

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Department of Global and Community Health
GCH 421, Community Nutrition

Instructor:	Whitney K. Gaston, MPH Phone: 703-993-4621 Email: wgaston@gmu.edu
Office Hours:	Robinson B 402 by appointment (or telephone)
Time & Place:	Thursday 10:30 am – 1:15 pm Northeast Module 130
Placement in Curriculum:	Requirement for Nutrition Certificate Program or Elective in other Program(s)
Prerequisite:	GCH 295 or permission of instructor
Catalog Description:	This course focuses on nutrition and health problems of specific community settings as well as examines the practices of nutrition services in various communities.
Course Objectives:	Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine nutrition and health problems from specific community settings.• Conduct an assessment of a community's nutritional needs.• Determine the nutritional status of a target population.• Describe how programs and interventions are planned and designed.• Examine specific successful community-based nutrition programs.
Rationale:	To provide a requirement for the nutrition certificate program or as an elective for health science and nursing students.
Teaching Strategies:	Lecture/discussion, Guest lecturers, Video presentations, Audio/visual aids, Student presentations, Case study analyses, Travel to local community nutrition sites
Text:	Community Nutrition in Action: An Entrepreneurial Approach, 4th Edition. 2005. Marie A. Boyle and David H. Holben
Students with Disabilities:	If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703/993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.
Cell phones and pagers:	Please turn-off cell phones and pagers during class.

Important Dates:

- Last day to add classes – Feb 5
- Last day to drop classes (no reimbursement) Feb 22
- Spring break March 10-16
- Last Day of Class May 5 (our last day is May 1)
- Exams May 7-14, (note: we will not have a final exam)

Evaluation:

There are a total of 400 possible points in the class; your grade will be based on: 2 projects (100 points each), 2 field activities, (50 points each) 4 internet-based activities (20 points each), and a journal (20 points); **Note:** These points do not include the possible 10 extra credit points.

> 375 = A
360 – 375 = A-
350 – 359 = B+
330 – 349 = B
320 – 329 = B-
310 – 319 = C+
292 – 309 = C
280 – 291 = C-
240 – 279 = D
<240 = F

Extra Credit (Due by April 24rd):

There is some opportunity for extra credit in the class. You can earn up to 10 points by volunteering at any community nutrition program (5 points per day). To obtain credit, turn in a one-page explanation of where and what you have done. This is beyond your class assignment.

Attendance:

Regular and prompt attendance is the student's responsibility. Students are expected to be punctual and remain in class its entire duration. Attendance (*including tardiness*) and class participation will be taken into account to evaluate your grade. You are expected to attend all classes and participate in class discussion. For example, if you have missed any classes and/or have been late, or have not participated in class discussion, your grade will be **downgraded** from a B+ to a B. If you have a LEGITIMATE reason to miss class or be tardy, documented illness, family emergency, etc. please email me. **IF YOU ARE RUNNING MORE THAN 10 MINUTES LATE, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE CLASSROOM, unless prior arrangement has been made.**

Late Assignment Policy:

I will accept assignments late, however, they will be docked 5% for each day late. I will NOT accept assignments any later than 2 weeks past the due date. You may email me your assignment however I must receive it before the start of class on the day it is due to be counted "on time."

Guidelines for papers: All papers will be double-spaced 12-point font, 1 inch margins.

PROJECTS:

➤ **Project #1 (Group): COST/NUTRIENT ANALYSIS OF GMU CAMPUS FOOD (100 points, written and oral due April 10, 2008)**

