Improving Worker Health: Social Movements, Policy Debates, and Public Health
Community Health Sciences CM470, Environmental Health Sciences M471, Labor & Workplace Studies M170, Urban Planning M470

Instructor: Linda Delp, PhD, MPH
Director, UCLA-LOSH (Labor Occupational Safety & Health Program)
Ueberroth Building, Suite 2107
10945 Le Conte Ave. Box 951478
www.losh.ucla.edu
Direct line: 310-794-5976
LOSH office number: 310-794-5964
ldelp@ucla.edu
Office hours: After class or by appointment

Units: 4 units
Course Location: School of Public Health, Room CHS 41-268
Course Schedule: Thursdays, 9:00 am – 11:50 am
Class web site: https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/18S-COMHLT/CM470-1

Teaching Assistant: Elana Kessler, elanask@g.ucla.edu; Thurs. 1-3 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Studies indicate that we are spending more time at work and that changes in the nature of work create job insecurity. Despite these trends, health researchers, policymakers and practitioners too often ignore the impact of work on health status. This course introduces the field of occupational health and safety in the larger public health and social justice arena, examining historical trends, social movements to advance worker health and safety, and current controversies in the context of threats to workers and public health.

Course readings and discussions will provide a theoretical and practical foundation to understand the intersection between the work environment and health, to analyze the cause of health disparities or inequities, and to debate the philosophies underlying current occupational health policies and interventions.

PREREQUISITES

This course is geared to students interested in: the sociopolitical and historic origins underlying the effect of work on health and the current threats to worker health; worker, community and environmental justice organizing; community-based interventions to improve workers’ health; and current policy debates in occupational health and safety including the intersection of science, public health and labor, and public policy.
Course topics focus on issues of interest to graduate students in Public Health (Community Health Sciences, Environmental Health Sciences and others interested in worker health policy and advocacy), Public Policy, Urban Planning and Social Welfare. Objectives for the course and related public health competences are listed in the chart below. The course is also open to upper level undergraduate students (juniors/seniors). It will be of particular interest to those with a minor in Labor and Workplace Studies.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES & PUBLIC HEALTH COMPETENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES (Students will…)</th>
<th>MPH PUBLIC HEALTH COMPETENCIES FOR CHS AND EHS*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Examine the role of work and the work environment as a determinant of health and wellbeing. | **CHS:**
| | H3: Identify and explain how social, cultural and behavioral factors affect the health of individuals, communities and populations. |
| | **EHS:** |
| | I1.1: Describe major direct and indirect human health and safety effects of major environmental or occupational agents or conditions. |
| | I3.1: Describe how humans are exposed to chemical, physical, and biological agents in the workplace and environment and how exposures are determined. |
| | I3.2: Describe how exposures can be controlled through administrative procedures, personal protective equipment, various engineering technologies, and social interventions. |
| 2. Analyze occupational health disparities and inequities by gender, race/ethnicity, and class and the influence of policies and advocacy on worker health equity. | **CHS:**
| | H4: Describe how health inequities are related to historical and contemporary structural inequities in power and privilege. |
| | **EHS:** |
| | I1.2: Identify the most important disease burdens with major environmental or occupational risk factors and the environmental or occupational risk factors that produce the most disease burden in either the general population or in heavily affected subgroups. |
| | I7.1: Define environmental justice and give examples of environmental exposures that are distributed unequally with regard to race/ethnicity and/or socio economic status. |
| 3. Investigate historical trends, sociopolitical factors and worker advocacy campaigns that shape occupational health research, policy debates and decisions. | **CHS:**
| | H4: See above |
| | **EHS:** |
| | I6.2: Identify major state, federal, international regulatory programs or authorities for occupational or environmental health. |
| 4. Explore the theoretical underpinnings of occupational health and worksite health promotion programs. | **CHS:**
| | H6: Recognize when existing approaches may not be culturally appropriate for a particular population and collaborate with communities and others to design, implement and evaluate more suitable health programs. |
| All (Objectives 1-4) | **CHS:**
| | H1: Access and understand the public health literature and information and apply it to community health. |
| | H10: Behave in an ethical manner in practice and research and in interactions with others. |
| | **EHS:** |
| | I12.1: Present cogent and well substantiated arguments for actions to address environmental health concerns. |

*Source: UCLA FSPH Competencies for Graduate Degree Programs. May 8, 2015. H: Discipline Specific Competencies for MPH in Community Health Sciences; I: Discipline Specific Competencies for MPH in Environmental Health Sciences*
COURSE GRADING, REQUIREMENTS

This year’s class will focus on worker health and safety in the current sociopolitical and economic climate. Course readings and assignments will integrate fundamental threats to workers rights as well as opportunities for worker education, media and policy advocacy campaigns that intersect with current movements: gender justice (sexual harassment, gender discrimination, Time’s Up), racial justice (Black Lives Matter, discrimination), gun violence in the workplace, the rights of immigrant workers (impact of ICE raids, deportation, CA policies), addressing poverty by increasing the minimum wage, etc.

