

PHE 500 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

PRINCIPLE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

NOTE: 12 Pages

Overview

The final project for this course is the creation of a 3-12 page public health issues analysis paper.

The field of public health is constantly faced with serious issues affecting the health of populations, from chronic diseases, such as diabetes and obesity, to communicable diseases, such as influenza and HIV. When working in the public health field, it is crucial for practitioners to be able to critically analyze an issue and understand the complex factors that drive health behaviors. Basic knowledge of public health principles assists in analyzing an issue and informs effective solutions.

For your final project, you will select a public health issue for analysis. The topic must be approved by the instructor. This analysis will give you the opportunity to explore a public health issue in depth and analyze various components, including a program or intervention that has been designed in order to improve or eradicate the health issue. Information should come from credible sources; in today's information-rich age, it can be sometimes be difficult to improve or critically needed in modern public health practice and one that you will use throughout your future MSPH program courses.

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Two, Four, and Seven. The final submission will be due in Module Nine.**

This assessment addresses your mastery with regard to the following course outcomes:

- Evaluate public health for its historical and current significance in protecting and promoting individual, community, and population health
- Analyze the role of the determinants of health in both the onset of and solution to public health problems
- Assess the impact of social and behavioral factors on individual and population health behaviors for informing design of effective public health programs
- Analyze the contributions of public health agencies, positions, and roles in effectively delivering public health's core functions and essential services
- Assess the extent to which public health programs utilize fundamental public health principles and theories in promoting individual and population health
- Assess the impact of local, national, or international programs or interventions on public health issues

Prompt

Your public health issue analysis paper will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of your selected public health issue, including why it has become a public health issue and its significance in the public health landscape. This project will also provide you the opportunity to hone your research skills for future use throughout the program.

Specifically, your analysis paper must address the following **critical elements**:

I. Introduction

- a. Identify and summarize your selected public health issue.
- b. Discuss your issue's **significance** to public health. In other words, is it significant because it affects a large percentage of the population, does it affect a largely underserved/disadvantaged population, etc.? Be sure to provide examples and evidence to support your discussion.
- c. Discuss how your selected issue has **evolved** to its current state. How long has the issue been a problem? How has the issue either increased or decreased in severity over time? Remember that this is the introduction, so this portion does not need to be lengthy.

II. Public Health Issue Analysis

- a. Provide a **historical** public health perspective about your issue, expanding on the introduction. Give details on the evolution of your selected issue. For example, if the selected issue is heart disease, you would discuss the rise in heart disease over time and what historical events or changes have contributed to the rise in prevalence. These events/changes could include how the change from an agricultural/manual labor society to a more sedentary work life has subsequently caused an overall decrease in physical activity; how transportation policies have affected changes throughout history that have affected your chosen public health issue. Be sure to substantiate your claims with examples and evidence.
- b. Identify a **population** that is at risk for this public health issue. Be sure to substantiate your claims with examples and evidence. Consider the determinants of health as discussed in the course. You should utilize peer-reviewed evidence to support your claims.
- c. Discuss the **social and behavioral** factors that contribute to this public health issue. What impact do these factors have on the issue you have selected? Be sure to justify your reasoning.
- d. Determine which public health theories you feel might be helpful in addressing your selected issue. Be sure to substantiate your claims with examples and evidence.
- e. What **contributions** have been made by public health agencies, positions, or roles with regard to your selected public health issue? In other words, what role have public agencies or specific positions or employees within the agencies played with regard to delivering public health services for this issue?

III. Program or Intervention Analysis

- a. Identify a local, national, or international program or intervention that addresses your issue and assess the **impact** of the program or intervention on the issue at that level.
- b. What contributions have been made by public health **agencies**, positions, or roles with regard to this program or intervention, and how did their contributions impact outcomes?
- c. Evaluate the **success** of the selected program or intervention (whether it was successful or not). Be sure to justify your evaluation.
- d. What social and behavioral **factors** did this program or intervention address, and did addressing these factors contribute to the success of the program or intervention? Why or why not?
- e. What **determinants of health** did this program or intervention address, and did addressing these issues contribute to the success of the program or intervention? Why or why not?
- f. Analyze the program or intervention's use of public health **principles and theories** to promote behavior change.
- g. Discuss the **challenges** that this program or intervention may have faced. If you feel that it has not faced any challenges, what do you feel are some potential challenges that it could have faced? Be sure to justify your reasoning.

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- h. Explain how you feel this program or intervention could have been **improved** by applying basic public health principles or theories discussed in the course. Be sure to support your claims.

IV. **Future Outlook**

- a. Analyze the **future outlook** of your public health issue at the local, national, or international level. Is the issue expected to improve? Why or why not?
- b. What needs to be done in order to continue to promote population health with regard to your selected issue?
 - i. Consider the **social and behavioral factors** and what needs to be changed in order to promote improvement of the public health issue.
 - ii. Consider the **determinants** of health and what needs to be changed in order to promote improvement of the public health issue.

V. **Conclusion**

- a. Briefly **summarize** your public health issue as well as the selected program or intervention.
 - b. Discuss the impact of this issue on your future role as a public health **practitioner**.
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