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NUTR 356: Nutrition Education in the Community—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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NUTR 356: Nutrition Education in the Community
A Peer Review of Teaching Project
Benchmark Portfolio

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Abstract

This course portfolio summarizes a thoughtful documentation of a peer review process of teaching for an undergraduate course in community nutrition. The portfolio provides my description of the course and course goals utilizing the 'Backwards Design' approach; a reflection of teaching methods and activities used to enhance learning and reach course goals; an analysis of teaching activities at the end of the semester and planned changes for teaching this course moving forward.

Keywords: community nutrition education, undergraduate, Needs Assessment, Nutrition and Health Sciences
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Description of the Course

This is a 300 level undergraduate course called Nutrition Education in the Community. This class exposes students to community based nutrition assistance programs, which may or may not involve an educational component. As it is currently taught, it covers many topics related to nutrition assistance programming including things like food security, assessing nutritional status, assessing community needs, principles of epidemiology, types of federal assistance programs available, policy making, program planning and lesson planning. In essence, the course gives undergraduate nutrition majors (with various options including dietetics, nutrition & exercise science, community health & wellness) an understanding and foundation about what community nutrition entails. A large majority of students are Dietetics option students and female. Dietetics students are typically highly motivated since they have to achieve above a C letter in this course requirement. There are also first-generation college students that may include an increasing number of ethnic minority groups and occasionally international students. The first semester I taught the course, 64 students were enrolled. This semester 46 students enrolled which made the peer review process for this course more manageable without a teaching assistant.

Currently this course is a requirement for Dietetics option students, and has been approved to meet the requirements of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)/Didactic Component. The course is designed “to provide basic understanding of competencies needed for dietetic practice” and “to provide a community perspective to new areas of nutrition.” With that said, the Dietetics requirements are in the process of being updated and there are a lot of unknowns about what that means for this course and others that are currently being taught. I have had discussions with my department curriculum committee members including our Dietetic Internship Director about this course and how to handle the existing objectives for this course. The direction I have taken thus far is to create a course that focuses on the nutrition education process more intimately, versus the existing course that provides a broader brush approach to community nutrition education. Moreover, with the addition of a new Community Health and Wellness option in the Nutrition major, I am now considering the needs of these students as well in redesigning this course.

Course Goals

First, I want the course to be more focused so that students can walk away with a better understanding and mastery of key principles and skillsets relevant to community nutrition education. My goal in the end is for students to be able to thoughtfully answer such questions as: What is community nutrition and what does community nutrition education look like today? Why do we even have community nutrition education? How do we assess the needs of a community in terms of nutrition intervention or education? What are the challenges in meeting the nutrition needs of a community? What are the constraints of nutrition assistance...
programs? How can we improve community health through community nutrition assistance programs?

Answering these questions will require knowledge of some new definitions or concepts such as food insecurity or epidemiology. But more importantly there is a process of identifying relevant information or data (as well as gaps or limitations to that information), synthesizing that information and having a better understanding of the nutritional problem(s) at hand, which are much more complex than students initially perceive (typically at the individual level).

There is also an unspoken reality that many nutrition assistance programs are already established and program design or lesson development is low (if ever) on the list of responsibilities. Hence the focus should be on helping students understand the importance of program evaluation (which will be covered in another course) and for this course, identifying good examples of nutrition education programs. I am always amazed at the quantity of nutrition education curriculum that already exists (and continues to be developed), and the relatively little evidence that exists to demonstrate its effectiveness or fidelity in the real world. At the very least, students need to see examples of existing curriculum and be able to critique its appropriateness for particular audiences or circumstances. My goal is to have students understand that there is no “one size fits all” approach to nutrition education, and with the right fundamental knowledge and understanding of learning (for the individual) and ecological factors at play, they can be more fluid and adaptable in their approaches to community nutrition. The new course objectives can be found on the syllabus (see Appendix A).

In this process, I want students to learn about themselves what it is they bring to the table. I preface my class by telling them that they all have their own unique experiences that can be helpful in relating to other people. Conversely, they need to be cognizant that this can also limit one’s ability to see and understand things from those who may have had completely different life experiences.

I see this course as an opportunity to expose students to the idea that working in the real world is not as straightforward as what you read in a textbook. I have a background in clinical and community nutrition so, in a sense, this course chose me. Just prior to joining UNL I worked in obesity prevention nutrition education programming and evaluation at the state and local level, so I have a better sense of what students will be facing in real world settings. My previous community related work experience was a good fit for me to take over as instructor for this course.

**Objectives of Peer Review Course Portfolio**

The first goal that comes to mind is demonstration of a successful backwards design course for future reference. This exercise has thus far been very helpful and I hope
to capture the process well enough that I can use later when I develop other courses
or share it with colleagues so that they might benefit from the example. I also
wonder if this process might be useful in other contexts (such as a semester-long
assignment for students). The second more obvious goal, which almost goes
without saying, is to provide students with courses that engage them while at the
same time enriching their education. The process of doing such takes considerable
thought, trial and error, and time to figure out. More specifically, I would be
interested in documenting the process of showing students their own progress in
gaining not only knowledge, but also how they are synthesizing their knowledge to
formulate more complex discussions and understanding around the successes and
failures of community nutrition and nutrition education. It will be as much a
process for me at it will be for them since the ‘real world’ has little room for such
reflection. Hence, documentation of this thought process becomes a critical piece
(i.e. the first goal mentioned). Lastly, my goal is to create a course portfolio that will
provide documentation of teaching excellence for my tenure and promotion file. In
the end I want to convey my genuine interest and investment in key stakeholders so
that the education I provide begins most tangibly with my students in the classroom
and eventually touches the people of Nebraska (and beyond). I like sharing Albert
Einstein quotes with my students and the following captures the spirit of what I try
to convey: “Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned
in school.”

The resulting portfolio will provide a broad overview for starters. Since I have only
taught this class once using materials graciously shared from a previous instructor, I
thought it would be most useful to reflect on what worked well and where the
course could be improved. The difficulty is that most aspects of this course could be
improved (lectures, projects, exams). Perhaps one of my biggest concerns from the
outset was the number of lectures slides for each class (and the lack of notes to
guide an outside instructor). This set the tone for a class that seemed to cover too
much information and painstaking detail that would exhaust the student while not
necessarily contributing to their education. I would like this portfolio to
demonstrate how this course was given a better focus and value to students.

Teaching Methods/Course Materials/Course Activities

The face-to-face teaching in large part involves a combination of lecture, group work
and discussion activities. In an effort to streamline the amount of material students
are expected to learn, I am focusing the lectures on key information that align with
the new objectives more concisely and purposefully. This in turn shortens the
lecture and allows time at the end (or in some instances the beginning) of class for
students to engage in reflection and discussion activities. The lectures will use
PowerPoint with less text and some ‘fill-in’ spaces that require students to pay
attention and take notes.
In addition to the combination of lecture, group reflection and discussion, I am also inviting four guest speakers throughout the course of the semester. Early in the semester librarians Andrea Dinkelman and Leslie Delserone will come in to talk to students on data literacy strategies and citation management for their Needs Assessment group project. Later in the semester, three speakers from different nutrition programs will come in to provide guest lectures on their respective programs. There will also be use of short video clips and a documentary to aid or supplement the lecture material. Students will be given questions to reflect on regarding the video content and some of this material they can expect to see on the exam.

Specific chapter readings are assigned for all lectures and students are expected to read these in advance of class on a regular basis. Readings average about 20 pages. I made an attempt to choose pages within a chapter that were most critical. I openly acknowledge that I do this as courtesy to students in an attempt to be mindful of other coursework load and responsibilities they have outside of my class. Students today are busier (many with jobs) and overloaded (e.g. life circumstances, volunteer activities and loan debt) more than they were a few decades ago.

The course activities outside of class also include individual and group assignments that are meant to engage students in integrating and applying the information they are learning in class. The first assignment is an individual reflection paper that instructs the student to choose and critique a real-world example of a Needs Assessment. This is done well in advance of conducting a Needs Assessment (NA) as part of a group project. The rationale behind critiquing existing examples is that it will 1) Expose students to an assortment of living documents; 2) Allow students to examine whether the ‘7 steps’ to a Needs Assessment are always included or identifiable; 3) Allow students to examine the strengths and weaknesses of existing documents; and 4) Provide better insight into how students will prepare their own group project. Students will also have two class sessions dedicated to working on the NA group project.

