**THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT**
**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES**
**DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCES**

**SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL NUTRITION (3 credits)**
**FALL 2024**

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| **Instructor**<br>Dr. Trishnee Bhurosy<br>Assistant Professor of Nutrition<br>Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences | **Days and time course meets:**<br>Mondays (11 AM to 2 PM) |
| **Office Hours:**<br>Through appointment only. To book an appointment, please email me at trishnee.bhurosy@uvm.edu. | **Where course meets:**<br>Teams (online) |
| **Instructor Office/Meeting Space:** 252 MLS Carrigan Wing<br><br>**Instructor Email:** trishnee.bhurosy@uvm.edu<br>*I usually respond to email queries within 24 hours, except during weekends and holidays.* | **Nature of course:**<br>Synchronous online |

**Email Etiquette**
The best way to reach me outside of class is by email. When you send me an email (or any other professional contact), make sure to avoid the kind of language you would use in a casual text conversation. Please address me as Dr. Bhurosy or Professor Bhurosy when you email me. Before you send an email to me, read your email aloud and ask yourself whether it sounds professional and respectful, and proofread it for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. Doing this shows me that you are taking this class seriously. **Please note that I may not respond to rude or disrespectful emails, and hostile emails will be reported if need be.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**
This course will examine health from a psychosocial and social ecologic framework, examining how individual and interpersonal factors interact to influence health. Health education and health promotion theories will also be discussed, and their application to public interventions that aim to modify one or more levels of the social ecologic model will be analyzed using examples from the published literature. This course will follow an online synchronous seminar format with student presentations and critiques of readings, interactive lectures, group work, and active discussion.

**COURSE RATIONALE**
This course will provide a foundation in the social and behavioral sciences relevant to public health nutrition and dietetics. Students will learn the role of social and behavioral determinants in the health of individuals and populations and how to map a presumed causal pathway from more distal determinants through proximal determinants to the end goal of improved health. They will examine theories of health behavior, both generally and specifically. Generally, the student will learn how to identify and use theoretical constructs and principles with particular attention to the use of theory in professional public health practice. Specifically, the student will learn to describe and apply the constructs and principles of several theories commonly used in public health behavior. The course will cover the four major individual theories that focus on intrapersonal factors (i.e., Health Belief Model, Transtheoretical Model, Reasoned Action Approach, and Social Cognitive Theory) as well as several interpersonal and social theories that

are beyond the individual level. Throughout the course, students will be expected to apply the concepts and principles to public health situations and issues.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**
This course will cover the following two social and behavioral competencies. Underneath each competency are several sub-competencies. After completing this course, students will be able to:

(1) Differentiate social from behavioral factors as determinants of health
    a. Define determinants with specific attention to determinants of health
    b. Describe the various ecological levels or categories of determinants that influence the health of individuals and populations
    c. Differentiate from a wide range of determinants, three sets of presumed causal factors:
    (1) health behaviors as determinants of health
    (2) intrapersonal factors that influence these health behaviors; and
    (3) upstream or distal social factors that influence behavior and health
    d. Articulate the pathways through which distal social factors influence health by way of their influence on proximal factors and on behavior using a causal diagram
    e. Identify scientific evidence in the literature on the role of social and behavioral factors as determinants of health

(2) Apply theories and concepts from several ecological levels to public health
    a. Outline the value of the ecological model in public health practice
    b. Explain the role of theory in public health practice
    c. Define and compare constructs and principles of four major individual theories of health behavior
    d. Apply the constructs and principles of the four major individual theories of health behavior to public health practice
    e. Apply constructs and principles from several theories that are at the macro (beyond the individual) level to public health practice
    f. Differentiate theories from other conceptual frameworks

**KRDN Competencies**
- As required by ACEND

**Reading**
There will be readings each week, including some chapters in the textbook, pages from Theory at a Glance, and articles in the literature.

**Main Textbook (Not required)**
Glanz, K., Rimer, B. K., & Viswanath, K. (Eds.). (5th edition 2015). Health behavior: Theory, research and practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Online copies of readings will be available. If you have the means to, I encourage you to purchase the book.

