

University of Florida
College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus
PHC 6009: Biology and Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS (3 credits)
Semester: Summer 2024
Delivery Format: Online
e-Learning in Canvas

Instructor Names:

Robert Cook, MD, MPH

Room Number: CTRB 4232

Phone Number: 352-273-5869

Email Address: cookrl@ufl.edu

Office Hours: I'm happy to have appointments by phone or zoom. Please contact Vicki Blaum at vblaum@ufl.edu to schedule an appointment. You can also email me with specific questions.

Rebecca Fisk-Hoffman, MPH

Email Address: rfisk@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Rebecca will schedule at least one hour a week with open Zoom discussion.

Preferred Course Communications: Direct email or scheduled appointment for videoconference. If using email, please copy both instructors. Do not message us through Canvas. If you do not receive a response email within 2 days during the week (or by the end of the day on Monday for emails sent during the weekend), please send a follow-up message. Your questions and comments are important to us, but sometimes things get lost in the inbox.

PREREQUISITES

PHC 6001 – Principles of Epidemiology, or permission of the instructor

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

This is a graduate-level class that is intended to provide knowledge, expertise, and skills on issues related to HIV/AIDS, including interpretation of data and research study design.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain the biological process by which HIV causes infection and AIDS, and how current HIV treatment and prevention strategies relate to these biological processes.
- Understand how social and cultural issues, including laws and ethics, affect the history of HIV and influence current strategies to stop HIV transmission and End the HIV Epidemic.
- Find and interpret epidemiologic data related to HIV/AIDS within different geographical areas or subsets of the population.
- Design and interpret charts and graphs and figures to obtain or communicate information related to HIV biology and epidemiology.
- Identify and describe current behavioral and biological strategies used for HIV prevention, and how these relate to national plans to End the HIV Epidemic.

- Develop skills in the developing and presenting an online presentation and designing a research study
- Develop skills in effectively communicating a research plan as a formal written document

Relation to Program Outcomes

This course provides primary instruction or reinforcement of the following competencies:

- Apply epidemiological methods to settings and situations in public health practice
- Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
- Communicate audience-appropriate public health content (i.e., non-academic, non-peer audience), both in writing and through oral presentation
- Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health
- Integrate systems thinking theory to incorporate multiple stakeholders at state and local levels to address a public health issue
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and appropriate communication when engaged in public health practice and research
- Apply criteria for identification, prevention and control of infectious agents
- Integrate social and behavioral science theories and concepts in the development of interventions/solutions to public health problems

How to Succeed in This Course

The summer session is shorter than other semesters but the course content is not shorter so the pace of this course will be fast. It's critical that you keep up with the schedule –each week expect about 2-3 hours of formal content, and 2-3 hours of homework per week (at minimum). This course is not self-paced so be sure to mark the assignment due dates, quiz dates, and book discussion date in your calendar and participate in them as scheduled. We will try to open course modules 1-2 weeks in advance so you can work ahead if desired. You are expected to have reliable internet access for this course. If you plan to go out of town then you'll need to plan ahead to ensure that your assignments are submitted on-time. The final paper in this course is a critical element, so start early, schedule a discussion with the instructor, and follow the guidelines. Please contact us in advance before missing any specific assignments.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The course assignments can be grouped into four categories. Grades will be based on your total points. There are 600 total points. 15 points is 2.5% of your grade, 50 points is 8.33% of your grade.

Assignments

Assignment Category	Total points and % of final grade
Quizzes	150 points (25%)

Homework and Discussions	250 points (41.7%)
Book Discussion	50 points (8.3%)
Final Project	150 points (25%)
Total	600 points (100%)

Quizzes

There will be three **online quizzes** during the semester to assess overall understanding of the material presented during lectures. The quizzes will be open book/open note, with a mixed format of short answer, long answer, and multiple choice. Please note that the quizzes will be timed. Once you start the quiz, you will be limited to 45 minutes. Each quiz is worth 8.33% of the course grade. You are supposed to do the quiz independently, and without help or input from others. Quiz questions will, for the most part, be based on the specific learning objectives for each class.

Course Homework and Discussions

There will be homework assignments nearly every week during the semester, most of which are worth 15 points (2.5% of the course grade). Homework assignments will be listed within each of the course modules on the Canvas course website. Homework could include writing a reflection on a topic, participating in course discussions, peer-review of other's work, finding and interpreting information from the internet, etc.

Book Discussion

During the first week of this course, you will vote on a book to read for the book discussion during week 10. You will be asked to write and answer three book discussion questions that we will use during our group discussion. You will participate in a live book discussion during the week of July 15 to July 21. The book discussion questions are worth 25 points of your grade and your participation in and contribution toward the book discussion is worth 25 points (total book discussion is 8.33% of grade).