Another assignment entails researching a nutrition-related bill and writing a letter to a legislator. This is meant to expose students to the most current nutrition related issues and engage them in the public policy process.

In addition, students will seek out their choice of any local food assistance or nutrition education program and volunteer 10-15 hours throughout the course of the semester. They will keep a journal about their experiences, observations and any interactions with clients. This is meant to reinforce course objectives related to understanding effective nutrition education principles especially as they relate to people from various backgrounds; and understanding the complexities of addressing major nutrition-related problems as they experience it in real-life settings. This activity was adopted from the previous instructor and journal entries seem to indicate students get a lot out of this volunteer experience. There is a sense of gratitude that comes from volunteering either because their interactions were
positive or students experience firsthand the extent of food insecurity or other nutrition-related issues in their own communities.

The main textbook is Community Nutrition in Action: An Entrepreneurial Approach (Seventh Edition) by Marie Boyle. Some chapters are stronger than others, and for one of the weak chapters I am pulling information from another textbook Nutrition Education: Linking Research, Theory, and Practice (Third Edition) by Isobel Contento. All textbook material is synthesized in PowerPoint slides with fill-in spaces to encourage note taking. All lecture slides are provided ahead of class so students can review ahead of time or print paper handouts to take notes in written format. (We discuss a research article at the start of the semester that suggests hand written notes are better for student learning, so as to encourage less computer note taking and distractions in the classroom).

**Rationale for Teaching Methods**

The PowerPoint lecture slides were created by a previous instructor and having taught the course for the first time, some of the feedback that I got from students was that there was too much text and information provided to them. A suggestion from students was that I include fill-in spaces to keep it interactive so that students had to take notes and keep them from getting bored or falling asleep.

I am trying a new active learning technique where students gather in groups of 3-4 after I have provided the lecture material. They are given instructions to reflect on the biggest take away points from the lecture and discuss among their group members. Once there is a consensus, they write 2-3 questions with answers on a half-sheet of paper with group member names. Then after they are given some time to discuss as a group, each group shares what they valued most from the lecture. This activity will have incentives built in. First, well thought out questions written on half-sheet may be chosen to be included on their exam. Second, if there are enough well written questions throughout the course of the semester, the last day of class before finals week will be a review session using a game format such as Jeopardy or Kahoot!, a game-based learning platform. And finally, students are given 1 point each for each Q&A they turn in. In essence my rationale for using this active learning process is to help them acquire the knowledge that is expected of them in a fun, engaging manner while helping prepare them for their exam.

**The Course and the Broader Curriculum**

This course provides an introduction to community nutrition and nutrition education and hence, a focused introductory course provides a strong foundation for undergraduate students who need a basic understanding of community nutrition whether or not they choose to focus on this area for their future career path. This course sets students up for success in subsequent courses that go into greater depth about program planning, development, implementation, and evaluation, namely
students whose designated undergraduate nutrition option is Community Health and Wellness. The Community Health and Wellness option has only recently been developed and approved, so we expect to see an increase in the number of student enrolling in this course with this particular nutrition option.

**Analysis of Student Learning**

To assess whether student learning has been enhanced, I revisit my goals. Ultimately, the main goal is to have students understand that there is no “one size fits all” approach to nutrition education, and with the right fundamental knowledge and understanding of learning (for the individual) and ecological factors at play, they can be more fluid and adaptable in their approaches to community nutrition. Two objectives that I have placed much emphasis in helping meet this particular goal are objectives #1 and #5. These objectives focus on building fundamental knowledge for this particular course, as well as higher level learning and development of real-world skills and application.

- Course Objective 1. Demonstrate general understanding of purpose, current methods & limitations of assessing nutritional status of target populations.
- Course Objective 5. Identify causes & discuss complexities of addressing major nutrition-related problems in US.

Assessment of whether student learning has been enhanced will involve examining three activities: 1) Comparison of Needs Assessment Group Project between this year’s class and last year’s class along with a brief discussion of the changes made to facilitate student learning between the two years; 2) Highlighting examples of students’ reflections on the Needs Assessment Critique assignment (one of the changes adapted in this year’s class); and last but not least, 3) Student feedback on class activities, which is an evaluation activity called *Keep. Stop. Start.* (adapted from Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas).

**Comparison of Needs Assessment Group Project between Two Classes**

The Community Needs Assessment group project is considered the 'big project' for students in this class. First, it should be noted for many nutrition students, this type of assessment is new and challenging, so it is not unusual or unexpected that students struggle with it. Looking back to the 2016 class, there was larger proportion of the class that failed the project on first attempt. Seven out of 22 groups failed this project (it was a larger class with 67 students), which is approximately 32% of the class. This year’s class, 2017, only two out of 15 groups, or about 13% of the class, failed on first attempt. The same rubric was used to grade papers both years, and I noticed an overall improvement in the quality of papers turned in this time around. Specifically, the required length of the paper was increased this year, and students easily met or exceeded the minimum page
requirement by including substantial sources of data to report and discuss. I came across little evidence of student utilizing typical tactics to take up space, such as use of large margins, excessive use of visuals, lots of white space or writing meaningless filler narrative. For both classes I allowed groups that failed or scored poorly to redo their papers and the average score in the end was similar between the two classes: 83% for 2016 and 82% for 2017. However, the noticeable difference for me was that this year's class grasped the complexity of this assignment much better than last years class as evidenced by the low rate of failing students and overall improvement in the quality and length of papers.

Overall improvements to this assignment were likely attributed to some changes I made since teaching the course last year. First, I added a new assignment to be completed long before students embarked on their own Needs Assessment. This assignment was a Needs Assessment Critique where students were given the opportunity to explore and critique a real-world example of a Needs Assessment (see section below). Second, I had students turn in an outline of their Needs Assessment at about the halfway point before the due date. This served as means of checking student progress and assisting any students who were off track and feeling lost.

**Highlights of Student Reflections from a New Assignment: Needs Assessment Critique**

The objectives behind critiquing existing examples of a real-world Community Needs Assessment are to:

1. Expose students to an assortment of living documents
2. Allow students to examine whether the '7 steps' to a Needs Assessment are always included or identifiable
3. Allow students to examine the strengths and weaknesses of existing documents
4. Provide better insight into how students will prepare their own group project

Four example assignments are included below to demonstrate student self-reflection and some success of this assignment in enhancing student learning. In addition, feedback provided by students at the end of the course indicate that 13 students (or 13% of the class) chose this assignment as one of the top learning activities to 'Keep' for future classes. For example, one student said this:

"I felt this activity helped me gain a better understanding of how a group Needs Assessment is conducted. By critiquing it, I was able to notice limitations, which gave me ideas as to how to do things differently for our group project."

The strongest evidence came from reading the guided reflections of students critiquing a real-world example of a Community Needs Assessment. Students were
given a list of local health department links to peruse and instructed to choose a Needs Assessment from their website to critique using guided questions to reflect on (see Appendix B for instructions). Excerpts from four student assignments are included here to illustrate enhanced learning to meet the assignment-specific objectives listed above.

**Student 1** (see Appendix C)
"Reading through this needs assessment helped me to grasp the concept of what a needs assessment is and why they are important in the process of improving the health of the community overall. I like the project overview in this needs assessment and will be clear with the purpose of the research that is being conducted. It is important for the reader to know what the research is being utilized for. One thing that I wish this needs assessment did have is a more clear overview of the results of the research. That is one of the most important parts of having a complete assessment because the priorities are founded from the results of the research. Reading through this example helped me to understand that the research that I will be doing can be both qualitative and quantitative and it also helped me gain an idea of how I would like to organize it. I would like to include a very clear results section and then derive my priorities and plan of action from the results of the data. This example also helped me to realize the importance of setting parameters for the research and then finding a topic from there. In conclusion, reading through this example helped give me some ideas of how to organize a project like this and why needs assessments are important in our communities."

