

# Course Syllabus

**IPHS 430 – CRN 44551**

**Epidemics of Injustice:**

***Disenfranchisement, Fugitivity, and Charting a Path Towards Freedom***  
**SPRING 2025**

**Credits:** 2  
**Meeting Day(s):** Mondays  
**Meeting Time:** 6:00 - 8:00 PM CST  
**Meeting Place:** Online on Zoom

**Instructor:** **Tiffany N. Ford, PhD, MPH**  
Assistant Professor, Community Health Sciences  
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**E-mail:** Thursdays 11am-12pm (virtual)  
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**Teaching Assistant (TA):** **Veronica Howell**  
**TA E-mail:** vhowel2@uic.edu  
**Office Hours:** Fridays 10:30am - 11:30am (virtual)

**Teaching Assistant (TA):** **Megan Duero**  
**TA E-mail:** mduer@uic.edu  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11:00am-12:00pm on Zoom (virtual)

**Planning Committee:** This course was co-developed by a planning committee made up of UIC faculty, graduate students, and Radical Public Health members who identified the annual course theme, topic areas, speakers, and planned the learning activities.

## I. Course Description

This two-credit course was developed through a collaboration between members of Radical Public Health (RPH), UIC School of Public Health (SPH) graduate students, and faculty who were brought together in 2018 by a sense of urgency to address ongoing threats to democracy, social justice, and the public's health. Reactionary politics and policies--and resulting unjust circumstances--have a long history and are resurgent today. This course will focus on the historical, social, cultural, and political factors related to the historical and contemporary health, and the historical and contemporary resistance and rebellion through public health, as seen through interdisciplinary and cross-movement work. Through the exploration of these legacies, we seek to learn how today, we can leverage our positionality and resources for social justice and health equity. This course will provide a historical understanding of structural and socioeconomic determinants of health and point to both modern and historical examples of how we can leverage our work for advocacy. Through guest lecturers and action labs, students will also learn from others' experiences and workshop tangible skills that will prepare them to engage in action and advocacy with others across disciplines and sectors. **This course is designed to explicitly center the voices and lived experiences of marginalized and historically excluded perspectives.**

[Radical Public Health](#) (RPH), a collaborator on this course, is composed of students, alumni, faculty, staff, practitioners, and community members who seek to address the systemic, underlying causes of public health challenges and to consider more radical solutions. RPH hosts group discussions, guest lectures, film screenings, panel discussions, and teach-ins on relevant issues. This course is supported by the [Community Health Sciences](#) (CHS) division at the UIC School of Public Health.

## II. Course Prerequisites

Junior/senior or graduate standing. Priority given to School of Public Health students.

While many students may not be in the School of Public Health, we expect that students have some level of baseline familiarity with public health. For those taking this course who are not in public health or would like additional background, optional, recommended prerequisite readings will be posted on Blackboard.

## III. Course Materials

Students will be provided with weekly materials one week prior to each session through the public [Google site](#). Please check the “Weekly Content” tab on the Google site for everything you will need to prepare for each session.

Registered students should also check the course Blackboard site for announcements, details about assignments, and Zoom links for registered student-only sessions during the semester. Registered students will choose a book to read for their book report assignment, detailed below. Some of these books are available for free from the UIC or public library, while others may need to be purchased.

## IV. Methods of Instruction

This class is an online class using lecture, discussion, and group-based learning to accomplish the learning objectives. Students are expected to participate in a classroom environment that is safe, collaborative, welcoming, and encouraging of civic participation and social action.

Course communication outside of the classroom will rely primarily on emails from the course TA. The [Google site](#) is the primary content area for the instructor, TA, and planning committee to post materials for the weekly sessions. Students are expected to log into the Google site regularly to learn about any developments related to the course. Registered students will be enrolled into the Blackboard course site prior to the start of the semester. Grades will be posted on Blackboard. Learn more about Blackboard at <http://uic.blackboard.com>.