Assignments are designed to explore threats to worker health; contribute to campaigns to educate, organize and advocate for workers to have a voice; and analyze the role of the media and relevant policy initiatives. Details for each assignment will be provided in class and class time allocated throughout the quarter to discuss and work with others on the assignments.

Class Participation, Weekly Readings and Assignments (20% of grade)

Assign. #1: Family Work History Interviews and Analysis (20% of grade)
5-6 page paper and notes (Due Wk. 3, Mon, April 16, 9 am)

Assign. #2: Worker Advocacy and Social Movements (20% of grade)
Work in pairs to contribute to Workers’ Memorial Week of Action advocacy event. Choose one of the following:
- Strongly encouraged if possible: Participate in Wed, April 25 am Workers Memorial Day Event at City Hall. Submit 2-page summary of event (Due Mon, April 30, 9 am)
- Participate in Fri am, April 13 OSH Activist Network meeting at L.A. County Fed of Labor to plan Workers’ Memorial Day event. Submit 2-page summary of notes from mtg and present decisions at April 19 class.
- Compile two 2-page summary factsheets of statistics with references for Workers Memorial Day press packet (Due Mon, April 23, 9 am)

Assign. #3: Op-Ed or Policy Memo (40% of grade)
Work in teams to write a well-substantiated Op-Ed article or Policy Memo
Group Presentations and Feedback
Due Wk. 9 (Op-Eds) & 10 (Policy Memos)

Class Participation, Weekly Readings and Assignments

All required course readings will be posted on the website along with other relevant supplemental references. Students are expected to complete required readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss them based on questions distributed in advance. Graduate students will work in teams of two to lead an interactive class discussion in one class based on the readings. A resource textbook by Levy, Wegman et al. is available at the LOSH
library in the Ueberroth building along with a number of other reference books and resources.

**Assign. #1: Family Work History Interview and Paper** (20% of grade)

Students in the class are from different backgrounds and bring a variety of experience and perspectives. The first assignment is designed to acknowledge the value of those experiences as a foundation to examine job hazards and to analyze work as a social determinant of health and wellbeing. See interview questions and guidelines for the paper on the website.

Interview two members of your family, ideally from different generations. Summarize results of the interviews and analyze factors that might influence job satisfaction, exposure to hazards, access to resources, and avenues to have a voice in occupational health and safety policies at work and beyond. If possible, capture a short story of when they faced a dilemma or a choice about how to approach a work health/safety situation. Submit a 5-6-page paper with a summary and analysis. Attach your notes (English or Spanish, typed or handwritten).

**Due Wk. 3, Mon, April 16, 9 am.**

**Assign. #2: Worker Advocacy and Social Movements: Workers Memorial Week of Action** (20% of grade)

Each year, events are held throughout the country and beyond to remember those workers who have been killed on the job and to advocate for policies to improve workplace health and safety. You are encouraged to participate in the Workers’ Memorial Day Event if at all possible. Given that there will be schedule conflicts for some people, two additional options are also available. Choose one of the following. Coordinate with a partner from the class who participates in the same activity and review each others work before submitting.

- **Workers’ Memorial Day Event**, Wed. April 25 am
  - Press conference on Los Angeles City Hall steps
  - Delegation to Mayor to support worker health and safety campaign for Ports truck drivers
  - Interview two workers/worker representatives and submit 2-page summary of event (Due Mon, April 30, 9 am)

- **OSH Activists’ Network Meeting**, Fri am, April 13, 10:30am – 12noon at the L.A. County Federation of Labor (2130 James M. Wood Blvd. LA 90006)
  - Topics: 1) Redefining the scope of worker health & safety, exploring how issues of racial and gender discrimination, immigration, and insecure work impact workplace safety. 2) Plans for April 25 Workers' Memorial Day event
  - Submit 2-page summary of notes from mtg and present decisions at April 19 class.