**Student 2** (see Appendix D)
"There were some steps of needs assessment which were easily identifiable, while other steps were more difficult to find. I found all of the steps to be useful in one way or another...This site gave specific community data and target population data, mostly in the form of quantitative data. When examining the social-ecological model given in class and comparing it to the Northeast Nebraska Health Department Needs Assessment, it appears such considerations such as lifestyle factors, food choices, and living and working conditions were taken into account. This Needs Assessment also referenced Health People 2020 frequently and often compared data throughout the needs assessment."

**Student 3** Trenton Raymond (see Appendix E)
"Based on this community needs assessment, it helped me understand the amount of work and detail that is put into a needs assessment, and definitely helped me realize that getting to work on this project sooner than later would be beneficial. It also helped me understand the different ways we can share and display the information for our own needs assessment and as to why there is a paper portion and a presentation portion to this project. Overall I thought that this community needs assessment was very thorough
and well put together, and gave me more confidence going forward with this group project."

**Student 4 Molly Krause (see Appendix F)**

"Other than the lack of an action plan, this is an excellent needs assessment. I believe this is directly related to the number of people involved in conducting it. There were a variety of partners who worked on putting it all together, which allowed it to incorporate numerous aspects of health. With all of the different sides of health that were presented, the needs assessment could have been chaotic and hard to read, but it actually was extremely well-organized. Reading through this needs assessment helped me realize what kind of figures, information, and writing are appropriate for my group project. I will probably come back to this document as an example for organizing a table of contents and setting up background information. I also noticed that the Panhandle Community Needs Assessment included a section on the strengths of the community. When we talked about needs assessments in class, my mind went straight to problem areas. However, I think it is important to note what a community is doing well with, so I will try to incorporate that into my own group project as well."

**Student Feedback on Class Activities: Keep. Stop. Start.**

The last assignment of the semester was a Class Activities and Peer Evaluation (see instructions in Appendix G). For this assignment, students were instructed to evaluate class activities, and their peers’ performance on the Needs Assessment Group Project. For the former, students were to choose at least 3 class activities from a list of all the types of learning activities used throughout the semester to decide whether I should keep it, stop it, or start something different (such as modify an existing activity). The list of learning activities were provided to the students to choose from which included: Needs Assessment Critique; Legislative Letter; Needs Assessment Group Project (outline, report & oral presentation); Community Nutrition Volunteer Experience & Journal Entry; Kahoot interactive game; Videos: King Corn documentary, Feeding America; & ‘Grow Food’ rap video; Guest lectures; Group discussion & ‘Take-away’ Q&A (at the end of lecture); and Class discussion during lecture.

I stressed that their constructive criticism of learning activities was welcome, good or bad. I also made it very clear that they were not evaluating me, rather the learning activities, so that they felt more inclined to give honest feedback. A complete table summarizing 'Keep. Stop. Start' tallies and written student responses are available in Appendix H.

Of all the possible learning activities provided, the Needs Assessment Group Project received the most favorable votes to keep or keep with revisions (19 students said to 'Keep'; 7 students suggested ways to improve the assignment; 2 students said to 'Stop' this activity). Collectively, this implies that over half of the class (26 out of 46
students, 57%) willingly chose this activity to 'keep' among the list of all activities to choose from. In addition, students provided insightful feedback. For example, several students openly acknowledged it was a challenging project as depicted in the excerpts below:

"At first I dreaded this because like many people I find group projects to be more difficult. I honestly got a lot out of this project and feel like I am walking away with a lot more knowledge about community nutrition."

"Starting the project was difficult but once our group got going it became very interesting and enjoyable. I would say keep this because I ended up with a group who stayed on top of what we assigned each other, but had heard of other groups who had difficulties with their groups."

"Although this assignment was tedious and confusing at first, I felt that I learned a lot from the research that we did. I think this assignment was valuable to the learning in this class."

Another theme that emerged from student feedback was the applied nature of the project, which helped them take what they learned in class passively, to an active process where the skillset involved in conducting a Needs Assessment helped them learn firsthand the various steps involved.

"It helped me learn how to assess a community and how to tie the notes we took into actual work."

"I thought the Needs Assessment group project was a great project for this class, it really help us understand the different aspects of a needs assessment and the work that goes into it as well as opening our eyes to some issues going on in the areas that we chose."

"Is a great example of a real life project that some of us could work on at another point."

"This was probably the biggest learning experience of the class, because it brought everything together. I thought the outline should have been graded though, because it was a lot of work."

"I learned so much when doing our group project that it would have honestly hurt my grade had we not done it. It helped me know the steps of the assessment along with many different organizations and ways to get help."

The latter quote suggests this particular student may be a hands-on or project-based learner, and is especially telling of the project's value for this type of student. Still, the project had some challenges and students offered good suggestions for improving the learning experience. Specifically, students commented on concerns
about uneven distribution of the workload for a group project and having more clarity or structure on how to go about the group project in a timely manner.

"Really helped me to learn what all goes into a real needs assessment. However, it was really hard to write a group paper and have everyone divide the work evenly and be on the same page.

"While this activity took a long time to complete, it helped me gain insight and practice on assessing a community and their pressing issues. One thing I suggest would be for students to label the parts of the assignment they completed. It would discourage one person in the group doing most of the work."

"While I thought the project was very educational in itself, more guidance in the instructions would have been helpful and it would have been nice to be able to pick our group members—to ensure that we got to work with reliable and hardworking people."

"I think this activity (Needs Assessment outline) should be kept because it really helped my group prepare for the report and oral presentation. However, I think more guidance should be given as to how to structure our outlines and the details that should be included to better prepare us for the report."

"Have outline due earlier, as well as breaking needs assessment paper up into sections, have steps 1-4 due earlier and maybe get feedback before finishing rest of steps."

"Not necessarily stop, but modify. I would have liked if we got to choose our groups because I did not luck out so great with mine. Maybe if there were checkpoints along the way that would have helped because some of my group members put in their sections too close to the deadline and there was simply not enough time for me to add/take away things and make the changes necessary to turn in a project I was confident in. Some students do not care about what grade they get as long as they pass the class, and others are taking this class as an elective so really do not care about what grade they receive. That makes it really hard to work with while trying to balance the grade you are aiming for, with not doing the whole project on your own."

The second most favored learning activity was the Volunteer Experience & Journal Assignment. This required 10-15 hours of community nutrition education related volunteer experience and a 2-page reflection paper about their community experience. Slightly more than half of the class, 52%, chose to 'Keep' this activity or offered suggestions for revisions (22 students said 'Keep'; 2 students suggested way to improve; 4 said to 'Stop' this activity). Student quotes suggested several benefits
from this assignment. Specifically, students remarked on the applied nature of this learning experience to help tie in and reinforce what they learn in the classroom; gaining new perspective; exposure to various issues, jobs or community resources; expanding their network of professional and personal contacts; providing a resume builder; and just plain 'feeling good' about volunteering in their own communities.

"Gave us insight about what is really going on in the community. Provided experience for a good cost. Met good people and new friends. And also connecting to some important people for networking."

"This project really tied together the entire class. Our presentation wasn’t on Lincoln’s food insecurities/obesity but many others were, and doing Meals on Wheels really showed me what everyone was talking about. It made all the presentations actually mean something."

"You learn more from doing rather than just hearing about the concepts. I got a lot out of my experience that would’ve been impossible to just teach-just wish setting up experiences was easier."

"This is a great way to get out into the community and see what programs are being implemented and how we can get involved even when we are not dietitians or public health officials."

"Any push for people to volunteer is good, to develop us as citizens while also developing our resumes. Reflecting on the experience helps ensure that we got something out of it."

In third place for most favored learning activity was the Take-away Q&A assigned at the end of each lecture. This was one of several new activities I incorporated into the class and was glad to see it was well received by approximately one-third of the class (15 students said to 'Keep'; 7 students said to 'Stop'). This was a relatively simple active learning activity that took place at the end of lecture. Students would get in groups of three and discuss the main take-away or key points they picked up from the day's lecture; then as a group they would write down two questions and corresponding answers to turn in for 2 credit points. This was meant to help them reflect on and reinforce the lecture material covered each time. Although this activity received the highest number of 'Stop' votes, there was enough feedback to pinpoint that this activity needs tweaking rather than elimination. More details on planned changes to this and other activities are discussed in the next section.

