Course information

Instructor:
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Los Angeles, California 90095-1772
Office phone: (310) 206-4253
blcole@ucla.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Time: M, W 8:00-9:50 am, 4 hours/week
Location: 51-279 CHS
Cap on Attendance: 30
Units: 4

Required Text

There is no required text. Required readings, which include journal articles, research reports, reviews and guidelines, are available on the internet. Most required readings are open access. Those journal articles that are not open access are available without charge to UCLA students accessing them from a UCLA-based computer. If any reading is either not available or if a URL is not valid, please notify the instructor immediately (blcole@ucla.edu).

Course Goal and Description:

The goal of ENV HTH 215 is to provide students with a sound understanding of health impact assessment practice, its rationale and underlying principles, and opportunities to develop and apply HIA skills in work with public agencies and community-based organizations.

The course will meet for four hours per week in the Spring quarter. The format is interactive seminar and discussion focusing on problem-solving around case-study health impact assessments and students’ experiences working on HIA-related projects with public agencies and community-based organizations. ENV HTH 215 can be taken either for a letter grade or as S/U. Students in the MPH program who wish for this course to count towards their degree requirements must take the course for a letter grade. All students (regardless of whether they are taking the course for a letter grade or as S/U) are expected to engage actively in the class discussions, problem solving sessions and team projects.

Course Website:

An electronic version of the syllabus, discussion forum and additional guidance on the team projects is available on the course website: https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/15S-ENVHLT215-1
If you are unable to access the course website, please contact Brian Cole (blcole@ucla.edu).

Course Structure:

The class will meet for two two-hour sessions each week. The course format is primarily interactive seminar and discussion with a heavy emphasis on learning from case-studies. Active participation is essential to success in this course. Students are expected to have read all required readings prior to each class session. Reading assignments are listed in the course schedule found at the end of this syllabus; any updates will be posted on the course website.
## Learning Objectives and Competencies