Supplemental Reading. National Institutes of Health. Theory at a glance: A guide for health promotion practice [This booklet is a brief guide to theory]

Other articles in the peer-reviewed literature [available online and through Blackboard].

**IMPORTANT RESOURCES**
• **Students' Accessibility Services**
Student Accessibility Services (SAS) works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations, which are communicated to faculty in an accommodation letter. All students are strongly recommended to discuss with their faculty the

accommodation they plan to use in each course.  If you need accommodations, please inform me as soon as possible and get in touch with SAS at:
A170 Living/Learning Center;
802-656-7753
access@uvm.edu
www.uvm.edu/access

• **Rally Cat's Cupboard (Food Pantry)**
Rally Cat's Cupboard is a student-run food pantry at UVM that seeks to address food insecurity among the campus community. It is located on the first floor of the Davis Center. It is run by students and available to all members of the UVM community. Email: rallycatscupboard@uvm.edu. Website: https://www.uvm.edu/foodsystems/rallycatscupboard.

• **Mental Health Resources for Students**
In-person, virtual, individual, and group sessions are available for students through the Counseling and Psychiatry Services (CAPS) at UVM. Please call 802-656-3340 for an initial appointment. More details can be found at https://www.uvm.edu/health/CAPS.

• **UVM Writing Centers**
The UVM Writing Centers are here to support both undergraduate and graduate students looking for feedback and support on their writing projects. To book an appointment, please visit this link - https://www.uvm.edu/uwi/writingcenter

• **Research and Citation Help**
For help selecting research topics, finding information, citing sources, and more, ask a librarian. The UVM Libraries are eager to help. You may ask questions by phone, e-mail, chat, or text, or make an appointment for an individual consultation with a librarian.
Howe Library: https://library.uvm.edu/askhowe
Dana Medical Library: https://dana.uvm.edu/help/ask
Silver Special Collections Library: https://specialcollections.uvm.edu/help/ask

**Religious Holidays**
Religions may be practiced in many different ways and can impact participation in classes variably. Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. **Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors as early as possible and at least one week prior to their documented religious holiday the date(s) of the conflict or absence.** Faculty must permit students who miss work or exams for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work. The complete policy is here.

**Statement on Alcohol and Cannabis in the Academic Environment**
 As a faculty member, I want you to get the most you can out of this course. You play a crucial role in your education and in your readiness to learn and fully engage with the course material. It is important to note that alcohol and cannabis have no place in an academic environment. They can seriously impair your ability to learn and retain information not only in the moment you may be using but up to 48 hours or more afterward. In addition, alcohol and cannabis can:

- Cause issues with attention, memory, and concentration
- Negatively impact the quality of how information is processed and ultimately stored
- Affect sleep patterns, which interferes with long-term memory formation

I expect that you will do everything you can to optimize your learning and to fully participate in this course.

## ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS
**Attendance is required for this course. For a graduate class that meets once a week, you are allowed up to <u>two excused absences</u>.** For each anticipated absence, please email the professor and the teaching assistant at least 24 hours before the class starts. **Each additional absence without a valid reason and proof of documentation will result in a 5% drop in your overall grade.** If you miss any class, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered and to make up for any missed work.

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Students are expected to submit all work on the due dates. If for any reason the student cannot complete their assignment on time, it is his/her/their responsibility to inform the instructor in advance of the due dates. **For each late day of submission, 10% will be removed from the overall points associated with an assignment unless you inform me at least 2 weekdays in advance of the deadline with proof of documentation.**

## USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE APPS
*Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. <u>Therefore, AI-generated submissions from tools such as ChatGPT (or similar ones) are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and/or unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else's work, is plagiarism.</u>*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
Below are the required assignments for Social and Behavioral Nutrition. Each assignment will have detailed instructions, templates, and a grading rubric posted on Brightspace. Students must follow instructions, templates, and grading rubrics to complete their assignments.