- This project involves an overall research question. “Are foods which are more nutrient dense, more expensive at George Mason University?”
- For this project, you will collect data, analyze the data, report the data, and then choose an appropriate course action concerning nutrition intervention.
- You will divide into groups of 3-4 people and choose one or more of the food vendors on campus (i.e. Food Court, Express Mini Store, La Patisserie, The Bistro, George’s, Jazzman’s, Chow Hall, Sub I etc.)
- To collect the data you will conduct a random sampling of 25 food items. For example, you may collect all 25 samples from one vendor (not recommended unless you have a clear objective), or several from each of several vendors (for example – compare burgers amongst vendors). You will collect information concerning the cost/serving of each food item and then you will use the food labels, brochures, or http://www.ars.usda.gov/main/site_main.htm?modecode=12354500 to determine the nutrient composition of each food item. The nutrient information you will focus on will be: calories, fat, saturated fat, unsaturated fat, protein, sodium, calcium, folate, vitamin A, vitamin E and fiber – all nutrients on a per serving basis.
- You will then chart the food items according to their cost/serving and nutrient density/per serving (see last page of syllabus).
- Once the analysis is done, you will create a brochure to inform students of the least expensive, most nutrient dense foods. You will then develop an intervention to help improve the diets of GMU students. This will be presented to the class in the form of a power point presentation.
- Summary of what you need to turn in:
 - A **chart** with the foods, the serving size, amount (weight, volume, etc.), their nutrient information (from labels, brochures or government web sites) and cost. (See last page in syllabus for example chart).
 - An educational two-page **brochure** that can be used to inform students of your conclusions.
 - A 4-5 page report with conclusions from your analysis including:
 - A description of the community investigated.
 - The methods used to collect the data.
 - A description of the data collected.
 - Results of the findings and data analyses.
 - Discussion/Conclusions from data analyses.
 - Implications of data analyses.
 - A proposal for a potential intervention that can help improved the diets of GMU students based on your findings.
- A power point presentation reflecting the above described report will be presented in class. All students in the group will receive the same grade so it is up to you to share the work. If you are encountering a problem, please let me know.

➤ **Project #2 (Individual): DESCRIPTION OF A COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAM**
(100 points, written and oral due April 24, 2008)

- You will work individually on this project. For this project you will find an ongoing community nutrition program. Your job is to find out as much about this program and present the information to your class. **Note: This program cannot be the same program you volunteer for in Field Activity #2.**
- Try to find out the following information:
 - What is the objective of this program?
 - Why was this program developed?
 - How long has this program been running?
 - Where is this program located and who benefits from the program?
 - Is this program effective/successful based on outcome?
 - If yes, Why/What identifies the success?
 - Has there been any evaluation on the effectiveness of the program to client health and nutrition? What are they?
 - Is there data evaluating the cost effectiveness of the program?
 - If answers to the above questions is no or inconclusive, propose an evaluation scheme.
 - How is this program funded?
 - Are there any other community nutrition programs like this one? You will need to do research to answer this.
 - How does this program relate to community nutrition?
 - Can you volunteer to work for this program? In what capacity?
- There are a few ways to gather this information:
 - Do some research in the library and on the web.
 - Interview a person highly involved in the program.
 - Interview a person who participates in the program.
 - Volunteer to work for the program for a day and do some participant observation.
Note: again, this volunteering will not count towards Field Activity #2.
- What you will turn in:
 - A 4-page description of the program which best addresses each of the questions listed above. It is preferred that you present your findings in paragraph form.
 - Any relevant copies of brochures or web-pages which describe the project.

FIELD ACTIVITIES:

➤ **Field Activity #1 (Group activity, Group & Individual grade): Health and Fitness Expo on March 26 and 27, 2008 (50 points total - participate in activity on March 26 or March 27, critique due April 3, 2008)**

- The activity will take place in Dewberry Hall. The focus is on healthy living for college students. The class will divide up into groups of 3-4 per group. Each group is to focus on one aspect of nutrition as related to college students. Examples might include but are not limited to:
 - Healthy snacks while studying
 - Weight loss and healthy weight loss tips
 - The Freshman 15
 - Exercise tips

- Body fat/ Body composition and Diet
- Tips for eating out and eating on campus
- Fad diets
- Revised food guide pyramid (April, 2005)
- Importance of variety in the diet and vitamins and minerals
- You may check Chapter 8 for healthy weight-related information
- For this activity, you will spend time at Dewberry Hall on March 26 or March 27, 2008. You will present a poster, PowerPoint presentation, or video that instructs students in the area that you have chosen. You will provide handout materials including brochures, flyers, list of support services, websites, etc. that complement your chosen topic. You will prepare an evaluation sheet for your presentation and ask students who visit the room to complete it before leaving.
- Your grade will be based on the group poster/video/PowerPoint presentation and the quality of the handouts/ brochure that you prepared. In addition, each individual will prepare a 2-page paper in which you describe what you did individually, summarize the results of the evaluations that you collected and provide an overall critique of the activity (i.e. Did your presentation interest students? Did participants learn anything? Did it change any behaviors? Did you keep the attention of the students? What would you do differently?)