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate the skills listed as “Course Learning Objectives” below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES</strong></th>
<th><strong>ASPH MPH COMPETENCIES</strong></th>
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</table>
| 1) Explain the rationale for the use of health impact assessment (HIA) | B1 Describe the direct and indirect human, ecological and safety effects of major environmental and occupational agents.  
D4 Discuss the policy process for improving the health status of populations.  
K1 Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to specific individual and community health outcomes. |
| 2) Describe the phases of an HIA and the specific procedures used in each phase | E2 Identify the causes of social and behavioral factors that affect health of individuals and populations.  
J3 Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health.  
J4 Apply the core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance in the analysis of public health problems and their solutions.  
J5 Promote high standards of personal and organizational integrity, compassion, honesty and respect for all people.  
J6 Analyze determinants of health and disease using an ecological framework.  
K1 Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to specific individual and community health outcomes.  
L8 Analyze inter-relationships among systems that influence the quality of life of people in their communities.  
L9 Analyze the effects of political, social and economic policies on public health systems at the local, state, national and international levels. |
| 3) Analyze how a proposed policy may influence environmental determinants of health and the health status of individuals affected populations; | J3 Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health.  
J4 Apply the core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance in the analysis of public health problems and their solutions.  
J5 Promote high standards of personal and organizational integrity, compassion, honesty and respect for all people.  
J6 Analyze determinants of health and disease using an ecological framework.  
K1 Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to specific individual and community health outcomes.  
L8 Analyze inter-relationships among systems that influence the quality of life of people in their communities.  
L9 Analyze the effects of political, social and economic policies on public health systems at the local, state, national and international levels. |
| 4) Effectively and constructively review HIAs; | J3 Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health.  
J4 Apply the core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance in the analysis of public health problems and their solutions.  
J5 Promote high standards of personal and organizational integrity, compassion, honesty and respect for all people.  
J6 Analyze determinants of health and disease using an ecological framework. |
| 5) Describe the ethical and practical reasons for stakeholder participation in HIA; | E4 Identify critical stakeholders for the planning, implementation and evaluation of public health programs, policies and interventions.  
G1 Describe the roles of, history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.  
G2 Explain how professional ethics and practices relate to equity and accountability in diverse community settings.  
J10 Appreciate the importance of working collaboratively with diverse communities and constituencies (e.g. researchers, practitioners, agencies and organizations). |
| 6) Assess the technical feasibility and political utility of an HIA for a given policy proposal; | E3 Identify individual, organizational and community concerns, assets, resources and deficits for social and behavioral science interventions.  
L9 Analyze the effects of political, social and economic policies on public health systems at the local, state, national and international levels. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7) Find, review and synthesize evidence related to the causal pathways analyzed in an HIA;</td>
<td>C10 Evaluate the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic reports. J3 Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health. J4 Apply the core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance in the analysis of public health problems and their solutions. J5 Promote high standards of personal and organizational integrity, compassion, honesty and respect for all people. J6 Analyze determinants of health and disease using an ecological framework. K1 Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to specific individual and community health outcomes. L8 Analyze inter-relationships among systems that influence the quality of life of people in their communities. L9 Analyze the effects of political, social and economic policies on public health systems at the local, state, national and international levels.</td>
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<td>8) Develop clear, concise visual representations of the causal linkages analyzed in an HIA;</td>
<td>F7 Demonstrate effective written and oral skills for communicating with different audiences in the context of professional public health activities. F10 Use informatics and communication methods to advocate for community public health programs and policies.</td>
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<td>9) Identify and use available data to characterize the prevalence and distribution of health risk factors and health conditions in an affected population;</td>
<td>A5 Apply descriptive techniques commonly used to summarize public health data. A8 Apply basic informatics techniques with vital statistics and public health records in the description of public health characteristics and in public health research and evaluation. F8 Use information technology to access, evaluate, and interpret public health data.</td>
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<td>10) Build simple quantitative models to integrate available data and scientific evidence to estimate the direction and magnitude of potential health effects;</td>
<td>C3 Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, time and place. L8 Analyze inter-relationships among systems that influence the quality of life of people in their communities.</td>
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<td>11) Describe how policy proposals may affect health disparities and formulating strategies for minimizing these disparities;</td>
<td>B7 Discuss various risk management and risk communication approaches in relation to issues of environmental justice and equity. G1 Describe the roles of, history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.</td>
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<td>12) Develop sound, actionable policy recommendations based on HIA findings that are appropriately targeted to specific agencies</td>
<td>B3 Describe federal and state regulatory programs, guidelines and authorities that control environmental health issues. B5 Specify approaches for assessing, preventing and controlling environmental hazards that pose risks to human health and safety. B7 Discuss various risk management and risk communication approaches in relation to issues of environmental justice and equity.</td>
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<td>13) Communicate the results of HIA analyses to decision-makers and community stakeholders in written reports and face-to-face presentations;</td>
<td>A10 Develop written and oral presentations based on statistical analyses for both public health professionals and educated lay audiences. C8 Communicate epidemiologic information to lay and professional audiences. D9 Communicate health policy and management issues using appropriate channels and technologies. F7 Demonstrate effective written and oral skills for communicating with different audiences in the context of professional public health activities. F9 Use informatics methods and resources as strategic tools to promote public health. F10 Use informatics and communication methods to advocate for community public health programs and policies.</td>
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Course grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>% of grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student’s Contribution to Team Project</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>April 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. 1-page description &amp; workplan</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>June 3 (7 am)</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Written</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>June 3 (7 am)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. In-Class Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>May 25 or June 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mid-term</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>In-class May 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Exam 2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>May 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Case study presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Sign up for Weeks 2-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Attendance &amp; In-Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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Team Projects

These projects will involve working as a team with other students to complete one component of an HIA (or a health component of an environmental impact assessment) with a public agency or community-based organization. The team will produce a written deliverable to be provided to the client agency or organization at the conclusion of the project. These deliverables will usually focus on only one component of an HIA that can be completed in four to six weeks, not an entire HIA.

(1) On the second day of class students will form teams and select a project from a list of alternatives provided by the instructor (see examples below).

(2) Each team will provide the instructor with a 1-page description outlining their proposed deliverable along with a workplan with a breakdown of each team member’s contribution to the final product on or before the second week of class each team. The instructor may alter the scope of this plan to conform to course learning objectives, feasibility and/or client expectations.

(3) During the last class meeting (Week 10) students will present their findings to the class in a 10-minute presentation.

Students will be graded on their specific contribution to their team’s deliverables.

Project examples

- Logic framework and literature review for an HIA of a city ordinance permitting healthy food vending near schools;
- Population assessment (“profile”) for a health impact assessment of a ship-to-rail cargo facility at the Port of Long Beach;
- Data collection for an HIA on a plan to provide free transit passes for K-12 students;
- Scoping and stakeholder engagement plan for an HIA of converting two-way boulevards to one-way;
- A community stakeholder report on the findings from an HIA of a proposed subway line.