| Assignments | Points | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Topic Page | 50 | 10% |
| Causal Diagram | 100 | 10% |
| Evidence Tables | 100 | 20% |
| Project Summary | 100 | 20% |
| Quizzes (Top scores for 5 quizzes taken) | 50 | 10% |
| Group Discussions | 50 | 10% |
| Class Participation (Student-led seminars) | 50 | 20% |
| **Total** | **500** | **100%** |

**GRADING SCALE**

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|---|---|
| > 98.0 % | A+ |
| 93.0-97.9 % | A |
| 90.0-92.9% | A- |
| 88.0-89.0% | B+ |
| 83.0-87.9% | B |
| 80.0-82.9% | B- |
| 78.0-79.9% | C+ |
| 73.0-77.9% | C |
| 70.0-72.9% | C- |
| 68.0-69.9% | D+ |
| 63.0-67.9% | D |
| 60.0-62.9% | D- |
| < 60.0% | F |

**ASSIGNMENTS**
*Please note that I will provide a template for each of the application assignments on Brightspace.*
**Application Assignments:** Since this course is preparing students to be public health professionals, they must learn to apply the concepts to situations they might encounter as public health professionals and dietitians. In the application assignments, students will apply the concepts and principles of the course to a health situation that they select. The students will be asked to assume the role of a public health professional in a community and setting of their choice. Then, they will select a health issue, health behavior, and priority group that needs public health programming. Through a series of application assignments, students will apply concepts of the course to this setting by outlining the logic of a proposed intervention to improve this health issue by encouraging members of a priority group to engage in specific health behaviors.
These assignments are set up to build on one another. The application assignments include:

**A topic page**: Since this course is preparing most of you for a job as a public health professional, I will ask you to apply the basic concepts of the course to the real world. I will ask you to apply the course competency to a public health scenario of your choice. That is, I will ask you to state a rationale for the decisions underlying a public health program using evidence and theory**.** All of you need to select the professional role, intervention setting, and topic defined with three elements (i.e., positive health state to be achieved; specific priority group; and specific health behavior). For this assignment, you will do the following:
1.  Identify your selected professional role, including your title and the name of the organization or agency where you are working.
2.  Select your setting, both the specific setting and the type of setting.
3.  Enter the setting in the second line of the title and enter your role in the third line of the title.
4.  Identify a positive health state or outcome to be achieved.
5.  Identify a specific priority group to be addressed.
6.  Identify a specific health behavior that if addressed will lead to a positive health state.
7.  Provide more context and explanation for terms that might be unfamiliar to someone who is reading your assignment (e.g., a less known location or priority group)

**A causal diagram**: A causal diagram is a visual representation that shows the logic or flow from presumed causes to an ultimate outcome. It is a graphic tool that illustrates the relationship among factors in a system and the pathways of influence. In a public health intervention design, a causal diagram, is a way to show how an intervention influences health by modifying underlying determinants and eventually improving health. It provides a picture that health professionals can use to explain and talk about their thinking. In this class, you will work on a simple causal diagram that specifies a specific priority group, health behavior to be improved, a health state to be improved, application of intrapersonal health behavior theories to your topic, and application of social determinants to your topic. You will also propose intervention activities to change at least two of the intrapersonal and social determinants for your topic.

**Evidence tables**: The purpose of this assignment is to create evidence tables that summarize findings relevant to public health decisions Rationale: Public health programs are more effective if they are based on empirical research and scientific evidence. Public health practice is improved when public health professionals review the literature around key questions, identify relevant to their setting/community, and create evidence tables to summarize the literature. For this course, you will need articles for four types of decisions:
1. Articles that support the selection of a health issue and that demonstrate that addressing that health status is of sufficient public health significance to justify the allocation of scarce public health resources
2. Articles that support the selection of a specific priority group and that justify a focus on this specific segment of the population

3. Articles that support the selection of a behavior and that demonstrate that modifying this behavior will improve health issue
4. Articles with findings on determinants of the selected behavior in the priority group, particularly proximal (intrapersonal) and distal (demographic, structural or environmental factors) that might be addressed or modified by an intervention or public health program [Optional evidence table for students to do]

**Project summary**: This one-page summary document will outline the logic of the proposed intervention for your assignment. This one-page summary will be a culmination of the other assignments that you will be working on throughout the semester (e.g., the evidence tables, causal diagram, etc). You will work on 5 different concise paragraphs that provide a rationale for the following: 1) positive health state; 2) specific priority group; 3) specific health behavior; 4) specific intrapersonal/belief determinants related to changing the behavior; and 5) social and distal determinants related to changing the behavior.

**Quizzes and Group Discussions**: In addition to these application assignments, you will be assigned online quizzes based on readings and online group discussions. The quizzes are open-book, and you will have three attempts for each quiz. The group discussions are meant for students to critically assess a specific topic that was covered in class and share their thoughts with their peers in a respectful manner. For each online group discussion, you will be asked to respond to one or more discussion questions and answer to at least two of your peers' responses. Please note that each answer to the group discussion should be comprehensive and thoughtful. For example, responses such as "I agree", "I can see what you mean", "I think so too" do not count as adequate.

# Sample Rubric (Project Summary)

| Criteria | Ratings | | | Pts |
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| Title of the project, Setting, and Name | **5 pts Full Marks** *1. First line begins with "rationale for" and identifies your proposed intervention topic* *2. You describe the setting for proposed intervention* *3. You include your name* | **1-4 pts Partially Addressed** *1. The proposed intervention topic is not properly identified* *2. The setting for the proposed intervention is not fully described* *3. You included your name* | **0 pts Zero** *1. No proposed intervention topic* *2. Lack of any setting for proposed intervention* *3. No mention of your name* | |
| Positive health state | **5 pts Full Marks** *The health issue to be improved is stated as a healthy state or status. Is it the healthy phrasing?* | **1-4 pts Partially Addressed** *The health issue to be improved is partially stated as a healthy state or status.* | **0 pts Zero** *No mention of the positive health state* | |
| Specific priority group | **5 pts Full Marks** *The priority group is the ultimate beneficiary, the segment of the population whose health will benefit from the proposed intervention.* | **1-4 pts Partially Addressed** *The priority group as the ultimate beneficiary of the proposed intervention is not partially identified.* | **0 pts Zero** *The ultimate beneficiary of the proposed intervention is not identified.* | |
| Specific health behavior | **5 pts Full Marks** *1. The behavior is an action that someone can perform rather than a status or state that results from that action.* *2. The behavior is the healthy version of the action, the action to be encouraged rather than the risky version to be reduced.* *3. The behavior is the action of the specific priority group, the ultimate beneficiary, the segment whose health will be improved.* | **1-4 pts Partially Addressed** *1. Incomplete description of the behavior as an action that someone can perform.* *2. The behavior is described as the risky version and not as the healthy version.* *3. The behavior is not an action that the ultimate beneficiary can do and is partially addressed.* | **0 pts Zero** *1. No description of the behavior as an action to be performed.* *2. No description of the healthy version of the behavior to be performed.* *3. The behavior is not an action that the ultimate beneficiary can perform.* | |
| Positive health state main point bolded | **4 pts Full Marks** *The main point sentence is bolded and identifies the main idea of the paragraph in a logical manner.* | **1-3 pts Partially Addressed** *The main point sentence is partially bolded/not bolded, and the main idea of the paragraph is partially presented in a logical manner.* | **0 pts Zero** *No bolded main point sentence and the main idea of the paragraph is not presented in a logical manner.* | |
| Specific priority group main point bolded | **4 pts Full Marks** | **1-3 pts Partially Addressed** | **0 pts Zero** | |

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| | *The main point sentence is bolded and identifies the main idea of the paragraph in a logical manner.* | *The main point sentence is partially bolded/not bolded, and the main idea of the paragraph is partially presented in a logical manner.* | *No bolded main point sentence and the main idea of the paragraph is not presented in a logical manner.* | |
| Specific health behavior main point bolded | **4 pts Full Marks** *The main point sentence is bolded and identifies the main idea of the paragraph in a logical manner.* | **1-3 pts Partially Addressed** *The main point sentence is partially bolded/not bolded, and the main idea of the paragraph is partially presented in a logical manner.* | **0 pts Zero** *No bolded main point sentence and the main idea of the paragraph is not presented in a logical manner.* | |
| Proximal determinants of behavior main point bolded | **4 pts Full Marks** *The main point sentence is bolded and identifies the main idea of the paragraph in a logical manner.* | **1-3 pts Partially Addressed** *The main point sentence is partially bolded/not bolded, and the main idea of the paragraph is partially presented in a logical manner.* | **0 pts Zero** *No bolded main point sentence and the main idea of the paragraph is not presented in a logical manner.* | |
| Distal determinants of behavior main point bolded | **4 pts Full Marks** *The main point sentence is bolded and identifies the main idea of the paragraph in a logical manner.* | **1-3 pts Partially Addressed** *The main point sentence is partially bolded/not bolded, and the main idea of the paragraph is partially presented in a logical manner.* | **0 pts Zero** *No bolded main point sentence and the main idea of the paragraph is not presented in a logical manner.* | |
| Positive health state succinctly and clearly explained with supporting statements | **10 pts Full Marks** *1. There are at least two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health state to be achieved.* *2. Sentences are supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed** *1. There are less than two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health state to be achieved.* *2. Sentences are partially supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **0 pts Zero** *1. There are no supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health state to be achieved.* *2. Sentences are not supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | |

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| Specific priority group succinctly and clearly explained with supporting statements | **10 pts Full Marks** *1. There are at least two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the priority group that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed** *1. There are less than two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the priority group that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are partially supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **0 pts Zero** *1. There are no supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the priority group that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are not supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | |
| Specific health behavior succinctly and clearly explained with supporting statements | **10 pts Full Marks** *1. There are at least two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health behavior that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed** *1. There are less than two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health behavior that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are partially supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **0 pts Zero** *1. There are no supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the positive health behavior that has been selected.* *2. Sentences are not supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | |
| Proximal determinants of behavior succinctly and clearly explained with supporting statements | **10 pts Full Marks** *1. There are at least two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the selection of proximal determinants influencing the behavior.* *2. The determinants chosen are based on health behavior theories.* *3. Sentences are supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed** *1. There are less than two to three supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the selection of proximal determinants influencing the behavior.* *2. The determinants chosen are partially based on health behavior theories.* *3. Sentences are partially supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | **0 pts Zero** *1. There are no supporting statements that clearly explain the reasoning for the selection of proximal determinants influencing the behavior.* *2. The determinants chosen are not based on health behavior theories.* *3. Sentences are not supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | |
| Distal determinants of behavior succinctly and clearly explained with supporting statements | **10pts Full Marks** *1. There are at least two to three supporting statements that clearly* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed** *1. There are less than two to three supporting statements that clearly* | **0 pts Zero** *1. There are no supporting statements that clearly* | |

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| | explain the reasoning for the selection of distal determinants influencing the behavior.<br>2. *The distal determinants are either based on a specific health behavior theory or are evidence-based (i.e., found by researchers that it is related to the behavior).*<br>3. *Sentences are supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | explain the reasoning for the selection of distal determinants influencing the behavior.<br>2. *The distal determinants are not fully based on a specific health behavior theory or are not evidence-based.*<br>3. *Sentences are partially supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | explain the reasoning for the selection of distal determinants influencing the behavior.<br>2. *The distal determinants are not based on a specific health behavior theory or are not evidence-based.*<br>3. *Sentences are not supported by citations from peer-reviewed articles.* | |
| References are in APA format<br>https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html | **10 pts Full Marks**<br>*All the references are cited in APA format accordingly.* | **1-9 pts Partially Addressed**<br>*Some references are not cited in APA format accordingly.* | **0 pts Zero**<br>*No reference is cited in APA format accordingly* | |