- **Factsheets for Workers’ Memorial Day press packet**
  - Create two 2-page summary factsheets of worker health and safety statistics with references. Possible topics include: Trends in worker fatalities and impact on
different groups of workers; Workplace violence (guns, discrimination); Work environment and women’s health (sexual harassment, scheduling and work-life balance), Job insecurity and workers’ health, Immigrant workers and job injuries
  o Submit press-ready factsheets Mon, April 23, 9 am

**Assign. #3: Op-Ed or Policy Memo** (30% Op-Ed/Policy Memo; 10% Group Presentation)

Choose a current topic of interest that affects worker health and safety and: 1) reflects a disproportionate impact on certain groups of workers (gender, race/ethnicity, undocumented immigrants, low wage workers, non-union workers) and 2) is at the center of a policy debate (there are many examples). The topic can build on issues you’ve explored in the family work history and/or worker advocacy assignments – or can be a new topic.

Choose a focus on writing an Op-Ed or a Policy Memo and work in teams as follows:

- **Teams of two** write an Op-Ed of 750 words (app. 2 ½ pages + references) which includes a story and your opinion about a policy issue; your opinion should be substantiated by research.
- **Teams of four** write a Policy Memo of six pages + references which includes a discussion of equity and proposed recommendations for policy and program changes directed to targeted audiences (community-based organization such as a clinic or worker center, employer, labor union, university program (e.g. LOSH), coalition (e.g. SoCalCOSH or National COSH), local, state, federal government (proposing new policies or stronger enforcement of worker protections.)

Guidelines and examples of each are attached at the end of the syllabus. Throughout the course, Op-Ed articles and APHA policy statements will be included with relevant class readings and will be discussed and analyzed.

Op-Eds/presentations are due Week 9 and Policy Memos/presentations are due Week 10.

- Teams submit a draft to Professor/TA the week before they present.
- Teams revise based on feedback and upload assignment via class website by Mon, 9 am of the week they present for classmates to critically review prior to class.
- Teams “pitch” their opinion or proposed policy changes to the class, justifying their recommendations, and respond to classmates’ questions. Guidelines for presentations will be distributed in class.

**Paper Format and Grading**

Format papers as follows:

- Double spaced, 12 Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, page numbers bottom center of page
- References: (Author, Date) in text and alphabetized list at end
- First page should include: Name, Date, Course, Title of Assignment at top of page
- Save paper with filename format: last name – assign# - date
- Upload papers to the website as a word document by the deadline.
Papers will be graded based on five criteria:

- Analysis (paper should not be just descriptive),
- Organization (clear structure with intro and conclusion, easy to follow),
- Content (knowledge, quality and creativity),
- Citations and sources (adequate citations, number and diversity of sources, consistent formatting of citations and works cited),
- Quality of writing (basic writing skills, formatting such as page numbers, Proofread paper before submitting!)

UCLA courses are governed by a code of academic integrity. Students are encouraged to review the UCLA policy regarding cheating and plagiarism: https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/portals/16/documents/studentguide.pdf

RELEVANT NOTES & POLICIES

Class Attendance
Weekly readings, discussion questions, class attendance and participation represent 20% of the grade so attendance is critical. We recognize that emergencies may occasionally arise. If so, please send an email prior to class; submit written responses to discussion questions related to the readings for that class; and ensure that you are familiar with materials covered in class and expectations for any assignments. In the event of more than one absence, an additional assignment will be required.

Use of Electronic Devices
To ensure full participation in the class and to foster an environment of respect that maximizes the exchange of ideas by everyone, electronic devices such as laptops should ONLY be used for course content and cell phones silenced during class.

Late Assignments
Assignments are due on the dates posted. Any extensions will be granted only in the event of an emergency. One letter grade will be deducted for each day assignments are late.

Students with Disabilities
If you wish to request an accommodation due to a suspected or documented disability, please inform your instructor and contact the Office for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible at A255 Murphy Hall, (310) 825-1501, (310) 206-6083 (telephone device for the deaf). Website: www.osd.ucla.edu. This information will be treated as confidential.

