PBHL 6355 Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) Capstone Course

Term: *Fall 2025*

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Office Hours: Office Hours are fulfilled by mandatory 1-on-1 sessions, and by scheduling additional 1-on-1 sessions. You may also schedule a meeting at any other date/time in person face-to-face, or via Zoom.

Course Dates: August 25, 2025 – December 12, 2025

Course Times: Asynchronous with 3 individually scheduled 1-on-1 meetings with faculty

Classroom: CANVAS/Zoom

Course Overview

The ILE is the culminating experience for MPH students and is a requirement for graduation in the MPH program. The capstone is typically completed in the last term of the program.

The ILE Capstone course is an opportunity for students to synthesize, integrate, and apply the knowledge, skills, and competencies developed throughout the MPH degree program. The final deliverable will be an evidence-based assessment of population health challenges for a three-county region of varying rurality, evidence-based strategies addressing one or more challenges, and a final recommendation for improving population health. The final deliverable includes a professional presentation appropriate for a town-hall gathering of county commissioners and members of the community, and a final detailed report to the county commissioners and local population/public health entities.

Prerequisite: All core MPH courses or permission of the instructor of record and program director. **Co-requisite** (n/a).

Student Learning Outcomes. After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Critically analyze population health challenges and opportunities for a defined population of varying rurality with respect to 3 types of population health evidence:
   a. Type 1 Evidence – that which suggests "something needs to be done"
   b. Type 2 Evidence – that which suggests "these are strategies that might work"
   c. Type 3 Evidence – that which suggests "this would probably work best in this population"

2. Communicate evidence-based findings and recommendation via:
   a. A formal written report prepared for legislative officials and population/public health professionals, and
   b. An oral presentation (for example, a Townhall meeting) to laypersons

3. Self-assess your comprehension of and ability to perform the following MPH competencies:
   a. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy, or practice.
   b. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design, implementation, or critique of public health policies or programs.
   c. Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention.
   d. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.
   e. Communicate audience-appropriate (i.e., non-academic, non-peer audience) public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.
   f. Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health.
   g. Analyze health outcomes across varying levels of rurality.
   h. Develop intervention recommendations based on the health profile of a rural community.

Required Textbooks and Readings

- **Primary Textbook:** none

- **Assigned Readings:** Throughout the semester, you will encounter insightful readings assigned and posted on Canvas, such as:

- Brownson, Ross C., Jonathan E. Fielding, and Christopher M. Maylahn. "Evidence-based public health: a fundamental concept for public health practice." *Annual review of public health* 30.1 (2009): 175-201.

- Stiefel, Matthew C., Tasha Straszewski, Jennifer C. Taylor, Christina Huang, Jessica An, Folasade J. Wilson-Anumudu, and Allen Cheadle. "Using the county health rankings framework to create national percentile scores for health outcomes and health factors." *The Permanente Journal* 25 (2020): 20-012.

- Others as provided via CANVAS Modules.

Recommended Resources (Optional):

- County Health Rankings & Roadmaps website: https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/
- RWJF Initiative: https://www.rwjf.org/en/grants/grantee-stories/programs/county-health-ranking-roadmap.html
- Other resources may be suggested throughout the semester.

Course Structure

The course is administered asynchronously online via the CANVAS platform. A timeline is provided that allows you to develop your final deliverable incrementally. In order to ensure you "remain on-time," you will schedule 1-on-1 meetings with your instructor (online, or in-person if you wish) at a date/time amenable to both, within designate weeks of the semester (see course calendar). There are weeks that have been designated as time to focus on your final (and interim) deliverables (see course calendar).

Tips for Success in this Course

1. **Participate.** I invite you to engage deeply, ask me questions, and talk about the course content with your classmates. You can learn a great deal from discussing ideas and perspectives with your peers and professor. Participation can also help you articulate your thoughts and develop critical thinking skills.
2. **Manage your time.** I get it—students usually juggle a lot, and I know you've got commitments beyond this class. Still, doing your best often means carving out enough dedicated time for coursework. Try scheduling specific blocks of time and ensure you have enough room to finish assignments, allowing extra space for any tech issues that might pop up.
3. **Login regularly.** I recommend that you log in to Canvas several times a week to view announcements, discussion posts and replies to your posts.
4. **Do not fall behind.** This class moves at a quick pace and each week builds on the previous class content. If you feel you are starting to fall behind, check in with the instructor as soon as possible so we can troubleshoot together. It will be hard to keep up with the course content if you fall behind in the pre-work or post-work.
5. **Use Canvas notification settings.** Pro tip! Canvas can ensure you receive timely notifications in your email or via text. Be sure to enable notifications to be sent instantly or daily. ([Canvas Notification Guide](#))
6. **Ask for help if needed.** If you are struggling with a course concept, reach out to me and your classmates for support.