**Planned Changes**

**Needs Assessment Group Project**

For this project, it was clear some students got stuck doing the lion’s share of the work. Still for other groups, they struggled to figure out how to evenly distribute the
workload. Implementing a requirement to turn in an outline to check progress was useful in helping jump start group work, but it was not enough in its current state.

First, the instructions for completing an outline were purposefully left vague and simply suggested following the format of the '7 steps' for a Needs Assessment which were covered in greater detail over two lectures and in the chapter reading. I wanted to be flexible and encouraged students to organize their outlines in a way that made sense to them, while keeping in mind the necessary steps involved in conducting a Needs Assessment. I learned that undergraduate students are not used to thinking creatively, independently or having such flexibility. Rather they prefer to be told exactly what to do and need to hear and see the instructions repeatedly. Moreover, it was apparent that some students never read the chapter. Therefore, instructions for the outline will be more explicit about each step, placing an emphasis on the first three steps, since this is where most of the time and energy is spent. In addition, I will provide the libguide link to resources on these instructions (these are provided to them on Canvas, but including it here will be convenient).

Second, one of the steps in the outline involves data collection which (ideally) covers three types of data. To help distribute the workload evenly, I will be explicit about instructing the 3-member groups to each choose one of these areas to collect data on, and subsequently, in the next step of the Needs Assessment, they would each be responsible for analyzing and interpreting their own data. This should help even out the workload and provide the structure that students requested in their feedback. I may also entertain the suggestion to have students label which section they completed for better accountability.

**Volunteer Experience and Journal Assignment**

At least 6 students commented that they had difficulty finding the time to fit this in. With a growing number of students working jobs or having other responsibilities while attending school, this is a concern. I have tried to accommodate some students, for example, if they are already volunteering somewhere in the community, then they explore the possibility of approaching their volunteerism with a nutrition education lens. It’s not always feasible, but there have been circumstances where it has worked. I am also considering offering an alternative project that still requires approximately the same time commitment, but is easier to manage with their own schedules. For example, one idea is to have them conduct an interview with a community nutrition professional and provide a 2 page reflection of that interview. Prior to the interview, the script of questions would need to be approved by me, the instructor. On the other hand, for those students who complained about lack of time, I wonder if procrastination and waiting until the last minute played a role. I will continue to encourage students to seek volunteer opportunities early in the semester and be more consistent about prompting them
to do so as the semester progresses. In addition, I can include a suggested deadline for identifying a volunteer opportunity on the syllabus and use it as a periodic verbal reminder.

**Take-Away Q&A**

Although most students provided positive feedback, specifically, that this daily lecture exercise kept them engaged, encouraged them to pay attention and helped reinforce the lecture material; several students commented that the activity felt rushed and subsequently, for some, this did not help them learn. Unfortunately, lectures tended to run into the designated discussion time and often students focused on quickly writing something down (the 2 points were a strong incentive) to get out of class on time. I will need to continue cutting back on lecture material to allow students enough time to reflect, discuss and come to an agreement on which Q&A to turn in. Also, one student suggested encouraging students to write the Q&A on a separate sheet of paper or log to keep track of the material they are learning as a review tool for the final exam. Often the questions they come up with are similar in content to what is asked of them on the final comprehensive exam, so I believe there is value in continuing this activity given more time is allotted to do it.

**Summary of Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process**

Much like my students, I found the process of reflecting and documenting my thoughts for the portfolio process to be extremely valuable. First, the 'Backwards Design' concept was by far the most useful tool in helping me design the course and definitely one I intend to use moving forward for development of new courses. Second, the structure and space provided throughout the year for this process was critical in development of a meaningful portfolio. This is essentially what I need to improve on for my students, especially as it relates to the core Needs Assessment Group Project. Through this process, I learned that although I wanted students to become independent, critical thinkers, they need more structure (not less), time and gentle reminders to think outside the box. It will take time to find the right combination of tools and activities to enhance student learning in a way that fosters critical thinking and motivates students to work harder. The Peer Review Teaching Project gave me the tools and confidence to continue improving so that, ultimately, students can broaden their worldviews and walk away with a meaningful education. As Albert Einstein so eloquently stated: "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school."
Appendices

Appendix A: Course Syllabus
Class time/location: Monday, Wednesday 4:00-5:15 PM, HECO 11
Instructor: Virginia Chaidez, PhD, RD
E-Mail: vchaidez2@unl.edu
Office hours & location: Monday & Wednesday 2-4pm, 104A Leverton Hall

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:
An overview of community nutrition to include assessment of community needs and services; policy formation; techniques for developing and delivering theory-based nutrition education.

PREREQUISITES:
NUTR 100 and NUTR 250; NUTR 251 or parallel.

TEXTBOOK:
Community Nutrition in Action: An Entrepreneurial Approach by Marie A. Boyle and David H. Holben, 7th Ed.

CANVAS:
This semester, this course will be taught using the Canvas learning management system. You may have experience using the Blackboard LMS (known on this campus as MyUNL). Canvas is a system that offers many of the same tools as Blackboard. UNL is moving to the Canvas system.

When you login to this course’s Blackboard site, you will see that there is no content there – only a link that will direct you to Canvas. You can access Canvas by going to canvas.unl.edu. When you do, you can login using the same username and password you typically use to login to Blackboard. Both Canvas and Bb are available via my.unl.edu.

Once you login to this course’s Canvas site, you will see that there is a module in the course dedicated called Intro to Canvas. This section will provide an overview of the Canvas LMS, give you access to resources about Canvas, and provide you with information about how to get help using Canvas. You can also find Canvas training course here: http://go.unl.edu/canvas-student

TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS & COURSE APPROACH:
Methods used will include lecture & discussion, exploring & critiquing real world examples, small group work, guest speakers, and practical exposure. You are responsible for all material presented in the lectures, even if you have been absent. Evaluation of lecture material will be performed via one exam and various assignments.

The instructor is committed to offering a course that maintains an atmosphere of ethical behavior, individual integrity, and equitable treatment of each person. Expression of ideas from various perspectives are welcome and encouraged in class discussions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
As a course approved to meet the requirements of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics/Didactic Component and Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) competencies, you will obtain material specifically designed to provide basic understanding of competencies needed for dietetic practice and health education programming (specific to community nutrition).

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Demonstrate general understanding of the purpose, current methods & limitations of assessing nutritional status of target populations.
2. Demonstrate general understanding of nutrition programming principles.
3. Demonstrate general knowledge of existing federal nutrition assistance programs.
4. Demonstrate a general understanding of effective (nutrition) education principles including constraints & considerations in design & delivery.
5. Identify causes & discuss complexities of addressing major nutrition-related problems in US.
6. Gain a general understanding of policy (Big P & little p) & articulate importance of reassessing policy periodically.

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
"Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining the integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. To further serve this end, the University supports a Student Code of Conduct which addresses the issue of academic dishonesty". Cheating during exams will not be tolerated. If a student is suspected of cheating, they will be asked to turn in their exam and leave the room. If a student is caught cheating, they will be dismissed from the course and will receive a grade of “F”. Refer to the Undergraduate Bulletin for the University policy on Academic Honesty.

Professional Expectations of Students:
The following behaviors/attitudes are expected from students:
• Attend class regularly & on time
• Do not leave class early
• When absence from class or alterations in arrival or leaving times are necessary, email or talk to the instructor
• Take responsibility for obtaining information missed as a result of being absent
• Come to class prepared. This means completing assignments, participate in discussion, be courteous, and come with a positive attitude

EXAMS:
There will be one exam given at three time points (at the beginning, middle and end of semester). The exam is comprehensive and the best score out of three will be included in calculating your final grade. Students missing examinations must notify the instructor and obtain permission prior to the exam to schedule an alternative examination time if they so choose. Otherwise, the student forfeits their opportunity to take the exam at an agreed upon time if the instructor is not notified prior to scheduled exams.

ASSIGNMENT PAPER REQUIREMENTS:
All papers must use APA or AMA style for in-text citations and reference lists. The failure to cite information that is not common knowledge where it is used can be considered a form of plagiarism. Please be sure to correctly cite all information in your papers. In addition to following the APA or AMA style guidelines, be sure using standard 1” margins, 12 point font size and Calibri or Times New Roman font style. Papers should be double-spaced.

