

Current Issues in Pregnancy and Birth
Fall 2012
UNST 421 577 CRN 14247
MW 12:15-2:05 NH 382

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Course Description: This fall the course will focus on expanding breastfeeding support in the greater Portland area and specifically at Portland State University. We will be working alongside the Nursing Mother's Counsel of Oregon to answer questions such as:

- Who is in need of lactation support but is not receiving it?
- How can we improve lactation facilities and other resources to support mothers that are returning to school/work here on campus and at other companies that serve the public?
- How is lactation support related to employee retention and student attrition and what is needed to help retain employees and students here at Portland State University?
- How can we inform mothers and families about their legal rights and available resources?

University Studies Goals

UNST goals fall into four categories: social and ethical responsibility, inquiry/critical thinking, communication and the variety of human experiences (diversity). Application of these goals to this course are detailed below.

Course Goals*: By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Explain the physiological, economic, environmental and community health benefits of initiating and continuing breastfeeding. (*critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility*)
2. Discuss ways in which breastfeeding is or is not supported by medical practices, workplace policies and facilities, community support and cultural norms. (*critical thinking, diversity, social and ethical responsibility*)
3. Identify lactation resources available to mothers in the Portland area and be able to discuss how they differ in who and how they are able to serve. (*diversity*)
4. Explore breastfeeding perspectives within your personal community and reflect on factors that influence decisions to breastfeed. (*critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility*)
5. Utilize research methods to help the community partner answer questions concerning the need for, and barriers to, accessing lactation support. (*communication, critical thinking*)
6. Develop communication skills and facilitate information sharing between the community partner and the public regarding lactation resources (*communication*)
7. Analyze the efforts to increase breastfeeding rates in the Portland area and explore how these apply toward the goals of *Healthy People 2010*. (*critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility*)
8. Organize and communicate project results to the community partner. (*communication*)

*(UNST goals are designated in *italics*)

Course Activities

- Tour and assess lactation facilities and examine other spaces with the potential to be adapted or converted for use by lactating mothers
- Develop outreach materials and create on-line informational materials to communicate resources to the PSU community
- Facilitate communication with community groups, businesses and families to gather information about potential barriers to, and avenues toward, expanding lactation support
- Utilize qualitative and quantitative research methods in the analysis and interpretation of PSU lactation survey results
- Compare actions being taken to expand lactation resources to mothers at different locations, nationally and regionally
- Participate in all classroom discussions and experiential activities pertaining to the course
- Write weekly reflection papers, read assigned articles
- Work in small groups to complete the course final project

Community Partner

We will be working primarily with the lactation support group here at Portland State University. Although there are many involved parties, **our primary contact** will be Emily Persico, the Office Coordinator of the PSU Women's Resource Center, as well as with the new Coordinator of Services for Students with Children.

Emily Persico email: epersico@pdx.edu phone: 503-725-2796

Additionally, we will be in communication with the Nursing Mothers Counsel of Oregon.

"Nursing Mothers Counsel of Oregon (NMC), founded in 1977, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the support, promotion and protection of breastfeeding within our community"

The NMC is an all-volunteer organization that offers free breastfeeding phone support from peer-counselors, free prenatal breastfeeding classes, and low to no cost pump rentals and lactation consultations for low-income mothers. The NMC is a founding member of the Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon is involved with breastfeeding advocacy. Their work helped to pass Oregon's Breastfeeding and Return-to-work law in 2008 which then led to passage of national breastfeeding support for working mothers in the 2010 Healthcare Reform Law.

Our key contact will be **Marion Rice: 503.708.0707** email: marion@nursingmotherscounsel.org
<http://www.nursingmotherscounsel.org/>

Reflective writing

The purpose of the reflection papers is 1) to explore the connections between the course content, readings and work with your own life experiences and 2) to connect your experiences in the class with the University Studies goals. Each assignment should be thoughtful and thorough, approximately one to two pages in length (typed and single spaced).

There will be a total of 10 reflection pieces. Writing assignments will be given in class each Monday and will additionally be posted on Desire to Learn--each reflective writing piece will be due at the start of class the following Monday. **Late papers will lose 20% credit unless prior arrangements have been made.** I will do my best to have them graded and returned within one week. **No late papers will be accepted for credit after the assignment has been handed back.**

Reflection papers are worth 15pts each. The rubric is detailed on D2L but generally is as follows:

Reflection paper responds completely to the writing prompt	4pts
Paper well organized, correct spelling and grammar utilized	4pts
Paper demonstrates critical thinking and consideration of the topic	4pts
Paper integrates other ideas and components from the course, other courses you are taking or from your own life experiences	3pts

Readings

Reading assignments will be discussed—usually—every Wednesday in class. For **each** assignment, please provide a short (1-2 paragraphs) write up of your impressions of the article or reading selection **due at the beginning** of class via D2L. This allows me to know your personal thoughts on the subject even if they are not expressed during our discussion. Each write-up is worth 10pts.

