommendations. Course assessments are scaffolded throughout the semester, culminating in the Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio and Presentation.

A detailed course schedule, including weekly topics, learning activities, required readings, and assessment deadlines, will be available in D2L Brightspace. Students are expected to review course materials before each module or class session, actively participate in all required learning activities, and submit assignments by the published deadlines. Unless otherwise specified, all coursework must be submitted electronically through the designated D2L assignment folders.

Course Units

Unit 1: Foundations of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (Weeks 1–3)

This unit establishes the conceptual foundations of infectious disease epidemiology by examining the epidemiologic triad, chain of infection, natural history of infectious diseases, measures of disease frequency, and determinants of disease transmission. Students will explore historical and contemporary infectious disease events while developing the epidemiologic reasoning needed to interpret patterns of disease occurrence and critically appraise infectious disease evidence.

Unit 2: Transmission Dynamics, Surveillance, and Prevention (Weeks 4–6)

Students examine the mechanisms of infectious disease transmission and the epidemiologic principles underpinning disease prevention and control. Topics include reproductive number (R_0), herd immunity, vaccination strategies, screening, healthcare-associated infections, and local, national, and global surveillance systems. Emphasis is placed on interpreting surveillance data and evaluating public health interventions using epidemiologic evidence.

Unit 3: Outbreak Investigation and Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (Weeks 7–10)

This unit develops practical competencies in outbreak investigation through the application of epidemiologic methods to authentic public health scenarios. Students will formulate outbreak hypotheses, interpret descriptive and analytic epidemiologic findings, evaluate laboratory and

surveillance data, construct epidemic curves, and recommend evidence-based control measures. Contemporary outbreak investigations will be used to strengthen applied epidemiologic decision-making and scientific communication.

Unit 4: Emerging Infectious Diseases, Global Health, and Future Challenges (Weeks 11–15)

The final unit focuses on contemporary and emerging issues in infectious disease epidemiology, including antimicrobial resistance, zoonotic and vector-borne diseases, pandemic preparedness, climate change, One Health, global health security, and risk communication. Students will integrate knowledge acquired throughout the course to critically evaluate current infectious disease challenges and develop evidence-informed recommendations through their Infectious Disease Investigation Portfolio.

Attendance

Regular participation and engagement are essential for success in this course. Attendance expectations for both online and hybrid students are described in the Course-Specific Policies section below. Students are expected to engage consistently with course materials, learning activities, and assessments throughout the semester.

Weekly Learning Process

To remain on track throughout the semester, students are expected to follow the learning sequence below for each instructional module:

1. **Review the Weekly Module Overview.** Read the weekly announcement to identify the module learning outcomes, required readings, learning activities, important updates, and assessment deadlines.
2. **Complete the Assigned Learning Materials.** Read the required textbook chapters, peer-reviewed articles, case studies, and other assigned resources, and watch any recorded lectures or instructional videos.
3. **Engage in Learning Activities.** Participate actively in discussion forums, case analyses, data interpretation exercises, simulations, or other module-specific activities designed to reinforce key concepts, promote critical thinking, and encourage collaborative learning.

4. **Complete Required Assessments.** Submit all assigned coursework, quizzes, Applied Epidemiology Briefs, policy analyses, and other assessments through D2L by the published deadlines.
5. **Reflect on Feedback and Prepare for the Next Module.** Review instructor feedback, reflect on your progress, and apply lessons learned to strengthen your understanding of course concepts and improve future performance.

Following this learning process consistently will help you build knowledge progressively, develop epidemiologic reasoning skills, and remain on track throughout the semester.

Attendance and Participation

Section 81W (Online)

Attendance in the online section is demonstrated through consistent and meaningful engagement with course activities. Students are expected to log into D2L regularly, review course materials, participate in required discussions and learning activities, and submit assignments by the published deadlines. Simply logging into the course does not constitute attendance; active participation in weekly learning activities is required.

Section 81B (Hybrid)

Students enrolled in the hybrid section are expected to attend all scheduled face-to-face sessions unless an excused absence has been approved in accordance with university policy. Class meetings are designed to extend and apply concepts introduced through online learning and include case discussions, data interpretation exercises, outbreak investigations, and collaborative problem-solving activities.

To maximize learning, students should arrive prepared by:

- Completing assigned readings before class.
- Reviewing lecture materials and module content.
- Participating actively in discussions and epidemiologic problem-solving exercises.
- Contributing professionally and respectfully to collaborative learning activities.

Because many in-class activities involve the application of epidemiologic methods to authentic public health scenarios, they cannot always be replicated through independent make-up work.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is one that complies with university policy and is supported by appropriate documentation. Students should notify the instructor as early as possible whenever they anticipate missing a scheduled class session, learning activity, or assignment deadline.

Examples of excused absences include:

- Participation in officially authorized university activities.
- Serious illness of the student.
- Serious illness or death of an immediate family member.
- Religious observances recognized under university policy.
- Required military service.
- Legal proceedings requiring the student's presence.
- Other circumstances approved under applicable university regulations.

When an absence is approved as excused, students are responsible for communicating promptly with the instructor to arrange completion of missed coursework, when appropriate. The instructor reserves the right to determine the format and timing of any make-up work, which may differ from the original assignment or learning activity.

Professional Expectations

This course prepares students for professional practice in epidemiology and public health. Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and respect in all interactions throughout the semester.

Students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally with classmates and the instructor.
- Contribute constructively to discussions, collaborative learning activities, and group work.
- Demonstrate academic honesty and integrity in all coursework.
- Respect diverse perspectives and engage in evidence-informed, scholarly dialogue.

- Maintain appropriate confidentiality when discussing real or simulated public health cases.