Only scientific or reputable references including reputable websites may be used for papers. Note- Wikipedia is not a good source by itself; you must look up and cite the original source for full credit.

All the assignments should be submitted on Canvas on time. Late assignments are subject to a 10% penalty per day. Emailing assignments to the instructor is NOT allowed and will not be graded.
**EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

Comprehensive Exam 100 points
‘Key point’ class discussion Q&A (2 or more per lecture) 25 points
Project 1: Needs Assessment Critique 50 points
Project 2: Legislative Letter 25 points
Project 3: Needs Assessment **Group Project** 100 points
Project 4: Journal of Community Nutrition Experience 50 points
Project 5: Needs Assessment **Group Oral Presentation** 25 points
Peer & Instructor Evaluation 25 points

**TOTAL:** 400 points

**GRADING SCALE:**

Grades will be determined based on percentage points:
98-100% = A+
90-97% = A
88-89% = B+
80-87% = B
78-79% = C+
70-77% = C
68-69% = D+
60-67% = D
Below 60% = F
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<td><strong>Discussion &amp; EXAM 1 (Pre-test)</strong></td>
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<td>Program Planning</td>
<td>Chapter 5 (p 150-174 &amp; 180-186)</td>
<td>PROJECT 1: Needs Assessment Critique</td>
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<td>Policy Making</td>
<td>Chapter 6 (p 192-209 &amp; 217-223)</td>
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<td>Understanding Behavior Change</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (p74-92)</td>
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<td>Chapter 16 (p 647-650)</td>
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Appendix B: Instructions for Needs Assessment Critique Assignment
NUTR 356
PROJECT 1: Community Needs Assessment Critique
(50 points)

This assignment is designed to give you an opportunity to evaluate real-world examples of a community needs assessment. Critiquing existing examples will:

1. Expose you to an assortment of living documents
2. Allow you to examine whether the ‘7 steps’ to a needs assessment are always included or identifiable
3. Allow you to examine the strengths and weaknesses of existing documents
4. Provide better insight into how you will prepare your own group project

Instructions:

1. You will browse examples of community needs assessments using a list of County and District Health Department websites found here: http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/puh_oph_lhd.aspx
2. Choose at least one needs assessment that you feel is a good example and write a 2-3-page paper (double-spaced) addressing the following:
   a. What were your first impressions that drew you in?
   b. Are all the ‘7 steps’ included?
      i. If so, were they easily identified?
      ii. If no, do you think it was appropriate to leave out? Why or why not?
      iii. How descriptive and useful was each step?
   c. Was this needs assessment conducted by a single person, a team, or a variety of partners? (If it’s not indicated, provide your best guess). How does this affect the quality and thoroughness of the needs assessment?
   d. What elements of this needs assessment do you plan to take away and use for your own needs assessment?
   e. How did reading through this example help you understand what is expected of you for your group project?
3. This is a reflective paper, so you may organize and write it in a format that makes sense to you. Use of subheadings are recommended to organize your paper.
4. Cite the needs assessment report(s) used for your paper.

7 Basic Steps to a Needs Assessment

Step1: Set the Parameters of the Assessment
Step 2: Develop a Data Collection Plan
Step 3: Collect Data
Step 4: Analyze and Interpret the Data
Step 5: Share the Findings of the Assessment
Step 6: Set Priorities
Step 7: Choose a Plan of Action
As part of a small group (3 people), address step-by-step how you would conduct a Community Needs Assessment. There should be 7 steps in all. Please use the information directly from the lecture notes and slides, as well as the information provided below. The paper should be 6-10 pages in length double-spaced. Use the APA or AMA style for citing your references. (Refer to the lib guide link below for more information on citing your sources.)

7 Steps to a Needs Assessment (also see lecture notes):

Step 1: Set the Parameters of the Assessment
   a) Define your “community” (example: a region, state, county or city.)
   b) Determine the purpose of the Needs Assessment
   c) Set goals and objectives for the Needs Assessment

Step 2: Develop a data collection plan
   a) Specify the types of data needed

Step3: Collect Data
   a) Use various links and sources to gather various data that will ‘paint a picture’
      - http://unl.libguides.com/nutr356
   b) Do your best to include quantitative and qualitative sources of data
   c) Consider the Social-Ecological Model in deciding types of data to collect

Step 4: Analyze and Interpret the Data –
   a) Consider reference data
   b) Statements about target population & comparisons are merged with community & background data
   c) Data are then used to diagnose the community (4 steps involved)
   d) Consider use of visuals to help illustrate key points (tables, graphs, figures, pictures, maps, etc). Be sure to describe or explain any use of visuals in your paper.
   e) Consider discussing limitations of your data.

Step 5: Share the Findings of the Assessment – Discuss whom you would target and how you would share your findings.

Step 6: Set Priorities – What are the most pressing issues? Which health outcome is most important? Be realistic in setting priorities.

Step 7: Choose a Plan of Action – Examples: Change policy, organize workshops, alter an existing program, develop a new program. Do your best to project a realistic and concise plan of action that will have impact.
Needs Assessment Critique

First Impressions

Initially what drew me into this needs assessment was the fact that it was easy to find. On many of the other websites I visited the needs assessment was either very difficult to find or was not there at all. After doing a brief overview of the document it is clear that the information is organized and the report flows nicely from one topic to the next. The table of contents gives you an overview of what can be found within the document and the data is clear and concise. I also appreciate that the project overview which gives the reader an understanding for why this needs assessment was created and what the goals of the project are.

The Seven Steps

The first of the seven steps of the needs assessment is to set the parameters. The 2011 PRC Community Needs Assessment included their parameters on the very first page. The areas that will be included in the study are Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, and Potawattamie Counties. The second step is to develop a data collection plan. Their data collection plan is listed under the methodology subtitle. They plan on using both qualitative and quantitative data by imploring phone interviews, surveys, and researching the pre existing health related data. Steps one and two were very descriptive and thorough.

The data portion of the needs assessment was quite extensive because they are looking at all the different components that go into health. All of the results graphs and tables were well labeled and easy to understand. In this needs assessment there was not one consolidated section which analyzed and discussed the results of all the studies. The results were sprinkled throughout and reported with the data. Certain sections of the data were analyzed more thoroughly than
other sections. It is helpful to have concrete results clearly stated rather than just providing graphs and figures.

The next step is to share the findings of the needs assessment. The overarching findings of this needs assessment were not clearly labeled. The reader has to sift through the document to find the results of each individual topic of study. However, the next step, to set the priorities, is labeled very clearly near the front of the document. There are nine main priorities that can be improved based on the needs assessment. These priorities include access to healthcare, obesity and nutrition, and proper education about healthcare. The document does not go in depth on each of these topics, it may have been more useful if the writers had talked about why these nine areas are in the most need of improvement. Lastly, the needs assessment did not list a plan of action. Because the company that conducted the needs assessment is more geared towards the research aspect of the assessment, it is an appropriate step to leave out. Those who work in public health or community nutrition can use this information to develop programs, change policies, and organize workshops.

The 2011 PRC Community Needs Assessment was conducted by a team of people at Professional Research Consultants, Inc. It is more beneficial to have a team working on a needs assessment than just one individual. This allows for more collaboration and perspectives to be brought together to paint the bigger picture.

Takeaways

Reading through this needs assessment helped me to grasp the concept of what a needs assessment is and why they are important in the process of improving the health of the community overall. I like the project overview in this needs assessment and will be clear with the purpose of the research that is being conducted. It is important for the reader to know what the
research is being utilized for. One thing that I wish this needs assessment did have is a more clear overview of the results of the research. That is one of the most important parts of having a complete assessment because the priorities are founded from the results of the research.

Reading through this example helped me to understand that the research that I will be doing can be both qualitative and quantitative and it also helped me gain an idea of how I would like to organize it. I would like to include a very clear results section and then derive my priorities and plan of action from the results of the data. This example also helped me to realize the importance of setting parameters for the research and then finding a topic from there. In conclusion, reading through this example helped give me some ideas of how to organize a project like this and why needs assessments are important in our communities.