➤ **Field Activity #2: Volunteer for community nutrition project (50 points, Description due April 24, 2008, so activity must be completed prior to that date).**

- You are to work individually; however, more than one individual may volunteer at the same site. The idea is to go out there and do some volunteering for a community nutrition project!!
- Minimally, you need to give 3 hours of your time.
- Your grade will be based on a three-page description of the organization and its mission and description of the project and the activities you performed. In addition to the description, comment on how effective you perceive the organization to be based on number of clients served, quantity/quality of food, discussion with clients and staff. Turn in a copy of a brochure, pamphlet, or web-site describing the program along with your comments.
- Some suggested programs (but are not limited to) include:
 - Meals-on-Wheels: <http://www.mowaa.org/>
 - S.O.M.E. So Others May Eat <http://www.some.org/>
 - N-Street Village: <http://www.nstreetvillage.org/>
 - ALIVE: <http://www.alive-inc.org/>
 - Food and Friends: <http://www.foodandfriends.org/site/pp.asp?c=boIILKMyC&b=11152>
 - Capital Area Food Bank: <http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/>

WEB ACTIVITIES (Total of 80 points; each activity 20 points)

➤ **Web Assignment #1: This assignment is from Chapter 16 in your text (20 points, due February 7, 2008)**

- List the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care from the chapter text.
- Access the website: www.ifanca.org/ (go to top menu – What is Halal?) and outline the basic principles of Muslim dietary laws; distinguish foods considered haram and halal. If you are Muslim, answer these questions for Jewish dietary laws (you will have to use the WEB)

- Using the text in the section “Cross cultural communication” in chapter16, identify and discuss the cultural food practices and any other component that may be relevant to Muslims (Jewish people).
 - Outline cultural issues that you discovered in your research of the Muslim (Jewish) way of life that would be different from those of your ethnicity. Or think about how another ethnicity might differ from your own. How might this impact your interaction with them when you hold a group session, share a meal, and conduct individual counseling sessions?
 - Paper should be a minimum of 3 pages.
- **Web Assignment #2: This assignment is from Chapter 8 in your text (20 points, due February 21, 2008).**
- Define overweight and obesity.
 - Discuss the genetic vs. environmental causes of obesity.
 - Search the web for three Federal/state/local or non-profit programs designed to increase exercise and reduce weight. Summarize each program. Which program has been the most successful and why? If there are no data available that have evaluated these programs, identify which program you believe has the greatest potential for success and discuss why you have chosen this program.
 - Paper should be a minimum of 3 pages.
- **Web Assignment #3: This assignment is from Chaptel13 in your text (20 points, due March 6, 2008).**
- See Case Study in text page 445 “UNICEF’s Child Survival Campaign.”
 - Answer questions # 1 -4 under “Foundation: Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills,” using the WEB and your text.
 - Select one element of GOBI that you view as a priority and propose intervention strategies (You may have to Google).
 - Paper should be a minimum of 3 pages.
- **Web Assignment #4: This assignment is from Chapter 5 in your text (20 points, due April 3, 2008).**
- Access 4 internet sites supporting assistance for families that are hungry and homeless (refer to page 156 in your text for a list).
 - Describe these sites. To who are they targeted? What kinds of programs do they offer? How are they funded? Are they helpful to families or to professionals? What did you find most interesting about the sites? Do they have a nutrition focus?
 - Paper should be a minimum of 3 pages.

JOURNAL

- **Journal Assignment: 2 parts, 20 points total, Part 1 due April 24, Part 2 due April 17**
- **Part 1 (due April 24)** - Keep an ongoing notebook regarding everything that you have learned in the class. This can be hand-written and should contain notes from class and the readings, films, guest speakers. I would approximate about one or two pages **each week**. Feel free to personalize how you can take the information you learn and incorporate into your life, family, your world.