**Students must register via Zoom to be admitted into the Zoom classroom. You will need to register for each week separately to receive the correct Zoom link for the week's session. Please check your email or see the Blackboard page for links.**

**If you have questions outside of class time, please email them to the TA ([vhowel2@uic.edu](mailto:vhowel2@uic.edu)) with “E of I” in the subject line so that you can ensure you receive a response.**

## V. Course Objectives

**At the end of this course, students should be able to:**

1. Describe the impact of history on public health, health inequities including relevant theories (i.e. physical embodiment)
  - a. Articulate the importance of history, laws, policies, and power structures to understand and protect the health of the public
2. Describe key historical, social, cultural, and political factors related to historical and contemporary health and well-being of both advantaged and marginalized groups

- Evaluate the ways that power structures and systems of oppression have shaped historical and contemporary social injustices and health inequities throughout history
- Explore historic and modern examples of resistance to systems of oppression across multiple areas of health and among various population groups
- Develop skills to take action against a threat to the public's health, and increase confidence in one's ability to take action using these skills
- Develop skills and experience working with partners or stakeholders across public health sectors or other fields to promote public health and social justice
- Demonstrate application of advocacy around a course topic for your own professional and/or academic work by developing an advocacy tool (i.e., toolkit, workshop, presentation, infographic, social media toolkit, annotated bibliography, podcast).

## VI. Course Outline

**Class sessions will be conducted via zoom every Monday from 6:00-8:00 pm CST.** This outline is subject to change/adjustment as the course proceeds during the semester.

**BB = Blackboard**

**Blue sessions are free and open to community members**

Session	Date	Topic	Speaker	Reading, Homework, Other Class Prep	Other Assignments/Due dates	
1	1/13	<b>Health Equity Overview</b> [Lecture]	Dr. Linda Rae Murray	Review <a href="#">syllabus</a> and <a href="#">Google site</a>	Complete <a href="#">pre-course evaluation</a>	1/31
2	1/20	No class- <i>MLK Day, Inauguration Day</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	
3	1/27	<b>Fugitivity Under Racial Capitalism</b> [Lecture]	Dr. David Stovall	<a href="#">Dr. Camara Jones Explains the Cliff of Good Health (Video)</a>  <a href="#">Tiffanie Marie, Ph.D. and Kenjus Watson, Ph.D.: Apocalyptic Education (Podcast)</a>	Pre-course evaluation closes	1/31
4	2/3	<b>What is Fugitivity? Where is Fugitivity?</b> [Reflection & Discussion]	<i>Registered students only</i>	See BB for Reflection & Discussion activity instructions	Post reflection item to BB  Submit book report choice to Blackboard discussion board	2/3, 6 pm  2/7
5	2/10	<b>Freedom Fighting as a Fugitive Activity: Shared Timeline Development</b> [Action Lab]	Dr. Tiffany N. Ford & Dr. Richard David	N/A	N/A	
6	2/17	<b>Immigration as a Fugitive Activity</b> [Lecture]	Dr. Naomi Paik  Q&A with Dr. Nadine Naber	TBA	N/A	
7	2/24	<b>Shared Liberation as a Fugitive Activity</b> [Panel]	Leone Jose Bicchieri  Chris Rudd  Caesar Thompson moderating	<a href="#">"The Road Not Taken"</a> by Lerone Bennett	N/A	
8	3/3	<b>How are Fugitivity and Freedom Related?</b> [Reflection & Discussion]	<i>Registered students only</i>	See BB for Reflection & Discussion activity instructions	Post reflection item to BB	3/3, 6 pm

9	3/10	<b>Power Mapping</b> [Action Lab]	<b>Sari Bilick from Public Health Awakened</b>	Video: " <a href="#">Narratives for Health Equity</a> " from Human Impact Partners  Reading: " <a href="#">The Three Faces of Power</a> " from the Grassroots Power Project	N/A	
10	3/17	<b>Root Cause Analysis</b> [Action Lab]	<b>Facilitators from Radical Public Health</b>	N/A	N/A	
11	3/24	No Class- <i>UIC Spring Break</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	
12	3/31	<b>Root Causes, Power, and Our Book Reports: What Are the Connections?</b> [Reflection & Discussion]	<i>Registered students only</i>	See BB for Reflection & Discussion activity instructions	Post reflection item to BB  Book Report Due before class <small>*Due to Eid al-Fitr observance, you may submit your report by 11:59pm on Wednesday, April 2 without a point reduction.</small>	3/31, 6 pm  *3/31, 6 pm
13	4/7	<b>Education as a Fugitive Activity</b> [Panel]	<b>Dr. Mario LaMothe</b>	N/A	N/A	
14	4/14	<b>Reproductive Justice as a Fugitivity Activity</b> [Panel]	<b>Dr. Dana-Ain Davis</b> <b>Yoselin Colorado</b> <b>Mary Driscoll</b> <b>Shalonda Carter</b> <b>Renee Odom</b> moderating	N/A	N/A	
15	4/21	<b>Healthcare as a Fugitive Activity</b> [Panel]	<b>Emily Hacker</b> <b>Dr. Tammy Abughnaim</b> <b>Caesar Thompson</b>	N/A	N/A	
16	4/28	<b>Fugitivity and Our Freedom: How Do We Get There?</b> [Reflection & Discussion]	<i>Registered students only</i>	See BB for Reflection & Discussion activity instructions	Post reflection item to BB  Final day to submit Engagement Activity Reflection <small>*Hard deadline</small>  Post Final Project to Blackboard discussion board <small>*Hard deadline</small>	4/28, 6 pm  4/28, 11:59pm  5/2, 11:59pm
Finals Week	5/5	N/A	N/A	N/A	Peer responses to Final Projects <small>*Hard deadline</small>	5/9, 11:59pm