Graded Course Requirements Information

Assignments

Assignment	Week Assigned	Date Due*	Point Value
1. Pick 3 counties	1	Aug 29	2
2. Competency Pre Self-Assessment			2
3. Acknowledge receipt of 3-county region	2	Sep 5	1
4. Schedule 1st 1-on-1 meeting (for Week 5)	3	Sep 14	1
5. "Top 10 Challenges" written report draft		Sep 19	10
6. "Top 10 Challenges" PowerPoint slides draft			5
7. First 1-on-1 meeting		Sep 22-26	3
8. Schedule 2nd 1-on-1 meeting (for Week 9)	7	Oct 10	1
9. "Top 3 Strategies" written report draft		Oct 17	10
10. "Top 3 Strategies" PowerPoint slides draft			5
11. Second 1-on-1 meeting	9	Oct 20-24	3
12. Schedule 3rd 1-on-1 meeting (for Week 12)	10	Oct 31	1
13. "Final Recommendation" written report draft		Nov 7	10
14. "Final Recommendation" PowerPoint Slides draft			5
15. Third 1-on-1 meeting	12	Nov 10-14	3
16. ILE Presentation	15	Dec 1-5	10
17. ILE Final report, written	16	Dec 8	20
18. ILE Final PowerPoint slides			5
19. Competency Self-Assessment			3
*All assignments due by midnight on date indicated (except 1-on-1 meetings)			

Course Grade: This is a Credit/No Credit course; you must receive "Credit" to graduate from the MPH Program. An "incomplete" is not permitted. Should you receive "No Credit", you will have to repeat the course. A "Credit" grade is earned by achieving an overall point value of 80 out of 100 (as detailed in the assignment list above). A summary of the type of assignments is provided below:

Assignment Group	Assignment Group Percent Value
1-on-1 Meetings	12%
3-County Region	3%
Self-Assessments	5%
Type 1 Evidence drafts	15%
Type 2 Evidence drafts	15%
Type 3 Evidence drafts	15%
ILE Final Project	35%
	100%

Late Work and Make-Up Exams:

Late work is automatically reduced by 50% of stated percent value (see above list of individual items) unless reason for lateness is for a verifiable emergency situation (what constitutes an emergency and what suffices as verifiable determined by instructor on a case-by-case basis).

Attendance Policy:

Attendance at all 1-on-1 sessions and Presentation are mandatory. Failure to schedule/attend any 1-on-1 session results in a 2% penalty on overall course grade, for each session missed. Failure to attend presentation will result in a 5% penalty of course grade (unless due to verifiable emergency); if a missed presentation is not "made up", the remainder of the presentation value (15%) will be penalized to overall course grade.

University Policies & Student Resources:

University policies and student resources are available on the University website and in Canvas under "Syllabus". (You may copy or print the following information to include in your syllabus or use the links provided below.)

- University Policy
- Student Resources

Calendar of Topics, Readings, and Due Dates
Note: Course week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday; all due dates mean "by midnight"

Module / Week # Dates	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignment(s)	Due Date
1 25-31 Aug	• Course Overview • RWJF Healthy County Roadmap • ILE Competencies • Pick 3 county	• Syllabus • Explore RWJF	1. Pick 3 counties 2. Competency Pre Self-Assessment	**Aug 29**
2 1-7 Sep	• What is EIPH? • Type 1 Evidence • Type 2 Evidence • Type 3 Evidence • 3-county region	Brownson 2009 EBPH Concept	3. Acknowledge receipt of 3-county region	**Sep 5**
3 8-14 Sep	• Type 1 Evidence • What is a problem? • What is a challenge? • Compared to what?	Stiefel 2020 RWJF County Health Rankings	4. Schedule 1st 1-on-1 meeting for Week 5 (Sep 22-26)	**Sep 14**
			5. Type 1 Evidence "Top 10 Challenges" written draft 6. "Top 10 Challenges" PowerPoint draft	**Sep 19**
4 15-21 Sep	**Independent work week**			
5 22-28 Sep	**First 1-on-1 meeting**		7. Meet with Instructor	**Sep 22-26**
6 29 Sep – 5 Oct	**Independent work week**			

Module / Week # Dates	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignment(s)	Due Date
7 **6–12 Oct**	• Type 2 Evidence • Quality/Level of Evidence • Features appeal to you		8. Schedule 2nd 1-on-1 meeting for Week 9 (Oct 20-24)	**Oct 10**
			9. Type 2 Evidence "Top 3 Strategies" written draft 10. "Top 3 Strategies" PowerPoint draft	**Oct 17**
8 **13–19 Oct**	**Independent work week**			
9 **20 Oct – 26 Oct**	**Second 1-on-1 meeting**		11. Meet with Instructor	**Oct 20-24**
10 **27 Oct – 2 Nov**	• Type 3 Evidence • What makes a good fit?		12. Schedule 3rd 1-on-1 meeting for Week 12 (Nov 10-14)	**Oct 31**
			13. Type 3 Evidence "Recommended Strategy(ies)" written draft 14. Type 3 Evidence PowerPoint draft	**Nov 7**
11 **3–9 Nov**	**Independent work week**			
12 **10–16 Nov**	**Third 1-on-1 meeting**		15. Meet with Instructor	**Nov 10-14**
13 **17–23 Nov**	**Independent work week**			
14 **24–30 Nov**	**24-28 Thanksgiving Holidays**			
15 **1–7 Dec**	**Student Presentations**		16. ILE Presentation	**Dec 1-5**
16 **8–12 Dec**	• ILE Final Project Due submission • Competency Self-Assessment		17. ILE Final Project written report 18. ILE Final Project Final Power Point slide set 19. Competency Self-Assessment	**Dec 8**

Note: While this course calendar is "final," it may be subject to changes as necessary as we move through the semester. Monitor your CANVAS notifications on a regular (at least weekly) basis.