2011 PCR Community Health Needs Assessment

First Impressions:

When I first saw this website, I was a little overwhelmed at the amount of information it had. There were several tabs at the top of the page, which included Programs and Services, Resources, as well as Partnerships, among others. It took me a few minutes to find the needs assessment. What drew me in to this particular site was the fact it includes the county from which I grew up. I am from a rural town of about 1,600 and was not too familiar with the local health department.

7 Basic Steps to a Needs Assessment

There were some steps of needs assessment which were easily identifiable, while other steps were more difficult to find. I found all of the steps to be useful in one way or another. Below, the 7 basic steps to a needs assessment are listed, along with my analysis of how this website followed each step.

1. Set the Parameters of the Assessment

The parameters of the Northeast NE Public Health Department were defined both visually and throughout the site. Visually, this Health Department actually showed which counties in Nebraska it focuses on, including Cedar, Dixon, Wayne, and Thurston. This health department made their mission and vision statements available while also defining their goals and objectives, some of which included, “Promote and encourage healthy behaviors and mental health,” “Assure the quality and accessibility of health services,” and “Prevent epidemics and spread of disease.”

2. Develop a Data Collection Plan
This site gave specific community data and target population data, mostly in the form of quantitative data. When examining the social-ecological model given in class and comparing it to the Northeast Nebraska Health Department Needs Assessment, it appears such considerations such as lifestyle factors, food choices, and living and working conditions were taken into account. This needs assessment also referenced Health People 2020 frequently and often compared data throughout the needs assessment.

3. Collect Data

It was difficult to find specifics on how exactly the data was collected. From the type of data collected, I would assume some data was collected through surveys, such as reasons for not seeing a doctor and tobacco use, while some data were collected through other means. For a few data sets, the site referenced retrieving secondary data from sources such as the Census Bureau and DHHS.

4. Analyze and Interpret Data

As previously stated, reference data was used throughout the needs assessment. The assessment also used Nebraska data, United States regional data, as well as data contrived from the United States as a whole for comparative standards. In addition, several statements compared and analyzed the target population with that of other data, such as comparisons of obesity rates in minorities in Northeast Nebraska to that of the United States as a whole. Most of the interpretation of data consisted of discussing specific community data with that of Healthy People 2020 objectives, as well as data collected from past years.

5. Share the Findings
While it took a few minutes to find where the data was shared on the site, this health department made all of the findings accessible. They did this through various reports, more specifically, “Analysis and Report,” as well as a powerpoint titled, “Needs Assessment,” both of which included multiple tables and graphs to illustrate their findings. The site also listed other reports available to the public, such as statewide and national reports.

6. Set the Priorities

I could not really find anything stating which health outcome was most important. It appeared the focus was to give the audience a wide array of health concerns, as well as related demographics and comparisons.

7. Choose a Plan of Action

This health department shared several resources with the public related to the data in the Assessment, including resources to access to healthcare, partners programs throughout the community, and health and wellness assistance programs.

As stated on the needs assessment, Ionia Research compiled the data, which is an offsite contractor intended to aid in research. Looking further into Ionia, it is stated they use multiple modes of data collection, which may assist in gathering data. Elements which may be useful for this class’s needs assessment project could be using some of the resources this site referenced, further illustrating a specific of the needs assessment through the use of graphs and tables, and using comparisons with Healthy People 2020 throughout the project. By examining this Needs Assessment, a clearer picture was made of what a Needs Assessment actually is as well as what points to make throughout the project. It also helped me to know what to include in the project.
Needs Assessment and Site Resources Used:

http://www.nnphd.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/Resources%7CFind%20Local%20Resources

http://www.nnphd.org/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/51f830a301085/Summary%20Table%202020Responses.pdf


http://www.nnphd.org/
Appendix E: Student 3—Needs Assessment Critique Assignment
A: What were your first impressions that drew you in?

I chose the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) and Lancaster County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) as my needs assessment to critique. I found this plan on the Lincoln - Lancaster County Health Department website. I actually came across it reading the Community Health Profile update which puts together information gathered from the MAPP committees and the assessments they conducted. MAPP process includes four assessments for the community: Community Health Assessment, Community Themes and Strengths, Forces of Change Assessment, and the Community Public Health System Assessment. These assessments provided viable statistical data on a plethora of health related topics including but not limited to demographics, risk behaviors, leading causes of death, maternal and child health, geographic differences, environmental health, communicable diseases, health disparities and so on. It is from this community health profile along with the community health assessments through the MAPP process that CHIP was adopted. Other first impressions that drew me in definitely included the title “CHIP” because it states in the title that there is a plan included, which as I was reading the Community Health Profile (in which I found out about CHIP) realized that the profile did not include any plans of actions but just brought all the data available together to form priorities for the community. So it sounds like I chose two separate needs assessments but in reality the CHIP is essentially the plan of action of the overall needs assessment that was put together by MAPP.
B: Are all ‘7 steps’ included?

Glancing through the CHIP and MAPP documentation it appears that all seven steps were included in the process of conducting a community needs assessment for the Lincoln and they were fairly easily identifiable.

Step 1, setting the parameters of the assessment was done by the MAPP committee which set out 11 core elements key to the health status of the community, these included:

1. Demographic characteristics
2. Socioeconomic characteristics
3. Health resource availability
4. Quality of Life
5. Behavioral Risk Factors
6. Environmental Health Indicators
7. Social and Mental Health
8. Maternal and Child Health
9. Death, Illness and Injury
10. Infectious Disease
11. Sentinel Events

As was briefly mentioned earlier Step 2, 3, and 4 involving the collection of data plan, collecting the data, and analyzing and interpreting the data were set forth by 4 individual assessments that include Community Health Assessment, Community Themes and Strengths, Forces of Change Assessment, and the Community Public Health System Assessment. A timeline for the updated 2015 data was installed that detailed how and when the data would be collected and analyzed for these assessments from April through July and in August and September the revised CHIP would be written and released. Analyzing and interpretation of the data seems to compare to state and national results for similar health categories. For step 5, the findings of the assessment were then shared with the county health department, CHSI peers as well as the committees for CHIP and the Community Health Profile. Part of the information shared relates to step 6 which is setting priorities, MAPP and CHIP both share information on how together they scored and ranked health issues in the community, and what they came up with were 4 broad priority issues which are:
1. Access to Care
2. Chronic Disease Prevention
3. Behavioral Health
4. Injury Prevention

From here CHIP takes over as the existing plan of action currently in place. Throughout its documentation it provides the vision, goals and progress report relating to these four priorities, and within each priority, exists another set of goals and strategies to improve the health status of the community.

C: Was the needs assessment conducted by a single person, a team, or a variety of partners? How does this affect the quality and thoroughness of the needs assessment?

This community assessment was conducted by community work groups that worked on MAPP and CHIP committees, and they were provided technical guidance from the Divisions of Health Data and Evaluation, Health Promotion and Outreach as well as the Community Health Services. I feel that working as a large group with set groups or teams inside the large group can be incredibly beneficial especially when such a sizable overall task is trying to be accomplished; this is especially true if communication between everyone involved is clear and avidly sustained throughout the work. However, if communication is not clear and involved, it can be detrimental and create havoc as well as producing a poor product.

D: What elements of this needs assessment do you plan to take away and use for your own needs assessment?

I don’t know if I will use any of the data from this needs assessment directly, since we are planning on doing a different city, but I will take away knowing where to look for the correct information and into choosing what priorities we want to specifically cover in our needs assessment. As seen from this needs assessment there are going to be several health issue options
to choose from, but at the same time helped narrow the options associated within this region. I also have a better sense of how to analyze the information and what to compare our data against.

