Overview of the Course:
During this course, students will explore social, psychological, and cultural determinants of health behavior and consider their meaning for public health professionals in domestic and international community settings. The course addresses conditions and phenomena that affect people’s understanding, acceptance, and use of health information and, therefore, the design, implementation, and evaluation of community health interventions. The purpose of this overview course is to provide an overview of the theories and principles that can be used to explain how social factors and human behaviors influence health. The course will focus on both social and behavioral determinants of health and will involve active engagement with the environment as we explore causes of and pathways to health and disease.

Social determinants of health (SDH) are social conditions, factors and systems that place people from different socio-demographic and socioeconomic groups (social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and place of birth) at differential risk of poor health and premature mortality. Behavioral determinants of health are human behaviors that influence risk of acquiring disease and experiencing poor health.

Course Learning Objectives:
This course will:
1. Familiarize students with views on key concepts that form a basis for literacy in the social and behavioral aspects of public health: culture, race/ethnicity, gender, poverty disparities, factors related to behavior change, community, and organizational climate.
2. Recognize environmental factors including biological, physical and chemical factors that affect the health of a community.
3. Describe the key components of “core” theories and models of behavior and behavior change for individuals, groups, and communities
4. Apply constructs of behavioral, social and cultural theories related to individual and population health and health disparities over the life course.
5. Help develop empathy for and a collaborative stance toward populations with whom one will work in the field of public health.
6. Apply policy approaches regarding the structure, process and outcomes of health services including the organization, outcomes and accessibility of care.
7. Understand practices associated with the delivery, quality, and costs of health care for individuals and populations.

Course Format and Materials:
This course draws upon two types of reading material: (1) a textbook that focuses on summarizing social determinants of health and (2) scientific articles that are reviews, methods papers and examples of different kinds of research. It is essential that you come to class having completed the readings, ready to discuss them.

Classes will include lectures, discussions, and in-class exercises.
Classroom Etiquette

- It is expected that everyone will attend class and show up on time.
- Mobile device (e.g., smart phones, pagers, etc.) ringers will be turned off or placed on vibrate prior to class.
- It is expected that everyone will check their NYU email accounts and NYU Classes regularly for course updates, new materials and announcements.
- Laptops are allowed in class, as long as their use does not distract other students.

Required Readings

- Journal and other readings listed in this syllabus.

This class requires substantial reading. You may need to read some articles several times, outline the main points, and even look up additional references and background materials. Readings marked “optional” are not required but may be necessary to understand some assigned readings.

For help using NYU Classes click on the tutorial link in the upper right hand corner of NYU classes. Lecture slides will be posted on NYU Classes after the class session. Any readings not readily available through BobCat will also be posted.

Evaluation:

**Participation (15% of final grade)**
Criteria for evaluation of participation include: evidence that the student read and applied readings to what she says in class; evidence of critical thinking about the topic being discussed; and evidence of any new ideas or perspectives that the student contributes to oral and written discussions. Attendance is obviously necessary for participation.

**Fishbone diagram (10% of final grade)**
Each student will develop a fishbone diagram for the journal article she intends summarize. The fishbone diagram will be discussed in class. In brief, it is a method for thinking through the SDH of a particular health condition.

**Summary of a journal article (15% of final grade)**
Each student will provide a 3 to 5 page written summary of an original research journal article that we will be reading and discussing in class. Each paper should describe the purpose of the research, how it was conducted; where and on whom it was conducted, the methods used, the conclusions made and the limitations of the research. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce the student to the scholarly work published in the field of public health and to the art of consuming and critiquing original research reports. The piece must be in your own words. Be sure to read the “Guide to Writing Journal Article Summaries” to assist you in this assignment; it will be discussed in class.
You may not work in groups to complete the journal article summary. The purpose of this assignment is to learn how to read, comprehend and synthesize empirical examinations of the causes of health disparities. You must acquire this skill in order to complete the final paper and succeed in the program more generally.