Email communication
Please send any class-related emails to ldelp@ucla.edu and elanask@g.ucla.edu with Worker Health in the subject line to make it easier to identify if we are not able to respond immediately and need to find your email later. (It can be very difficult to find emails when searching for the sender since email addresses often do not reflect the sender’s name!)
## COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

### Notes:
- Readings will be posted on the website. **Articles designated for a specific week should be read prior to that class session.**
- The course schedule and readings will be flexible as needed to accommodate guest speakers and a worksite visit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
  a. How poultry work affects workers’ health and why this is relevant to us.
  b. A statistic and story that stood out to you and why.
  c. The research methods used and how each method contributes to creating a comprehensive picture of work in the poultry industry. |
| 4/12 2        | **Social Determinants of Work & Health Equity** | • Watch 30 minute video 1980, “Can’t Take No More” [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v2JTQjiCdc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v2JTQjiCdc)
• Skim Levy, Wegman et al, 6th Ed, 2011, Chpt. 1, Occupational and Environmental Health: Twenty-First Century Challenges and Opportunities, pp. 3-21 (note especially Figure 1-7 on pg. 12)
  ➢ Read Op-Ed, The Killing Floor (What is author’s opinion? How is it substantiated? Are you convinced?)
  ➢ Skim APHA Policy Statement, Improving Working Conditions for US Farmworkers and Food Production Worker (What problem is identified and which groups of workers are affected? What interventions/strategies are discussed and what are opposing arguments? Who are policy recommendations targeted to?) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 4/26</td>
<td><strong>4/26 The role of Science and Politics in the Occupational Safety &amp; Health Policy Arena</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Science, Power, Politics and Regulatory Approaches&lt;br&gt;  o Policy debates: 1) Chemicals - Safe until proven hazardous or Precautionary principle? 2) Ergonomics - Weigh the evidence or wait for more evidence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Session</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|               | Policy debate: What role for labor unions?  
|               | Guest speakers: Rosemarie Molina, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor; Rocelyn de Leon, UCLA-LOSH/Former OHIP intern  
| 7 5/17        | Public Health Strategies  
|               | Community-based Research, Education, Organizing to Improve Worker Health  
|               | Principles of popular education and community-based action research  
|               | Organizing campaigns and intervention strategies to prevent work-related injuries & disease  
|               | Choose one:  
| 8 5/24        | Current Public Health Debates - Promoting health, preventing injury and illness  
|               | Principles of Workers’ Compensation  
|               | “Total Worker Health” - Debates and innovative approaches to integrating worker health protection and promotion  
|               | OSHA, “Adding Inequality to Injury: The Costs of Failing to Protect Workers on the Job.”  
|               | Choose one:  
<p>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Team Presentations: Op-Eds</td>
<td>• Read Op-Eds of other teams and develop questions to pose to teams when they present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10            | Team Presentations: Policy Memos  | • Read Policy Memos of other teams and develop questions to post to teams when they present.  
• Course Evaluations                                                                                     |
| 6/7           |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- Relevant OSH statistical summaries, news & reports that highlight current trends and debates:

- OSH networks/advocacy organizations:
  - National Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health, [www.coshnetwork.org](http://www.coshnetwork.org)
  - California Policy Advocacy organization: [www.worksafe.org](http://www.worksafe.org)
  - SoCalCOSH: [https://www.socalcosh.com/](https://www.socalcosh.com/)

- Reference Textbooks (Available in LOSH Library):
Resources for Op-Ed Assignment:

Guidelines:
- How to Write an Op-Ed Article
  https://styleguide.duke.edu/toolkits/writing-media/how-to-write-an-op-ed-article/

Examples:
- On the Killing Floor

- How Memphis Gave Up on Dr. King’s Dream
  https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/30/opinion/sunday/martin-luther-king-memphis.html

- Disneyland’s workers are undervalued, disrespected and underpaid

- 2 Years, 31 Dead Construction Workers. New York Can Do Better

- More Injuries on the Job

- The Working Wounded.

- Safety Regulators Don’t Add Costs. They Decide who Pays Them.

Resources for Policy Statement Assignment:

Guidelines will be adapted from the following American Public Health Association (APHA) document
  https://www.apha.org/
Additional Guidelines to consult

- [https://www.govloop.com/community/blog/how-to-conduct-an-effective-policy-analysis/](https://www.govloop.com/community/blog/how-to-conduct-an-effective-policy-analysis/)
- [https://twp.duke.edu/sites/twp.duke.edu/files/file-attachments/policy-memo.original.pdf](https://twp.duke.edu/sites/twp.duke.edu/files/file-attachments/policy-memo.original.pdf)

APHA Policy Statement Examples:


