MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING

NUR 891
International Health: Beyond the Textbook

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course instructors
Connie Currier, MPH,
Denise Saint Arnault, RN, PhD,
Sheila Ward, RN, MPH

SPRING 2002
COURSE NUMBER: NUR 891

COURSE TITLE: INTERNATIONAL HEALTH: BEYOND THE TEXTBOOK

COURSE PLACEMENT: Elective course offered spring semester.

PREREQUISITES: None

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL: Reading, discussion, lecture, case studies, role plays, in-class writings, audiovisual materials and experiential participation.

CREDITS: Variable credit (2-3). The course will be offered on the world wide web for 2 credits. Students may opt to take the course for 3 credits, in which case they will arrange an individualized one-credit project with the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide a general understanding of factors/dynamics that affect the health of human populations and efforts to improve it. The course will provide an overview of international health and population status, and examine the role of national governments and international agencies in the policy and planning of health care resources and services. Students will recognize that individual involvement can make a difference.

The course is divided into four sections. Sections 1-3 represent the content for the 2-credit course, and section 4 applies to the third optional credit: 1) cultural context of health and illness; 2) socioeconomic indicators and determinants of health, 3) stakeholders and their priorities in planning and implementing interventions to improve health; and 4) applications of these principles in practical settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Integrate cultural concepts (explanatory models of health and illness, idioms of distress and health-related practices) into analysis of international health encounters.

2. Apply understanding of indicators, differentials and determinants of health to analysis of the health status of selected populations

3. Analyze and evaluate the priorities, roles and activities of key stakeholders in the international health arena, including national governments and major international agencies

4. Demonstrate values, attitudes and ethical principles consistent with cultural competence and participation in international health activities

5. Develop personal plan for involvement in international health promotion

Students who take the additional credit will:

1. Synthesize principles of culture, epidemiology and international conflict resolution in the development of a international health promotion project plan.
COURSE CONTENT:

(2 credits)
Part I. Introduction to cultural aspects of health
- Explanatory models of health and illness
- Idioms of distress
- Health-related practices

Part II. Indicators and determinants of health
- Indicators: population data, vital and health statistics, health services statistics, socioeconomic indicators
- Determinants: environment, biology/genetics, socioeconomic patterns and variations

Part III. Agencies and interventions.
- Agencies and other stakeholders
  - multilateral, bilateral, NGOs, national governments
  - roles and resources
  - policies, priorities and strategies
- Selected issues and interventions
  - Primary health care, nutrition, child survival, safe motherhood, immunization, AIDS

(Third credit)
Part IV. The Practice of international health
- Individualized project related to key topics in international health

STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

2 credit option: Analysis of cultural encounter (30%); quiz on determinants/indicators of health (30%); 5 page issue paper (30%); class participation (10%)

3 credit option: Additional project, format negotiable.

TEXTBOOKS/COURSE MATERIALS:


Course pack to be developed by instructors

COURSE INSTRUCTORS:

Connie Currier, MPH; Denise Saint Arnault, RN, PhD; and Sheila Ward, RN, MPH