Overview In this course we examine the impact of the built and natural environment on human health and health behaviors. We will discuss environmental factors ranging from plates and portions, to nature and parks, housing and neighborhood, as well as products and interior environments. We conceptualize “health” broadly to include physical health, obesity, mental health, and cognitive functioning, as well as health behaviors such as diet and physical activity. Several theoretical models are employed including the life course perspective, the bioecological model, and the reasonable person model (RPM). We focus on environmental factors that act as either protective mechanisms – fostering the long-term resilience of individuals -- or as risk factors -- contributing to long-term vulnerability.

Readings: Articles on blackboard: www.blackboard.cornell.edu

Requirements & Grading

A. Discussion Leadership 15% Each week, 1 (or 2) student(s) will prepare discussion questions in advance and email these questions to me on the Sunday (by 3:00 pm) prior to our meeting. These student(s) will then facilitate discussion in class.

B. Class participation & mini assignments 30% Participation is critical. In addition to contributing to discussion, participation involves completing four (4) mini assignments (given 7 options) such as environmental evaluations, collecting a bit of data through interviews, observation, or brief analysis & writing. See Blackboard “Assignments” for mini due dates. Students are also invited to participate in a “good news show & tell” during the last ~20 minutes of each class.

C. Project: Bridging the Gap (BTG) 20% Product & presentation due Wed Apr 13, in class
   • Topic, audience & idea (~ 1 page) due Mon Feb 22, 5PM
   • Draft/outline of product/idea (2 page max) due Mon Mar 14, 5PM

Create a product or intervention tool that is evidence-based and grounded in theory to address a real health/healthy environment issue in the local community. Ideally, you will connect with a real agency or organization as your partner and client. The nature and form of the “product” is flexible – might be printed or electronic or 3-dimensional.

D. Final Paper (~20 pages) 25% due Mon May 2, 5PM
   • Topic Idea, & at least 5 references (1-2 pages) due Mon March 7, 5PM
   • Paper Draft 5% due Fri March 25, 12 noon
   • In-Class Presentation of Final Paper 5% Wed May 4 & May 11

Your final paper will explore a topic related to environments & health. It must include a thorough, well-organized literature review (with at least 10 references – mostly journal articles). The paper may be either: 1) a research grant proposal or 2) an empirical research paper (for which you collect data & report your findings).
OTHER RELEVANT RESOURCES:


WEBSITES:

Change Lab Solutions: [http://changelabsolutions.org/](http://changelabsolutions.org/)


Health Impact Assessment, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm)


Dangerous by Design: [http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design/](http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design/)


COOL TOOLS:

- EPA’s National Atlas for Sustainability [http://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas](http://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas)

Week 1

INTRODUCTIONS

27 January, Wednesday Introduction: Environmental Impacts on Health


Optional Readings:

Week 2

3 February, Wednesday History of Environment & Public Health; & Health Impact Assessment


Review at least two of the following websites:
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, HIA: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm)
- Active Living Research, RWJF, HIA: [http://www.activelivingresearch.org/resourcesearch/hia](http://www.activelivingresearch.org/resourcesearch/hia)


Optional Readings:

Week 3

THEORETICAL GROUNDING

10 February, Wednesday Human Ecology, Health Promotion, The Life Course Perspective & the Reasonable Person Model


Optional readings are not provided electronically on BB. Some may be useful resources for paper or other pursuits.
**Reasonable Person Model (RPM) – Read at least 1 of the following:**


**Optional Readings:**


**February Break: Saturday 2/13 – Tuesday 2/16**

**Week 4 HOUSING**

17 February, Wednesday Housing & Health – Physical Health & Mental Health


**Optional Readings:**


Page 4 of 9
Mon 22 February 5:00 pm  PROJECT: BTG Topic, Audience & Product Idea DUE ~1 page

**Week 5**

24 February, Wednesday  Healthy Products & Healthy Interiors


Transparency Project Website: www.Transparency.PerkinsWill.com [peruse]

Google Green: http://www.google.com/green/efficiency/oncampus/#building [peruse]


Optional readings:


Optional Readings:


**Week 6**

2 March, Wednesday  NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods & Health


Optional Readings:


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**Mon 7 March, 5:00 pm PAPER Ideas Due – 1-2 pages w/ at least 5 citations**

**Week 7**

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9 March, Wednesday  Environment & Physical Activity: Active Living


Kuhlman, R. Helping Johnny Walk to School. National Trust for Historic Preservation [peruse]


**Peruse:** McCann Consulting: http://www.bmccann.net/publications.html

**Optional Readings:**


Mon 14 March 5:00 pm BTG PROJECT: draft / outline of DUE 2 page max.

Week 8

16 March, Wednesday The Food Environment: From Micro to Macro


Optional Readings:


Week 9

23 March, Wednesday The Life Course & Health


Optional Readings:


25 March, FRIDAY 12:00 noon Final Paper Draft Due

Week 10

30 March, Wednesday No Class

Week 11

6 April, Wednesday Health Disparities: Poverty, Race & Health


Week 12

13 April, Wednesday PROJECT: Bridging the Gap (BTG)

13 April: BTG PROJECT Due & In-Class Presentations

Week 13

20 April, Wednesday Natural Environment & Human Well-Being


**Optional Readings:**


### Week 14

**27 April, Wednesday**

**TBA**

**2 May, Monday 5:00 pm**  
**Final Papers Due**

### Week 15

**4 May, Wednesday**

**Consumption & Affluenza**

& **Presentation of Final Papers**

London, B. (1932). Ending the depression through planned obsolescence. (pdf retrieved from Wikipedia)


Optional: Ch 18 An emerging epidemic, pp141-147; Ch 19 The age of affluenza, pp148-154.


[http://www.buzzsawmag.org/2009/03/01/purchasing-is-for-suckers/](http://www.buzzsawmag.org/2009/03/01/purchasing-is-for-suckers/)

### Week 16

**11 May, Wednesday**

**Environmentalism & Sustainability: Taking Care of our Planet**

& **Presentation of Final Papers**


Optional Readings:  
And see: [http://storyofstuff.org/resources/](http://storyofstuff.org/resources/)