**Group project (30% of final grade)**
For this assignment, students will work in groups of 5-7 = to conduct an exercise designed to assess the physical and social context=of NYC neighborhoods and their potential influences on health. Each group will be randomly assigned a health outcome and UHF neighborhood. Groups will then travel to their assigned neighborhood and observe the physical and social environment of each neighborhood using an assessment form to take field notes =. Groups will then complete a fishbone diagram for your assigned health outcome in the context of your focal neighborhood. The exercise, assessment form, and fishbone diagram process will be explained in more detail during class.; All work related to this assignment will be presented in class, beginning in week 10.

**Final paper: Literature Review (30% of final grade)**
The assignment is to review and synthesize the research literature on a particular social determinant of a particular health condition. You may select any health problem or condition that interests you as long as you focus on any of the social/societal determinants of that problem or condition. This means you need to choose one social determinant and one
health outcome. Your research question must be approved by the instructor by October 30, 2013. The final paper should be no less than 12 and no more than 15 pages of text, typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point type, with one-inch margins all around.

The final paper is due on Wednesday, December 10th by 5:00 PM EST. It will be the student’s responsibility to make sure the assignment is on time. Please leave a hard copy of your final paper in my mailbox at 411 Lafayette Street, 5th floor.

**Grading:**

Class Participation 15%
Fishbone diagram 10%
Journal article summary 15%
Group presentation 30%
Final paper 30%

A “C” grade demonstrates substantial reading; a “B” grade demonstrates substantial reading and synthesis; and an “A” grade demonstrates extensive reading and exceptionally thoughtful synthesis and analysis.

**Grading scale (out of 100 possible points)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>NYU’s grading scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 – 100 (no A+)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67 – 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 66</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
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**Course Policies**

Please be sure to read the NYU Steinhardt *Statement of Academic Integrity* and the University *Policy on Religious Holidays*. They both are available on NYU Classes for your convenience.

Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 240 Greene Street.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Class overview: Understanding social and behavioral determinants of health; summarizing papers for a review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Socioeconomic status and the fishbone diagram</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Library session</td>
<td>Library session in Bobst room 619</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Meet in Bobst room 619</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Gender, sex, and sexual orientation</td>
<td>Fishbone diagram for journal article</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Culture, acculturation, and immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Urbanicity, urbanization and the urban environment</td>
<td>Journal article summary due</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>Health Behavior Theories: Individual health behavior models</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Health Behavior Theories: Interpersonal level theories, social networks, social norms and social influence processes</td>
<td>Final paper topic approval deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Health Behavior Theories: Community level theories and ecological frameworks</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Politics and health</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Life course perspectives and aging</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 26</td>
<td>National and international agendas for social determinants</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Current issues in social and behavioral determinants of health (TBD)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>No class (Monday schedule)</td>
<td>Final paper due</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
READINGS

**Week 1: Sept 3**

*Required*
- Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 1: Introduction

*Optional*

**Week 2: Sept 10**

*Required*
- Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 10: Poverty, social exclusion and minorities

*Optional*

**Week 3: Sept 17**

No class; attend library session

**Week 4: September 24**

*Required*
- Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 12: The social determination of ethnic/racial inequalities in health

*Optional*


Week 5: Oct 1

Required

• Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 15: Social determinants, sexual behavior, and sexual health


• Herrick AL, Stall R, Chmiel JS, Guadamuz TE, Penniman T, Shoptaw S, Ostrow D, Plankey MW. It gets better: resolution of internalized homophobia over time and associations with positive health outcomes among MSM. AIDS Behav. 2013 May;17(4):1423-30.

Optional


Week 6: Oct 8

Required


Optional


Week 7: Oct 15

Required
- Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 14: Neighborhoods, housing and health

Optional
- Geronimus, A. To mitigate, resist or undo: addressing structural influences on the health of urban populations. AJPH June 2000 90(6): 867-72.

Week 8: Oct 22

Required

Optional
Week 9: Oct 29

Required
- Marmot & Wilkinson - Chapter 8: Social support and social cohesion

Optional

Week 10: Nov 5

Required

Week 11: Nov 12

Required

Optional

**Week 12: Nov 17**

*Required*
- Marmot & Wilkinson: Chapter 3: Early life
- Chapter 4: The lifecourse, the social gradient, and health
- Chapter 13: Social determinants of health in older age

*Optional*

**Week 13: Nov 26**

*Required*

*Optional*

**Week 14: Dec 3**

TBD