

Stanford University

Community Health Assessment Course

Course Description

Stanford's Community Health Assessment and Planning course was developed in 2004 to provide students with formal instruction and experience in conducting community-based health assessment projects. The course is comprised of approximately 10 undergraduate and 10 medical students who work in small groups (4-6 students) for two quarters (January-June) to develop and implement a health assessment project at a partner community organization. While the course provides students with instruction on how to conceptualize and measure the health of a community and how to garner information needed to perform community health assessments, much of the student learning results from their hands-on experience in the community and their interactions with community partners.

Community Assessment Project Criteria

- Addresses a health-related issue for the identified community
- Suitable for approximately 6 students to conduct (ea. performing ~4 hrs/week of field work)
- Scope of project is suitable for completion within the academic quarter (10 weeks)

Example Student Projects and Assessment Questions

Asthma Triggers in East Palo Alto Schools

What are the asthma triggers that children in East Palo Alto are exposed to in the primary school environment?

1. How are the triggers being addressed?
2. Which triggers are most prevalent?
3. Which triggers are the most hazardous?
4. Which are easiest to fix?
5. What resources and actions are necessary to address these triggers?

Childhood Obesity Prevention in San Mateo County

How is the environment of San Mateo County middle schools contributing to the problem of overweight and obesity?

1. What food options are available to the students at school?
2. How do schools use recreational facilities to promote physical activity?
3. How many of the schools have policies and programs aimed at nutrition and physical activity? To what extent are those programs and policies being implemented?

2006 Timeline of Key Course Meetings and Project Milestones

1/11/06	First course meeting (Winter Quarter begins)
1/18/06	Community Partners meet students and provide orientation and background to their organization and assessment project
2/8/06	Community Partners come to class to help students refine assessment plan and to identify key informants for students to interview
3/8/06	Community Partners review student assessment plans
3/24/06	Students submit their final assessment plan (Finals Week)
4/06-5/06	Community Partners available for consultation
5/06-6/06	Students present assessment results to interested stakeholders