Grading criteria for project deliverables

a. Adheres to HIA guidelines/best practices applicable to the assigned component
b. Thorough (scope, methods, explanation)
c. Sound logic, supported by research evidence
d. Clear and comprehensible to lay audiences

Midterm and Final Exams

The aim of the mid-term is to assess understanding of core HIA concepts, principles and terminology covered in the readings and class discussion in Weeks 1 through 5. The mid-term exam format will be fill-in-the-blank and short answer. Closed book. One 4x5 notecard allowed.

The final exam is designed to assess deeper understanding of HIA concepts and their application to public health practice, and ability to critically apply information and skills from the course to address real-world problems. The final exam format will be short answer and short essay. Open book/Open note.
Case-study Presentation

Students are expected to lead a class discussion of one case-study individually or as part of a small group. While a short review of the case study may be helpful, it is not required. The discussant’s main role is to catalyze class discussion, not to lecture. Case studies for each week are listed in the course agenda, along with recommended discussion questions. The aim of the case-study discussion is to encourage reflection and application of course content.

Class Participation:

The class meets four hours per week and is in the format of an interactive seminar. Active participation is essential to success in this course. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE IN CLASS ON TIME AND THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL REQUIRED READINGS PRIOR TO COMING TO CLASS. PLEASE COME TO CLASS READY TO LEARN AND BE ENGAGED. Although you are allowed to use computers during class, we are relying on you to exercise restraint and not surf the web, check email or engage in other non-class activities online during class.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1: HIA aims and scope of practice

Session Agendas

Week 1: Session 1 (March 28)
1. Introductions
2. Review course scope, expectations and assignments
3. Lecture: Introduction to HIA

Week 1: Session 2 (March 30)
1. Discussion of case-study
2. Select team projects

Readings


Case Study


Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. What impacts and pathways were examined in the HIA? Were there other impacts or pathways that should have been considered?
2. How many people and organizations were involved in producing the HIA?
3. Were the methods and assumptions used in the analysis explicit and understandable?
4. Did the results seem unbiased, complete and substantiated by the evidence presented?
**Week 2: History of HIA and its analogs**

**Session Agendas**

**Week 2: Session 1 (April 4)**
1. Lecture: Environmental impact assessment (EIA) vs. HIA
2. In-class activity: Finding and review of health-related impacts in EIAs

**Week 2: Session 2 (April 6)**
1. History of HIA
2. Discussion of case-study

**Readings**


**Case Study**


**Case Study Discussion Questions:**
1. How did government policy support the HIA?
2. What was the impetus for support for HIA?
3. How were HIA results brought into the decision-making process?
4. What might be reasons for opposing HIA?

**Week 3: Challenges to conducting HIAs**

**Session Agendas**

**Week 3: Session 1 (April 11)**
1. Lecture: HIA obstacles, pitfalls and limitations
2. In-class activity: When to do and not do an HIA

**Week 3: Session 2 (April 13)**
1. Guest lecture on I-710 HIA
2. Discussion of case-study

**Readings**


**Case Study**


**Case Study Discussion Questions:**

1. Were there other impacts or pathways the HIA should have explored?
2. What were the technical hurdles to conducting the HIA?
3. What were the political hurdles to uptake of the HIA results?
4. Would a different HIA process or different findings resulted in a different outcome?
5. What are your suggestions for how the HIA could have been conducted differently?

**Week 4: Participation and Equity**

**Session Agendas**

**Week 4: Session 1 (April 18)**
1. Lecture: Equity and its assessment in HIA
2. Lecture: Stakeholder participation in HIA

**Week 4: Session 2 (April 20)**
1. Guest lecture on environmental justice
2. Discussion of case-study

**Readings**


**Case Study (choose one)**


**Case Study Discussion Questions:**

1. What strategies were used to facilitate participation in preparing the HIA? What about participation in the decision-making process?
2. Which of Arnstein’s levels of participation would best characterize participation in this HIA?
3. Were any stakeholders excluded from participating in the HIA? Why?
4. Would higher levels of participation have “improved” the soundness or impact of the HIA? Would more participation changed decisions on the proposed policy or project?
5. What, if any, are the tensions between facilitating broad, high quality participation and supporting more equitable outcomes in the final decision?
Week 5: Screening and scoping