Final Project

Students will design an original epidemiologic study related to HIV/AIDS prevention, transmission, treatment, behavior, policy, or other topics as approved by the instructor. This project is intended to be somewhat like a grant application in which you identify a problem (or gap in our knowledge) and propose a research study to answer the question. Because we need a final, polished paper completed within three months, there will be several benchmarks and deadlines to meet that will gain you points for homework or the final paper. These will include literature searching, drafting of research questions, paper outlines, and draft of final paper; peer-review of others' drafts, and the final paper. The Final Paper (100 points) will be the write-up of the study proposal, including one to two research questions, a brief literature review relevant to the proposed study, and a description of the proposed study. The write-up should be 8 to 10 pages, double-spaced, and is due on **July 31!** More details will be provided in the Canvas course site and in brief video clips provided by the instructor. You are strongly encouraged to schedule times to speak with the instructors about your project before you finalize your first draft of the overall project.

The specific weekly topics for this course, and weekly graded assignments are summarized in the following Table. There could be some minor shifts in schedules, but this is mostly correct.

Week	Dates	Topic(s)	Assignments	Due Date
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1	5/13 – 5/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • History of HIV in the U.S. • HIV Research Priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Quiz • Introductions • Homework 	5/20
2	5/20 – 5/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying research questions • Biology of HIV and the Immune System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Design Paper • Homework 	5/28
3	5/28 – 6/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV Care Continuum: Care Engagement and Treatment • Antiretroviral Therapies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of Research Paper Question • Homework 	6/3
4	6/3 – 6/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Lecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 1 • Peer Evaluation of Research Paper Question Draft 	6/10
5	6/10 – 6/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS Surveillance • Surveillance systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Research Paper Question • Homework 	6/17
6	6/17 – 6/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomedical Prevention Strategies • Behavioral Prevention Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of Research Paper and Design • Homework 	7/1
7	6/24– 6/30	Summer Break		
8	7/1 – 7/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV Testing • Late diagnosis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework 	7/8
9	7/8 – 7/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Lecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 2 • Rough Draft of Paper • Book Discussion Writing Assignment 	7/15
10	7/15 – 7/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Discussion • HIV Comorbidities and Co-Infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Evaluation of Rough Drafts • Homework • Book Discussion 	7/22 TBA
11	7/22 – 7/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida's Strategic Approach to the HIV Epidemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework 	7/29
12	7/29 – 8/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV and Stigma • Worldwide Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Paper • Homework 	7/31 8/5
13	8/5 – 8/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to HIV Cure and Vaccination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 3 • Homework 	8/9

Course Materials and Technology

Text: There will be a poll during the first week to choose a book to discuss during Week 10. In addition to reading the book, you will be asked to submit potential discussion questions and to participate in an online discussion about the book.

Additional Readings: Required course readings will be drawn from multiple open-access sources and posted on the course website. To participate in the online book discussion, you should be able to participate in Zoom discussions, which require a high-speed internet connection and are optimal if you have headphones with a microphone and a high-speed internet connection.

Technical Support

For all technical support for this class, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:

Phone Number: (352) 392-HELP (4357) Option 2

Email: helpdesk@ufl.edu

Webpage with Chat: [UF Computing Help Desk](#)

Grading: Each assignment contributes somewhat to the overall course grade. The final paper is a large chunk of the grade, so it is important to not fall behind on that assignment. If you miss an assignment due date, you will be assigned a zero. Please discuss with the instructor ASAP about possible make-up options, which can be considered in some circumstances but not always.

Although an assignment worth 2.5% of your grade does not seem like much, if you miss more than 3-4 of these it will be nearly impossible to obtain an A.

Point system used (i.e., how do course points translate into letter grades).

Points earned	93%-100%	90%-92%	87%-89%	83%-86%	80%-82%	77%-79%	73%-76%	70%-72%	67%-69%	63%-66%	60%-62%	<60%
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with an A. In addition, the Bachelor of Health Science Program does not use C-grades.

Letter grade to grade point conversions are fixed by UF and cannot be changed.

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	W F	I	N G	S- U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

For greater detail on the meaning of letter grades and university policies related to them, see the [Grading and Grade Policies](#) posted by the Registrar's Office.

Policy Related to Make up Exams or Other Work

Make-up exams or make-ups of assignments will only be given in the event of illness that is documented by a physician.

Please note: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail me promptly (within one hour) after the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Policy Related to Technical Issues

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **must** be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk created when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **must** e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Policy Related to Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to access online lectures before the assignment due date, to prepare for and participate in at least one online discussions in a professional manner, and to complete quizzes and assignments by the due date posted. There are several opportunities for peer discussion and feedback, and usually these are timed to a specific week or assignment. Please be respectful and timely with your responses.

All faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For greater detail on excused absences, see the [Attendance Policies](#) posted by the Registrar's Office.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see [Student Conduct and Honor Codes](#) information at the Dean of Students Office website or the [Academic Expectations](#) information at the Graduate School website for additional details.

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online [Faculty Course Evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. [Summary Results](#) of these assessments are available to students.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you must register with the [Dean of Students Office Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) within the first week of class. The DRC will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please make sure you provide this letter to me by the end of the second week of the course. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

[The Counseling and Wellness Center](#) (352-392-1575) offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Online and in person assistance is available.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the [You Matter We Care](#) website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.

The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the [Student Health Care Center](#) website.

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from the [Alachua County Crisis Center](#) at (352) 264-6789.

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Public health and health professions are based on belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace the University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads:

“The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political

opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act."

If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the [Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs](#) website.