RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE

HLTH 105 INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH

I. Basic Course Information

A. Course Number and Title: HLTH 105 INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH

B. New or Modified Course: New

C. Date of Proposal: Fall 2011

D. Sponsoring Department: Health Science Education

E. Semester Credit Hours: 3

F. Weekly Contact Hours: Lecture: 3

G. Prerequisites/Corequisite: None

H. Laboratory Fees: None

I. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair:
   Patrice Case, 908-526-1200, Ext 8915, pcase@raritanval.edu

II. Catalog Description

This course introduces the beginning student to the current issues in public health today from the local perspective to a global perspective. It includes consideration of community health problems, communicable disease control, epidemiological investigation, the public health response to bioterrorism, biomedical research, environmental assessment, analysis of individual and group behavior, public health nursing, common health indicators for measuring population and community health and policy developments. Course may be offered online or be web-assisted.
III. Statement of Course Need

A. Demonstrated demand

1. Introduction to Public Health is an essential “common denominator” course for many of the health care, allied health, nursing, public policy, emergency preparedness and public health professions.

   All nurses applying for a NJ School Nurse Certificate through the NJ Department of Education must have a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits including training in “Public health, including such areas as public health nursing, community health problems and communicable disease control.” Similarly, Introduction to Public Health or Community Health is frequently a required course for the BSN. Many pre-nursing students would benefit from such a course while waiting to be admitted to a nursing program. Additionally, many nursing students who fail or stop out of the nursing program could utilize this course as a means of broadening their knowledge related to public and community health and improving their GPA for re-entrance into a nursing program. This course would be offered both as a face-to-face and an online course.

   This course may also bolster offerings in the Fitness and Wellness, Health Sciences, Environmental Science and other such areas. It would also be an excellent stand-alone course for anyone seeking professional training in emergency response or bioterrorism.

2. Related courses within Community Colleges

   In general, ‘Contemporary Health’ courses focus on personal health and not public health. Introduction to Public Health focuses on the health of communities and not on individuals and would therefore be substantially different than such courses.

3. Related courses in other institutions

   Most schools using The Federal Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Taxonomy code 51 Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences will offer similar courses to Introduction to Public Health.

   Montclair State University HLTH 315 Public Health
   New Jersey City University HLTH 401 Introduction to Public Health
   Richard Stockton College of NJ PUBH 1100 Introduction to Community Health
   William Paterson University of NJ CMHL-120 Current Health Issues
   Kean University HEd 3635 Introduction to Public Health
   Rutgers University Public Health 832:232 Principals of Public Health
4. **Consistency with philosophy and mission of Community Colleges**

In fulfilling their mission, Community Colleges enhance educational and cultural programs with community, national and international partnerships, current technology, distance learning, and innovative teaching methods to reach an increasingly diverse population. This course facilitates student exposure to the multiple factors influencing population health, while simultaneously engaging students in the most current, innovative teaching methods. A primary emphasis of the course is the focus on the public health of diverse communities, extending from the local community to that of the global community. It will be utilizing the latest in education technology featuring an online delivery, which will make this critical course available beyond the boundaries of a classroom, and in fact, beyond county borders as well. It will employ cutting-edge distance learning techniques, such as virtual field trips, which will allow prominent public health officials to become guest lecturers in a “live chat.”

B. There is no lab component
C. This course is generally designed to transfer as a health science elective.

**IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum**

A. Free Elective
B. This course does not serve as a General Education requirement
C. This course does not meet a specific program requirement
D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, [www.njtransfer.org](http://www.njtransfer.org); for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

**V. Outline of Course Content**

**Tentative Topic Outline:**

A. What is Public Health: Core Functions and 10 Essential Services
B. History of Public Health
C. The Public Health System (incl. Governmental, Non-profits, health care, NGOs, etc.)
D. Government’s Influence on Public Health
E. Epidemiology: Principals and Methods
F. Statistics: Making Sense of Uncertainty
G. The Role of Data in Public Health
H. Biomedical Basis of Public Health
I. History of Infectious Disease
J. The Biomedical Basis of Chronic Diseases
K. Social and Behavioral Factors in Health
   1. Tobacco: Public Health Threat Number One
   2. Diet and Activity Patterns: Public Health Threat Number Two
L. Social and Underlying Determinants of Health
VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. Educational Goals

Students will:
1. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing. (GE-NJ 1)
2. Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems. (GE-NJ 2)
3. Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge. (GE-NJ 3)
4. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals. (GE-NJ 3)
5. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens. (GE-NJ 5, 9)
6. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance. (GE-NJ 7)
7. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples. (GE-NJ 8)
8. Students will understand ethical issues and situations. (GE-NJ)

B. Learning Outcomes

General:
Upon successful completion, learners will have achieved the specific expectations for these competencies that are listed below. Since there are neither clear nor easy answers to many of the public health problems and issues examined in this course, an important over-arching objective is to encourage learners to think
independently and critically about the issues, rather than to assume the role of passive recipients of factual information.

**Specific:**
This course is designed to enhance specific competencies. As a result, learners will be proficient in:

1. Describing public health as a system, including its unique and important features, to general audiences;
2. Applying measures of population health and illness, including risk factors, to community health improvement initiatives;
3. Identifying and distinguishing public health and prevention strategies from curative strategies for prevalent health problems;
4. Describing the role of law and government in promoting and protecting the health of the public and identifies specific functions and roles of governmental public health agencies in assuring population health;
5. Identifying and explaining how various organizations, positions and roles contribute to carrying out public health's core functions and essential services;
6. Identifying, measuring, and assessing the components of the public health infrastructure;
7. Applying principles derived from basic public health to planning, implementing, and evaluating public health interventions.

**VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning**

A. Lecture/discussion  
B. Computer-assisted instruction  
C. Student collaboration

**VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments**

A. Tests  
B. Research papers  
C. Shadowing project

**IX. Grade Determinants**

A. Tests  
B. Research papers  
C. Projects

**X. Texts and Materials**

A. Text  
B. PowerPoint presentations  
C. Handouts
D. Internet: self-grading quizzes, electronic flash cards

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

XI. Resources:
   A. RVCC Library

XII. Honors Options: None