**E: How did reading through this example help you understand what is expected of you for your group project?**

Based on this community needs assessment, it helped me understand the amount of work and detail that is put into a needs assessment, and definitely helped me realize that getting to work on this project sooner than later would be beneficial. It also helped me understand the different ways we can share and display the information for our own needs assessment and as to why there is a paper portion and a presentation portion to this project. Overall I thought that this community needs assessment was very thorough and well put together, and gave me more confidence going forward with this group project.
Resources

Lancaster County Community Health Improvement Plan


Lancaster County Community Health Improvement Plan Update 2015


Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships: October 2015 Meeting

BACKGROUND
My first impression of the 2014 Nebraska Panhandle Community Health Needs Assessment is that it is extensive. It is a seventy-four page document with numerous figures, tables, explanations, interpretations, and plans of action. The reason there are so many is because they date back to the late 1800’s. Most of these figures have to do with common public health data, such as crude death rates and population rates. Although it may seem like historical yet irrelevant information, I would think having those figures would assist in assessing the improvement or evolvement of the community. Some of the more recent figures are less typical epidemiological statistics. For example, Figure 27 looks at alcohol use, binge drinking, and impaired driving among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in the Panhandle. When going through the list of figures, I found myself rereading this title. I would never have thought to collect this data, because no one in the target population is of the legal drinking age, and many of them are not of the legal driving age. However, this seems to be a unique issue to this population. This shows how greatly communities can differ, even in the same state or region, causing every needs assessment to be tailored to its target population.

1. SET THE PARAMETERS OF THE ASSESSMENT
This first step of the needs assessment process was easily identified on the introductory page of the document. The community was defined as the residents of the Panhandle who fall under the Panhandle Public Health district and the Scotts Bluff County Health Department. The purpose of the needs assessment was more descriptive and in its own section. For setting goals and objectives, this community had previously held a “visioning process meeting” with forty-one
participants assisting in the determination of what the Panhandle’s biggest issues are and how to deal with them. These were then compiled into an organized list and used as the parameters of the needs assessment.

2-4. DEVELOP A PLAN, COLLECT, ANALYZE & INTERPRET DATA
Data collection is found throughout this needs assessment. Tables, figures, and charts are grouped by topic and presented in chronological order. Demographics, economics, health indicators, social factors, and target population data are all included. Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented in figures and explanations. With the sources below each figure, it is clear that the data collection came mostly from surveys, surveillance, and screenings. In analyzing and interpreting data, background information on the issue is given and then often compared to a reference. For example, one topic is injury and violence. The Panhandle’s history with this problem is explained, proceeded by Figure 28: “Crude Death Rates Due to Injury per 100,000 Population, Panhandle, and State, 2007-2012.” In comparing the rates of the Panhandle to the country or state as a reference, it highlights the issue as a serious problem.

5-6. SHARE THE FINDINGS & SET PRIORITIES
The fifth step in conducting a needs assessment, sharing the findings, was obviously accomplished, because the document was available on the health department website. The next step, setting priorities, had its own section in the needs assessment entitled “Prioritization Process.” There was a meeting of community stakeholders who collectively determined the priorities of the Panhandle. It even lists the criteria for setting priorities, including factors such as the magnitude of the problem, capacity of the local public health system, and readiness or political will. Then, from all of the problems previously presented in data and figures, they chose four health areas to focus on with specificity. For example, one of the priorities is cancer prevention, specifically primary prevention and early detection.
7. CHOOSE A PLAN OF ACTION
I was beginning to think this was the perfect community needs assessment, until I could not find any plan of action. However, if we had not learned in class that an action plan was part of a needs assessment, I would have assumed it was a separate document. The title “needs assessment” somewhat indicates that it only presents the status of a community, not a means of improvement. However, I do think it is appropriate to have an action plan in the same document. Otherwise, all of the work and findings from the data may not be utilized and the next needs assessment will look the same.

QUALITY
Other than the lack of an action plan, this is an excellent needs assessment. I believe this is directly related to the number of people involved in conducting it. There were a variety of partners who worked on putting it all together, which allowed it to incorporate numerous aspects of health. With all of the different sides of health that were presented, the needs assessment could have been chaotic and hard to read, but it actually was extremely well-organized.

MY OWN NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Reading through this needs assessment helped me realize what kind of figures, information, and writing are appropriate for my group project. I will probably come back to this document as an example for organizing a table of contents and setting up background information. I also noticed that the Panhandle Community Needs Assessment included a section on the strengths of the community. When we talked about needs assessments in class, my mind went straight to problem areas. However, I think it is important to note what a community is doing well with, so I will try to incorporate that into my own group project as well.
REFERENCE

NUTR 356 Nutrition Education in the Community  
Class Learning Activities and Group Peer Evaluation (25 points)

Your Name:__________________________________________________________

NUTR 356 Course objectives:

1. Demonstrate general understanding of the purpose, current methods & limitations of assessing nutritional status of target populations.
2. Demonstrate general understanding of nutrition programming principles.
3. Demonstrate general knowledge of existing federal nutrition assistance programs.
4. Demonstrate a general understanding of effective (nutrition) education principles including constraints & considerations in design & delivery.
5. Identify causes & discuss complexities of addressing major nutrition-related problems in US.
6. Gain a general understanding of policy (Big P & little p) & articulate importance of reassessing policy periodically.

A. Class Learning Activities: As part the process of revising to improve this course, your feedback will help determine which activities and assignments can facilitate learning best. Keeping the course objectives in mind, which learning activities would you recommend to Keep? Stop? Start?

- **Keep**: Which learning activities should be kept and why?
- **Stop**: Which learning activities should be eliminated and why?
- **Start**: What other suggestions or modifications would you propose to facilitate learning in the classroom?
- **Choose at least 3 activities** to reflect on. You are welcome to insert additional rows if you would like to comment on others:
  - Needs Assessment critique; Legislative letter; Needs Assessment Group Project (outline, report & oral presentation); Community Nutrition volunteer experience & journal entry; Kahoot interactive game; Videos: King Corn documentary, Feeding America & ‘Grow Food’ rap video; Guest lectures; Group discussion & ‘Take-away’ Q&A; Class discussion during lecture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning activity or assignment</th>
<th>Keep? Stop? Start?</th>
<th>Why? Tell me what you think in terms of how or whether this activity helped you learn (or not).</th>
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</table>
B. **Peer Evaluation:** Please rank your Needs Assessment Group Project teammates (including yourself) from 1 to 5 for the areas listed below. This will not be shared with your teammates. Consider all aspects of working together on the Needs Assessment Group Project including writing the report *and* working on the oral presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

Please include the rationale for the ranking with each name including your own.

a. **Participation as a team player.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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b. **Facilitator/leader in the management of the group project.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</table>

c. **Willingness to help others and keeping a positive attitude.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Table Summary of Student Feedback—Keep. Stop. Start.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Keep</th>
<th>Stop</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Journal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>It helped me connect the class to the real world and real issues. This is a great way to get out into the community and see what programs are being implemented and how we can get involved even when we are not dietitians or public health officials. I like this because it gets us involved with the community and can also be a resume builder as well. This project really tied together the entire class. Our presentation wasn’t on Lincoln’s food insecurities/obesity but many others were, and doing Meals on Wheels really showed me what everyone was talking about. It made all the presentations actually mean something. Gave us insight about what is really going on in the community. Provided experience for a good cost. Met good people and new friends. And also connecting to some important people for networking. You learn more from doing rather than just hearing about the concepts. I got a lot out of my experience that would’ve been impossible to just teach—just wish setting up experiences was easier. It is overall a great experience. It helped me learn a real life hunger need in Nebraska. I met interesting people and gained a more appreciative outlook on how blessed I was growing up and how many children and families still need help. This was my favorite assignment by far because I got on it right away with the chance of working for Matt Talbot’s Kitchen &amp; Outreach. Meeting the dietician there, Janet Buck, was an amazing experience and I definitely gained so much more insight on community nutrition because of this class and volunteering there. I am still currently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
volunteering there when I can.

Any push for people to volunteer is good, to develop us as citizens while also developing our resumes. Reflecting on the experience helps ensure that we got something out of it.

It is a great learning experience that is not possible in other classes.

I personally liked my volunteering experience and thought I learned a lot and also felt good helping out. I enjoyed seeing a new aspect of nutrition and how the Nebraska DHHS works and specifically how the School Lunch Program and the education side of things I had not had much exposure to in the past.

It puts the lecture material into application and gives perspective

This helps see what different options the community has that incorporates community nutrition and helps you learn what goes into the job.

I really enjoyed myself doing the volunteering works. It is fun and interesting yet it is a great time to gain more experience on the field which I’m trying to pursue.

