



GPH 732 Community Assessment Final Project Guidelines

You are the newly hired community health officer in your local health department tasked with assessing the health of your selected community and developing a plan to address the most pressing health issues. Your goal is to convince the mayor's office to support and fund the mitigation measures you will propose. In order to do this, you need to communicate the information you have collected to the major stakeholders: policy makers, public health professionals, and the public.

This culminating project allows you to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in this class to write a compelling report to policy makers and public health professionals. In it you will describe the demographics, health indicators, priority items to address, community assets, and recommendations for the city/county in which you reside. Use the most recently available data on the population living in the selected community and prepare a 20 - 25 page double-spaced, size 12 font paper (excluding cover page, executive summary, and references) for public health professionals and policymakers.

Points to note:

1. Use headings and subheadings throughout the report. Each section of the report should have a clear heading (in bold), as well as subheadings. You are strongly

encouraged to use the headings and subheadings described below; doing so ensures that your report contains all the required information.

2. Include all images and graphs within the body of the paper as appropriate (there should not be any appendices).
3. Submit all sections of the paper as one Microsoft Word document or one PDF file.

The document should have the following sections:

A. Cover Page

- This should include your name, the city/county/state, the health department for whom the report is being prepared, and a date.

B. Executive Summary

- This should be between 1.5 and 2 pages long and should include the major takeaways from the report. This is the section of your report that will most likely be read by policy makers, therefore you want to make the message as compelling as possible without using too much technical language.
- The executive summary should be completed after you have written and read through the final version of the full paper.

C. Community Assessment Report:

I. Introduction (1-2 pages)

- Provide a brief introduction to your community, describing the geography, size of the population, and any other relevant information.

- Clarify the purpose of the community assessment (feel free to use your creativity here).

II. Methodology (1- 1.5 pages)

- Describe the methods used to collect quantitative and qualitative data, including how data was obtained from the census, CDC, and other websites; and how the windshield survey was conducted.
(Don't describe what you found; just state what you did.)

III. Key Findings: Community Description (5 pages)

- Provide a detailed description of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the community, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, employment, income, level of education, access to healthcare, housing etc. Compare these data to other communities, states, and national rates so that your audience can get a sense of how well or badly your community is faring.
- Describe the physical environment and community context (city, town, county, urban, rural, etc.), including the results of the windshield survey and other visual observations.
- Use photographs from the windshield survey (and any relevant images or graphs) to discuss themes that describe the community.

IV. Key Findings: Community Health Profile (4 - 5 pages)

- Describe the health status of your community using specific health risk indicators and compare the data to other communities, states, and national rates. Include a discussion on how these health issues disproportionately affect specific minority populations.
- Include a GIS map (created by you) of one health indicator or social determinant of health to support the health profile.

V. Priority Health Issues (4 pages)

- List the top five priority health issues facing the community based on the information obtained from the assessment.
- Identify the top two health issues and describe the systemic factors that contribute to their persistence. (The systems thinking model from a prior assignment can also be a useful tool to frame your justification. Inserting the tool will not suffice for this section, you should explain it in a narrative.)
- Write a strong justification for your selection of the top two as priority health issues that need to be addressed. If you propose intervening on a rare condition, you can justify it based on its potential to cause significant morbidity or mortality. For example, Ebola is rare in the US but if just one case was found during your assessment, that justifies it being a priority item to address.
- In your justification, be sure to consider the population(s) most at risk, as well as the impacts of economic factors, demographic factors, and other social determinants of health.

VI. Community Assets and Capabilities (2-3 pages)

- Discuss two current intervention efforts (programs or policies) to prevent or control the top 2 priority issues from Section V. State at least one strength and one weakness of each effort. (Four intervention efforts in all.)
- Describe at least two community assets that either currently address or could address the top 2 health priorities from Section V (Two community assets for each health priority).

VII. Summary of Findings and Recommendations (2-3 pages)

- Summarize the major takeaways from the community assessment
- Describe one additional qualitative data collection method that could have been useful in gathering information about your community.
- Make two realistic and actionable recommendations to address the top 2 priority health issues, and link each recommendation to at least one essential public health service. Your recommendations should incorporate elements of systems thinking.
- For each recommendation include a measure for how the health department can track improvement.

VIII. Conclusion (0.5 - 1 page)

- Briefly restate the purpose for the community assessment (this should align with the information in Section C, I).
- Close with a strong statement you hope will resonate with your readers.

D. References

- All sources should be cited using the current AMA format.
- Most images, charts, and graphs would be original to you, and would therefore not need a citation. If you do however, use images or graphics that you did not create yourself, those should be cited. See the student resource folder in Brightspace for the AMA style guide for citing images and charts.

If you have any questions regarding the final project, please ask your instructor.