## VII. Grading

A letter grade (A-F) will be given for this course. Students will have to petition to take the course as pass/fail. Additional information about the grading criteria for each component will be distributed with the assignment. For assignments that require rubrics, these will be posted to blackboard. The relative weight of each course component is as follows:

25%	Reflection Activity
15%	Engagement Activity
30%	Midterm Book Report

30%	Final Assignment
Total: 100%	

### **Reflection Activity ("Show and tell") (25%)**

Students are asked to bring 1 item to class for each of the four Reflection & Discussion sessions that reminds you of the topics from the previous weeks. The reflection item should be anything that makes you think of the readings, lecture, class discussion, and/or action lab. We encourage you to consider items that remind you of disenfranchisement, fugitivity, freedom, an item that inspires you to use the skills learned in an action lab, or an item related to your engagement activity. Songs and videos, op-eds and blog posts, infographics or other art, a book excerpt, social media posts – each of these could make for interesting reflection items. **You will post these reflection items to a shared discussion board on Blackboard by 6 pm (before the start of class) the day of the Reflection & Discussion session.** We will engage with these reflection items in our registered student-only Reflection & Discussion sessions (weeks 4, 8, 12, 16).

Each student will be placed into a group to lead the Reflection & Discussion sessions. On the weeks that students lead a Reflection & Discussion session, they will need to prepare a 2-3 slide PowerPoint presentation that they will use to facilitate a class discussion. The goal of the Reflection & Discussion sessions are to braid together the themes from the weekly course content, students' own lived experience, the books that students are reading, and the focus of the course for the semester (i.e., *Disenfranchisement, Fugitivity, and Charting a Path Towards Freedom*). Students will take 15 minutes to present to the class in groups (with a 3-5 minute break in between to transition between groups). In their presentations, students should: 1) Summarize the key themes/takeaways from the weeks they are assigned; 2) Connect the themes to course content (for example: show and tell items, engagement activities they've attended, the book they're reading, semester theme); and 3) Lead a brief, reflective class discussion about the material based on 4-5 discussion questions. Further instructions on how to prepare to lead a Reflection & Discussion session can be found on the course Blackboard.

### **Engagement Activity (15%)**

In the spirit of action and advocacy, we would like you to attend an event or engage in an activity outside of class where you learn about advocacy or engage in direct action at least once over the course of the semester. This event can take on a variety of formats such as a lecture, workshop, panel, protest, vigil, talk back, etc. and it should touch on at least one of the topics from this semester (see the course schedule above). You should choose an event or activity that provides knowledge or builds skills that you can use in your profession. Good sources to look for events are pages for the [Collaboratory for Health Justice](#), [Radical Public Health](#), the [Gender and Sexuality Center](#), the [Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy](#). Acceptable events also include those outside of UIC. There will be a discussion forum on Blackboard to share engagement opportunities that can serve as this portion of the class. If students have questions if an event qualifies, they can contact the instructor. Submit a 1-page, double spaced journal reflection following the event, describing the event, why you attended, what you learned, and your experience, using a critical lens based on our class discussions. **The reflection is due by the last day of class (April 28) but can be turned in at any point prior to that.**

### **Midterm Book Report (30%)**

Students are required to read a book relating to the course topics and create a 2 to 3 page (maximum), double spaced book report. Students are welcome to form a book group with other students who would like to read the same book, but it is not a requirement. If you choose to read the same book as a group, each member of the group is still expected to submit their own book report.

The report rubric will be available on Blackboard. The book report should address:

What is the topic of the book? What is the author's argument or position? What did this book teach you? Should we read the book?