Session Agendas

Week 5: Session 1 (April 25)
1. Lecture: Screening and scoping in HIA
2. In-class activity: Preliminary scoping for an HIA

Week 5: Session 2 (April 27)
1. Discussion: Planning an HIA from A to Z
2. In-class activity: Developing a project timeline for an HIA
3. Discussion of case-studies

Readings


Case Studies (choose one)


Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. Why was the HIA conducted?
2. What pathways and impacts were analyzed? Were there others that should have been included?
3. What methods were used for the analysis? Did these seem appropriate?
4. Who was involved in screening and scoping for the HIA? Would involvement of different individuals and organizations resulted in a different focus for the HIA?

Week 6: The science and art of impact assessment

Session Agendas

Week 6: Session 1 (May 2)
1. Mid-term
2. Discussion: Common problems encountered by HIAs
3. Discussion of case-studies

Week 6: Session 2 (May 4)
1. Groups present team projects’ progress-to-date
2. Discussion and problem-solving of challenges encountered by team projects
Readings


Case Studies (choose one)


Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. Were the methods and assumptions explicit and clearly described?
2. Did the analysis seem appropriate for the goals of the HIA?
3. Were the findings sound, unbiased and based on available evidence?
4. Were there other impacts or pathways that should have been examined?
5. Were the results overly qualitative or quantitative?

Week 7: Communicating findings and follow-up

Session Agendas

Week 7: Session 1 (May 9)
1. Lecture: Formulating and presenting HIA recommendations
2. In-class activity: Developing recommendations for an HIA

Week 7: Session 2 (May 11)
1. Lecture: Reporting HIA findings for diverse audiences
2. Discussion of case-study

Readings

Gulis G. 2007. Contributing to a public health culture: health and economic impacts of a health promotion campaign in Denmark. Case study 14 (pp. 247-255) in The Effectiveness of Health Impact Assessment Scope and limitations of supporting decision-making in Europe (Wismar M et al., eds.) Published by European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. Available at: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/98283/E90794.pdf?ua=1


Case Study

Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. What were the key results and recommendations?
2. How were the results of the HIA and recommendations communicated to decision-makers?
3. Were the results and recommendations presented in a way that maximized their usefulness and/or impact?
4. How could the HIA have been conducted differently or results communicated to more effectively impact the decisions on this specific policy or project?
5. How could the HIA have been conducted differently or results communicated to improve inter-sectoral cooperation on improving population health in the long-term?

Week 8: HIA integrated into environmental impact assessment

Session Agendas

Week 8: Session 1 (May 16)
1. Lecture: NEPA and CEQA in a nutshell
2. Lecture: Integrating HIA into EIA

Week 8: Session 2 (May 18)
1. Discussion of case-studies

Readings


Case Studies


Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. What was the size of the potentially affected populations and how significant were the potential health impacts?
2. To what degree is discussion of human health impacts highlighted in the EIA?
3. Are there potentially significant health impacts that should have been analyzed? Does it appear that constraints on the EIA process prevented a fuller consideration of human health impacts?
4. Did decisions appear to be influenced by health impacts discussed in the HIA?
5. Did it seem that the recommendations of the HIA had the potential to influence major decisions (e.g. build/don’t build, fundamental design of the project) or did they focus on relatively minor issues?
6. Would a free-standing HIA (i.e. an HIA not integrated into the EIA process) have been more complete or effective?
Week 9: Building HIA capacity and supporting use of HIA

Session Agendas

Week 9: Session 1  (May 23)
1. Exam 2
2. Discussion: Core capabilities for HIA
3. Lecture: Approaches to institutionalizing HIA
4. Discussion of case-studies

Readings


Case Studies


Case Study Discussion Questions:
1. Was the HIA voluntary or mandated? If voluntary, what is the rationale for the HIA?
2. What institutional processes or mandates does the HIA tie into?
3. How were the findings of the HIA brought to bear on the decision-making process?
4. Are there politically feasible means to support broader application of HIA on this kind of policy or project?

Weeks 9/10: Presentation of team projects

Session Agendas

Week 9: Session 2  (May 25)
Student Presentations

Week 10: Session 1 (May 30)
Memorial Day - NO CLASS

Week 10: Session 2 (June 1)
Student Presentations