- **Part 2 - Understanding Dietary Change Journal (due April 17/share results in class) –** Follow a special diet for at least 3 days (preferably 5) Turn in your choice of dietary change for approval by February 28. Be sure it is measurable, specific, clear, concise and realistic. Specifically identify your dietary change and the reason for choosing this change. Keep a dietary journal of exactly what you eat for 3-5 consecutive days. Prepare a 2-3 page summary of your experience that you will share with the class. What dietary change did you make and why? how did it impact you? What changes did you see in yourself, what were some barriers you encountered? Was it difficult to implement, why/why not? Did you have a supportive environment, if so, how, in what ways? If not, why? How did the change make you feel, physically, psychologically, socially, positive, negative? Did you encounter family issues, what were they? Did you notice any social effects? Do you felt you succeeded, why, how? Was it harder than you thought? Have your perceptions of understanding dietary issues changed? If so, how?
- **Note: Because the goal of this project is to personally experience “change” and create an intervention for yourself, I will allow it to be almost any type of change – does not necessarily have to be a dietary change i.e. quite smoking, quit swearing, quit complaining and replace it with compliments.**

- **SCHEDULE: (please note this is subject to change)**

January 24, 2008

- Review syllabus
- Come up with official table sign logo for Health and Fitness Challenge.
- Homework:
 - Read Chapter 1

January 31, 2008

- Introduction to community nutrition
 - What is a community?
 - What is community nutrition?
- Divide into groups for project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food) and Field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge).
- Homework:
 - Read Chapter 16
 - Web assignment #1

February 7, 2008

- Web assignment #1 due: discuss
- Discuss “Gaining cultural competence in community nutrition”
- Homework:
 - Read Chapters 6 & 8
 - Develop outline for field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge)
 - Develop approach to project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food)
 - start developing plan of action to collect and analyze data.

February 14, 2008

- Discuss “A national nutrition agenda for the public’s health” and “Addressing the obesity epidemic: an issue for public health policy.”
- Progress reports/outline for field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge)
- Work on project # 1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food).
- Homework
 - Web assignment # 2

February 21, 2008

- Finish discussing “Addressing the obesity epidemic: an issue for public health policy.”
- Web assignment # 2 due: discuss
- Present plan of action for project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food).
- Get into groups to plan field activity #1 (Health and fitness challenge)
- Homework
 - Read Chapter 13

February 28, 2008

- Discuss “Nurturing Global Awareness: Community Nutrition with an International Perspective”
- Tentative Guest speaker
- Turn in Choice of Dietary Change for approval
- Get into groups to work on project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food).

- Homework:
 - Read Chapter 5
 - Web assignment #3

March 6, 2008

- Web assignment #3 due: discuss
- Discuss “Food insecurity and the food assistance programs”
- Take time to work in groups to plan field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge).
- Homework:
 - Read Chapters 2 and 7

March 13 SPRING BREAK!

March 20, 2008

- Discuss “The art and science of policy making”
- Discuss “Assessing community resources”
- Last minute group work for field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge)
- Homework:
 - Work in groups for project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food)
 - Last minute preparations for field activity #1 (Health and Fitness Challenge)

March 27, 2008

- You are on your own today!
- Participate in Health and Fitness Challenge
- Homework:
 - Read Chapter 4
 - Web assignment #4
 - Write summary and critique for Health and Fitness Challenge

April 3, 2008

- Web assignment #4 due: discuss.
- Summary and critique of Health and Fitness Challenge due (include brochures or other materials developed): present to class
- Discuss “Principles of epidemiology”
- Work in groups to finish project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food)
- Homework:
 - Read Chapter 3
 - Work on Project #1, it is due April 9
 - Find community nutrition program for project #2

April 10, 2008

- Project #1 (Cost/nutrient analysis of GMU food) is due. Present findings to class.
- Discuss “Assessing the target population’s nutritional status”
- Homework:
 - Read chapters 14 and 15

April 17, 2008

- Tentative Guest Speaker
- Share results from Dietary Change experience.
- Discuss “Designing community nutrition interventions”
- Discuss “Program planning for success”
- Homework:
 - Finish project #2 (Description of a community nutrition program), due April 24, 2008.
 - Finish activity and description for field activity #2 (Volunteer for community nutrition program), due April 24, 2008.

April 24, 2008

- Project #2 due: present findings (DESCRIPTION OF A COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAM)
- Field activity #2 report due: Describe and discuss volunteer work
- Turn in journal
- Turn in extra credit

May 1, 2008

- Wrap up
- Evaluation
- Multicultural banquet
 - Each student to bring in a dish reflective of their culture (country, area of US, religion, etc)
 - Along with dish, bring 18 copies of the recipe to share with class
 - Be prepared to talk about your dish and the significance it has had in your family.
 - No cheating by buying brownies at Whole Foods or Trader Joes ☺