The instructors and course planners have curated a list of suggested books, which can be found [here](#). These books are focused on a range of structural determinants of health and their historical context, as

well as ways to advocate and address these determinants. If students have another book not on this list they would like to read, they may email the instructors to request permission. **Please submit your book topic to the discussion board by February 7, 2025. The Book Report is due on Monday, March 31, before class (by 5pm).**

### **Final Assignment (30%)**

One of the objectives of this course is to encourage students to incorporate activism and advocacy in their professional lives. Thus, the final assignment is to create and share a piece of work that integrates a specific topic from the course with a specific advocacy tool. The instructors encourage students to produce something that is interesting to them and useful for their current or future work.

The grade for this assignment will be determined by the assignment itself (25 points), as well as thoughtful comments on 5 other students' projects (1 point each). The detailed rubric for the assignment and examples of this assignment will be posted on Blackboard. **Final Assignment is due on May 2 and responses to peers are due the following Friday (May 9).**

### **Grading Policy**

Changes to course and assignment requirements, including those made as accommodations and/or deviations from the established grading structure, should be documented in writing to ensure clear expectations of students and instructors and to avoid misunderstanding.

### **Late Work**

Assignments are placed intentionally throughout the semester to support student learning. **The instruction team does not require notification of late submissions.** Assignments that are submitted within 1 week of the due date will not have any points reduced for being late. Assignments that are submitted more than 1 week after the due date will receive an automatic 10% grade reduction for every additional week that they are late. The deadline for the final assignment is not flexible because of university grading deadlines.

### **Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete (IN) may be given only if, for reasons beyond the students' control, required work has not been completed by the end of the term. An IN must be converted to a letter grade (A-F) by the end of the students' next registered term subsequent to that in which it was received or, if the student is not registered, by the end of the twelve consecutive months subsequent to that in which the IN was received. Refer to the Student Handbook for additional information about incomplete grades.

## **VIII. Evaluation**

The School values student feedback on course content and faculty teaching skills as an important means for improving our work. This includes mid-course evaluations which provide an opportunity for continuous course improvement during the term. Please take the time to complete both the mid-course and end-of-term CourseEvals. In the last class session, students will have 15 minutes of class time to complete course evaluations. CourseEvals are anonymous and instructors will not receive their end-of-term CourseEvals results until after final grades have been submitted. We hope you take the time to participate in these opportunities for student feedback.

## **IX. Generative AI Usage**

Students may use artificial intelligence, or AI, tools (e.g. ChatGPT) to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these tools may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. For example, even when AI tools include citations, these references may be poor quality or entirely made up. Using AI tools may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity. Students should keep these concerns in mind if they choose to use AI to support their learning in this course.



Students may not submit any work generated by an AI program as if it is their own. If you include material generated by an AI program in your submitted assignments, it should be cited like any other reference material. Information on how to cite AI can be found at: <https://libguides.brown.edu/AI> Failure to cite contributions from anyone or anything else (including AI) is an academic integrity violation and will be handled as such.

## **X. Honor Code and Academic Integrity**

SPH students are expected to uphold the SPH Honor Code and act with truth and integrity in their academic work. To better promote an understanding of those obligations, all students entering an SPH degree program are required to complete the School's Academic Integrity Tutorial found at: <https://publichealth.uic.edu/current-students/academic-integrity-tutorial/>. Information regarding the Honor Code and SPH policy can be found in the Academic Policies and Procedures handbooks.

Academic dishonesty is an offense against the University and course instructors are obligated to report an incident to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating or assisting someone else in academic dishonesty, plagiarism, unauthorized possession of class materials (e.g., tests), and unauthorized changing of one's grade. Students found guilty of engaging in an act of academic dishonesty may receive a failing grade for the assignment or course. Such students may also be prohibited from holding an assistantship or leadership position within the School, and/or be barred from competing for School scholarships and other awards. The range of possible disciplinary actions flowing from an act of academic misconduct are found in the UIC Student Disciplinary Policy at: <http://dos.uic.edu/conductforstudents.shtml>.

Additional resources: Two excellent sources which define plagiarism and how to avoid it are located at: <https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/plagiarism.html> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>. Students are also encouraged to consult their instructor on rules for proper citation.