Professional conduct is considered an essential competency for graduate-level public health practice and is expected in both face-to-face and online learning environments.

Make-up Work

Students with university-approved excused absences or documented exceptional circumstances may be eligible for make-up work or deadline extensions. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible and provide appropriate documentation when required. The instructor reserves the right to determine the format, timing, and requirements of any make-up assessment.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is intended to serve as a guide for the course. Although every effort will be made to follow the schedule, course requirements, and policies outlined herein, the instructor reserves the right to make reasonable modifications to course content, instructional methods, learning activities, assessment dates, or other course requirements when necessary to support student learning, address unforeseen circumstances, or comply with university policies. Students will be notified of any substantive changes to the syllabus or course schedule in a timely manner through D2L Brightspace and/or their official East Texas A&M University email account.

University Specific Procedures

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 in the Student Guidebook.

<https://inside.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](#) webpage and

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

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

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty](#)

[13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Student](#)

[Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/document/s/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Graduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<https://inside.etamu.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

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 16

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Student Disability Services](#)

<https://www.etamu.edu/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) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce 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. Web url:<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, 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.etamu.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.



<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

East Texas A&M University recognizes that generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Gemini, Claude, Grammarly AI, and similar technologies) are increasingly used in higher education, research, and public health practice. Consistent with **University Policy 13.99.99.R0.10 (Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty)**, students remain fully responsible for all work submitted for assessment, regardless of whether AI tools were used during its preparation.

Course-Specific AI Policy

This course emphasizes epidemiologic reasoning, critical appraisal of scientific evidence, professional communication, and evidence-informed public health decision-making. These competencies are core learning outcomes and must reflect each student's own intellectual work. AI tools may support learning but are not a substitute for independent critical thinking or scholarly analysis. Students are expected to use AI responsibly, ethically, and transparently.

Permitted Uses

Students may use AI tools to:

- improve grammar, spelling, punctuation, and writing clarity;
- organize ideas or develop outlines;

- assist with software troubleshooting or coding when explicitly permitted by the instructor.

Prohibited Uses

Students may **not** use AI tools to:

- generate or substantially write assignments submitted for academic credit;
- produce analyses, interpretations, policy recommendations, or conclusions presented as their own work;
- fabricate, modify, or invent references, citations, datasets, quotations, or other forms of evidence;
- complete quizzes, examinations, or any assessment intended to evaluate individual knowledge unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.

Transparency and Accountability

Students are expected to acknowledge any substantive use of AI in accordance with instructor guidance. Failure to disclose unauthorized AI use, or submitting AI-generated work as one's own, constitutes academic misconduct and will be addressed in accordance with **University Policy 13.99.99.R0.10 (Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty)**.

Because many course assessments require students to interpret authentic epidemiologic data, justify methodological decisions, critically appraise evidence, and defend public health recommendations, students may be asked to explain, justify, or elaborate on any submitted work. Inability to demonstrate an adequate understanding of submitted work may be considered evidence of unauthorized assistance. The instructor reserves the right to conduct a brief oral verification (5–10 minutes) for selected assignments to confirm authorship, assess the student's understanding of the work submitted, and verify that course learning outcomes have been achieved.

Course Schedule

Please note: This schedule is tentative and may be modified to accommodate instructional needs, emerging public health events, or university requirements. Any changes will be communicated through D2L and/or university email.

Table 3: Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Learning Activities & Assessments
Unit 1: Foundations of Infectious Disease Epidemiology		
1	Introduction to Infectious Disease Epidemiology	Course orientation; principles of infectious disease epidemiology; history and achievements; discussion of landmark outbreaks; Module Discussion
2	Infectious Disease Transmission	Chain of infection, natural history of disease, reproductive number (R_0), incubation and infectious periods; Applied Epidemiology Brief 1
3	Surveillance Systems and Public Health Intelligence	Passive and active surveillance, syndromic surveillance, One Health surveillance, CDC and WHO systems; Surveillance data interpretation exercise
4	Measuring Infectious Diseases	Incidence, prevalence, attack rates, secondary attack rates, case fatality ratio, outbreak curves; Applied Epidemiology Brief 2

Unit 2: Outbreak Investigation and Disease Control		
5	Principles of Outbreak Investigation	CDC's ten steps of outbreak investigation; descriptive epidemiology; epidemic curves; laboratory confirmation
6	Analytical Epidemiology in Outbreaks	Cohort and case-control studies during outbreaks; risk ratios, odds ratios, hypothesis testing; Contemporary Outbreak Investigation assigned
7	Midterm Review	Integrated case discussion; review activities; Midterm Examination opens
8	Midterm Examination	Midterm Examination due; debrief and discussion
Unit 3: Contemporary Infectious Disease Challenges		
9	Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases	COVID-19, Ebola, Mpox, Avian Influenza, antimicrobial resistance; Applied Epidemiology Brief 3
10	Vaccination and Prevention Strategies	Vaccine epidemiology, herd immunity, vaccine effectiveness, outbreak prevention, risk communication
11	Global Health Security and Pandemic Preparedness	International Health Regulations, One Health, health equity, preparedness and response; Infectious Disease Policy Brief due
Unit 4: Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology		
12	Communicating Epidemiologic Evidence	Scientific communication, public health reporting, communicating uncertainty; Portfolio workshop
13	Infectious Disease Decision-Making	Translating epidemiologic evidence into policy and practice; student-led case discussions
14	Thanksgiving Break	No new coursework assigned; work on Investigation Portfolio

15	Future Directions in Infectious Disease Epidemiology	Artificial intelligence, genomic epidemiology, digital epidemiology; Investigation Portfolio and Presentation due
16	Finals Week	No class. Faculty grading period.