Final Project

Details of the final project will be presented by the community partner, but in general will involve analyzing and a survey of Portland State employees and students to assess current use and need for lactation facilities on campus, and creating recommendations for the campus. Some questions to consider include: What are the current views of, and accommodations for, breastfeeding in the workplace/school? How are mothers currently meeting their lactation needs—are facilities being utilized or are mothers finding other means to balance their work/school life and family life? Does information sharing and training about lactation support in the workplace result in changing attitudes and shifts in accommodations? How can we meet the needs of both staff and students?

We will also be assisting in the creation of a family-friendly spaces website, intended to provide easy access to staff and students about lactation support and resources on campus, as well as other information.

You will be working in small groups for the final project. Most of the work will occur in the classroom during scheduled class hours. However, there may be occasional needs for groups to work outside of class during day time hours (to meet with community groups for example). In that case, a work day will be assigned to allow for maximum scheduling flexibility. Additionally, you will need to communicate with the community partner, instructor and group members through phone, e-mail and in-person contact throughout the term to ensure success of the final project.

This is a 6 credit capstone course, which assumes there will be approximately 12 hours of out-of-class work during the course of the class.

Grading Scale

Attendance/participation in class activities	40%
Readings and write-ups	20%
Reflection papers	20%
Final project	20%

Attendance is a key part of this course and is essential to your success and that of your group. One absence may be excused. Additional absences have the effect of dropping one letter grade per absence.

There is no final exam for this course. Peer and self-review will be taken into account when calculating your final grade for the term.

Text

Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach. John W. Creswell. Sage Publications. 2008. Copies are available through the UNST library and one copy is reserved at the PSU library.

On-line Resources

The course syllabus, reflective writing prompts, articles for the class and other resources will be made available on-line via Desire to Learn. To access D2L, you must have a PSU ODIN account. Your D2L ID name will be the same as your ODIN user name and your password is the last 4 digits of your PSU Student ID number (or your ODIN password). Log into the course by going to <http://www.psuonline.pdx.edu>.

Students with Disabilities

Please see me if you have a disability that may require some modification to the course. I will work with you and the Disability Resource Center to arrange needed support.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in no-credit for the assignment. If you are using quotes or referencing the work of others, please be sure to appropriately cite your sources. Please see me if you are unfamiliar with how to cite a source.

Weekly Schedule

Below is our tentative schedule of topics and assignments. Please note that it is subject to change.

Week 1

Sept. 24th: Introduction to course expectations and service learning, overview of course work

Wed. 26th: The benefits and science of breastfeeding

Due: Article #1 Breastfeeding and the use of human milk

Week 2

Mon. Oct. 1st: no class MLK, Jr. day observed

Wed. 3rd: meet with Marion Rice from the NMC

Due: Reflection #1 (service learning)

Week 3

Mon. 8th: History of Breastfeeding/ Healthy People 2020

Breastfeeding in your personal community

Identifying our project goals/forming project groups

Due: Article #2 Breastfeeding and the risk of postpartum death in the United States

Due: Reflection #2 (mothers feeding experiences)

Wed. 10th: Local and national breastfeeding policies

Group work success

Due: Article #3: Partner influence on health behavior decision-making: Increasing

Breastfeeding duration

Week 4

Mon. 15th: Tour of PSU Lactation facilities

Due: Article #5: Lactating at PSU: State of the Campus

Due: Reflection #3 (male perceptions of breastfeeding)

Feb. 17th: Identifying Barriers to Breastfeeding

WIC Video: Breastfeeding: Another Way of Saying I love You

Due: Article #4: Public perceptions on breastfeeding constraints

Week 5

Mon. 22nd: Qualitative and quantitative research methods—examine survey questions and analysis techniques /group work time / Time spent out-of-class check in

Due: Cresswell: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches pgs 3-20

Due: Reflection #5 (Lactation at PSU)

Wed. 23rd: Project work time

Week 6

Mon. 29th: Global perceptions of breastfeeding/formula marketing

Video: Formula for Disaster

Due: Reflection #4 (breastfeeding in the media)

Due: Article #6: Impact of Hospital Policies on Breastfeeding Outcomes

Wed. 31st: Open work day (project work)

Week 7

Mon. Nov. 5th: Project work time

Due: Creswell pgs 87-93—ethical considerations

Due: Reflection #6 (international code)

Wed. 7th: Individual student check-ins

Data interpretation/group work time

Due: Creswell: Data interpretation pgs. 183-194, 218-220

Week 8

Mon. 12th: Milk sharing/milk banks, Project work time

Due: Reflection # 7 (group work)

Wed. 14th: Project work time—group check-ins/ class feedback

Due: Article #7: Breastfeeding among low income women with and without peer support

Week 9

Mon. 19th: Project/presentation work time

Due: Reflection #8 (Resources for new mothers)

Wed. 21st: Project/presentation work time

Due: Article #8: New reasons and new ways to study birth physiology

Also recommended but not required: Epidurals and Breastfeeding

<http://jhl.sagepub.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/content/21/3/305.abstract>

Week 10

Mon. 26th: Project/presentation work time/final edits

Due: Reflection #9 (interventions)

Wed. 28th: Project/presentation work time/final edits

Week 11

Final week schedule **THURSDAY Dec. 6th 12:30-2:20**

Presentation to Nursing Mother's Counsel of Oregon and Portland State University

Due: Reflection #10 (final reflection)