## **XI. Mutual Respect and Inclusivity**

Public health deals with controversial issues from multiple perspectives. Consideration of these issues may cause disagreements among us, or may evoke strong personal feelings, depending on our individual experience, histories, identities, and worldviews. In an increasingly diverse society, we, as public health professionals, value inclusivity and difference, and the opportunity to learn together. Therefore, in all of our interactions and communications, it is important that we strive to have mutual respect and appreciation for one another, and for any course guests and members of the community with whom we come into contact. If you anticipate that you may have difficulty with a topic, please discuss this with an instructor as soon as possible, so that your needs can be accommodated. If you have specific concerns about class content, communications, or interactions, you are encouraged to bring this up in class or discuss this privately with one of the instructors.

SPH's mission to protect and improve health and well-being both locally and globally is realized through collaboration, including listening and learning from many different voices and perspectives. Messages of discrimination, hate, islamophobia, and antisemitism are inconsistent with and harmful to our values at UIC SPH. Furthermore, to advance the public's health and well-being it is important for faculty to have the freedom to collaborate with investigators at academic institutions located in Chicago, across the nation, and around the globe.

## **XII. Disability Statement**

It is University policy to facilitate a barrier free environment so that students can fully access classes and other University activities. The Disability Resource Center provides assistance and support for students and assists with the provision of reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability. In order to receive accommodations, students must register with the UIC Disability Resource Center (<https://drc.uic.edu/>) and provide the course instructor with the Letter of Accommodation developed by the Disability Resource Center at the beginning of the term or as soon as feasible. Instructors will collaborate with you and the Resource Center to implement a plan that will facilitate learning.

## **XIII. Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Statement**

UIC is committed to providing an educational and work environment that is free from all forms of sex discrimination, sexual violence, and sexual and gender-based harassment. UIC prohibits and will not tolerate Sexual Misconduct of or by students, employees, patients, or visitors. UIC will take prompt and fair action to eliminate such conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects through interim protective measures and accommodations, equitable investigations, and disciplinary processes <https://oe.uic.edu/policies/sexual-misconduct-policy/>

## **XIV. The SPH Peer Support Team**

The Peer Support Team, comprised of MPH students advanced in writing and quantitative methods, is dedicated to helping their fellow students succeed academically. During the fall and spring terms, the team offers individual and group sessions to help students understand public health concepts and skills, and to assist with class assignments in a relaxed and supportive environment. Peer Support Specialists work with one another and in consultation with course instructors, TAs and Office of Diversity and Inclusion staff to ensure that students at SPH have the support they need to succeed in their coursework. Services are free of charge and available to all undergraduate and graduate Public Health students. You can schedule an appointment by clicking the scheduling tab below any of the specialists found here: <http://publichealth.uic.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/peer-support-team>

## **XV. Librarian Office Hours and Support**

The UIC SPH has a dedicated librarian, Professor Kim Whalen, available to assist students with [library research](#), including searching PubMed and other databases, accessing the full text of sources, navigating citation managers including Zotero, and developing systematic literature search strategies. Reach out to Prof Whalen with questions or to set up an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom. She is available at [kwhale4@uic.edu](mailto:kwhale4@uic.edu) and 312/355-7004. Her office is #114 within the Library of the Health Sciences.

## **XVI. UIC Counseling Center**

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning or otherwise be problematic or distressing. The UIC Counseling Center provides services to help students deal with a range of issues including coping with the transition to graduate school, anxiety and depression and identity and relationship issues. Counselors can help students increase resilience and develop effective coping and problem-solving skills. More information can be found at: <http://counseling.uic.edu/>.

## **XVII. UIC Academic Calendar**

<https://catalog.uic.edu/ucat/academic-calendar/>

## **XVIII. UIC SPH Success**

The SPH Success program includes resources for incoming MPH, MHA, and MS students to help students prepare for and succeed in the core courses required for each master's program. The SPH Success program is accessible to all incoming master's students at the UIC School of Public Health.



Incoming students are automatically enrolled in the SPH Success Blackboard site once they have submitted their initial deposit and intent to enroll forms. More information may be found here: <https://publichealth.uic.edu/sph-success/>

**XIX. Connect with Alumni on UIC Connected:**

Connect with alumni working in public health by joining UIC Connected. Sign up using your NETID and easily upload your LinkedIn profile. This is a great opportunity to network with alumni working in the field, learn more about job and internship opportunities and stay connected to UIC. Visit <https://connected.uic.edu/> for more information and to sign up.

**XX. Grading Rubrics**

See Blackboard for assignment rubrics.