I thought this was very beneficial for this class. To actually put ourselves into the community to see and learn things first hand.
I learned a lot about the public school systems and how they work by this volunteer experience. I also had a lot of fun with the children in the cooking after school program. The volunteer experience was a great way of learning outside of the classroom.

This was my FAVORITE aspect of the course. I was able to tailor my hours to an organization reflecting my interest and I learned SO much.
I am very beneficial from this experience, which gives me a chance to combine what I learn from class with practice in reality; dietitian is as a career that needs to interact with people, practice is the best way to approve effectiveness of knowledge.

I enjoyed this activity, even though it was hard for some students to fit into their schedule.

I did not mind doing this class activity but I didn’t feel like it tied into the class very well. Maybe there is a way to modify the assignment and have it due earlier in the semester or have more select opportunities that pertain to what we are learning.

A lot of students are working on top of 15-18 hours of class each week and struggle to make time for that outside of class.

If it’s forced, and I must quit my current volunteer commitments because I don’t have time, it is self-defeating.

I liked that this was a practical application for class and gave an insight into the type of jobs you can have in learning this material. 10 hours is a bit much; maybe instead say “attend 3 events for the semester”?

While I had difficulty with individuals responding and following-through in Omaha, I know my volunteering experiences have been priceless in helping me understand different perspectives based on ethnicity and economic status. Plus, it just feels good to help.

A good way to see community service in action, but not always relevant to policy. Also, I know many people that struggled to get this done when they paired it with everything else they had to do.

While it is a good thing to volunteer in general, I don’t think it was very
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Assessment Group Project</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt this was the most important thing we learned in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I got to know my classmates. Improved our social skills. Gave us knowledge on how to do needs assessment. And made us realize it is not that easy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>At first I dreaded this because like many people I find group projects to be more difficult. I honestly got a lot out of this project and feel like I am walking away with a lot more knowledge about community nutrition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Starting the project was difficult but once our group got going it became very interesting and enjoyable. I would say keep this because I ended up with a group who stayed on top of what we assigned each other, but had heard of other groups who had difficulty with their groups.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It helped me learn how to assess a community and how to tie the notes we took into actual work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I thought the Needs Assessment group project was a great project for this class, it really help us understand the different aspects of a needs assessment and the work that goes into it as well as opening our eyes to some issues going on in the areas that we chose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Although this assignment was tedious and confusing at first, I felt that I learned a lot from the research that we did. I think this assignment was valuable to the learning in this class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It was a lot of work, but I learned how to actually complete a needs</td>
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</table>
It helped understand what a needs assessment entails and how to go about the group projects.

I’m leaning toward public health for my master’s degree, and this assignment gave me a little insight on how to collect and interpret data from a community, and how to select the community in which the assessment needs to be done. It helped me understand how income and food insecurity goes hand in hand.

Is a great example of a real life project that some of us could work on at another point.

I learned so much when doing our group project that it would have honestly hurt my grade had we not done it. It helped me know the steps of the assessment along with many different organizations and ways to get help.

This project puts into perspective what it is like to conduct a Needs Assessment and all of information you need. The only thing I would suggest would be to provide more information in regards to the structure and details of what you would like in the presentation and the format of the paper.

This project gave me a whole new appreciation of how much work goes into a community needs assessment. However, I felt I needed more clarity on what we needed to do to properly complete the project.

I think this activity (Needs Assessment outline) should be kept because it really helped my group prepare for the report and oral presentation. However, I think more guidance should be given as to how to structure our outlines and the details that should be included to better prepare us for the report.
Overall I thought the project was helpful as well as interesting! I think however, a critic sheet or some sort of in class assignment for the audience might be beneficial (for oral presentation). When I was looking around during our presentation, a lot of students were doing other things.

While I thought the project was very educational in itself, more guidance in the instructions would have been helpful and it would have been nice to be able to pick our group members—to ensure that we got to work with reliable and hardworking people.

While this activity took a long time to complete, it helped me gain insight and practice on assessing a community and their pressing issues. One thing I suggest would be for students to label the parts of the assignment they completed. It would discourage one person in the group doing most of the work.

Have outline due earlier, as well as breaking needs assessment paper up into sections, have steps 1-4 due earlier and maybe get feed back before finishing rest of steps.

The group project is a fine, but I don't feel the presentation is necessary considering the majority of individuals in the class are not going to be involved in community health programming, and the individuals who are will have other avenues of experience.

Really helped me to learn what all goes into a real needs assessment. However, it was really hard to write a group paper and have everyone divide the work evenly and be on the same page.

This was probably the biggest learning experience of the class, because it brought everything together. I thought the outline should have been graded though, because it was a lot of work.
We had a really hard time doing our needs assessment because I just didn’t feel like we had a lot of directions with only two powerpoints to do a whole project.

While difficult to find the information needed using only google, it is worthwhile to see the problems of a community and get experience looking at this information.

I would like to have more emphasis on what community nutrition looks like in real life, and less textbook/note emphasis, because I feel I learned more through doing community nutrition assessments than when the class went through lecture notes. I felt as though the grading that occurred with the report did not reflect the same level of excellence required in other areas of the course. I thought I was doing well in the class, as a result of getting most of the points, until I received the grade for the report. The grade for the report was significantly lower than any other grade I had received in the course (besides the first exam). I felt there was a lack of consistency in how hard our assignments were graded.

Not necessarily stop, but modify. I would have liked if we got to choose our groups because I did not luck out so great with mine. Maybe if there were checkpoints along the way that would have helped because some of my group members put in their sections too close to the deadline and there was simply not enough time for me to add/take away things and make the changes necessary to turn in a project I was confident in. Some students do not care about what grade they get as long as they pass the class, and others are taking this class as an elective so really do not care about what grade they receive. That makes it really hard to work with while trying to balance the grade you are aiming for, with not doing the whole project on your own.

This project did not have a great application for my major and my
career goals. Many of the students in the class are dietetics majors. Therefore, I would recommend changing this project to program planning.

This project just takes too much time and is too wide of an area to cover. I think there could be better ways to show what a needs assessment is (just the critique was plenty for me). I think that unless you narrow what is needed or expected, it will continue to be an organized disaster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take-away Q&amp;A</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like this because it gives us an opportunity to earn more points and get involved with what we learned that lecture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I really liked having that because it let us reinforce what we learned in class that day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It facilitates learning for the test by reinforcing the material that day.</td>
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<td>I liked how these wrapped everything up at the end of the lectures and made you really think about the major points throughout the lectures.</td>
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<td>This was a really effective way to ensure attendance and make sure we were paying attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This activity helped me pay more attention in class because I knew I had to come up with questions and answers at the end of lecture. By thinking about the questions and answers, it helped me quickly revise the lecture in my head.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not only encouraged attendance but also did a good job of helping us reflect on the material at the end of the lecture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>These were easy points for the class and students had to review and pick out key information for each class.</td>
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</table>
This helped me reflect on the information heard in class and pick out the important things, even if I wasn’t fully paying attention the whole time.

These were useful and helpful. I enjoyed them, and the points helped. I think that the lectures could get a little long though, so keeping the Q&A would mean keeping the lectures timed right.

I didn’t think I took away much from these. Maybe if those questions were given back to us and we could reference them at a later time.

I liked this activity, but the papers should be passed out at the beginning of class so we can write down questions as we go, or just submitted online.

This didn’t help me all too much. I like the idea; I just don’t think it was enough to make a difference for me personally.

I think these were helpful to review lecture, but I would encourage people to write them down on a separate paper because they would be very helpful for reviewing.

This section helps me to refresh my memory for each lecture. By constructing questions and answers, I get to focus on the essential topics for final.

I like the idea behind this, but most of the time it felt rushed so people just wrote down without thinking much.

It was a very good idea to try and do, but I believe by the end of class people are ready to leave, therefore they do it as quickly as they can without actually discussing too much.

I felt like most of the time, people were writing down questions just to
get the points and not really discussing or reflecting on the subject.

I don’t believe this was an actual group discussion or valuable learning experience. Students want to leave as soon as class is over so I think everyone just wrote down quick Q’s and A’s and left.

I do not think that these help any. Especially when you end class right on time then you have to stay after even longer to fill it out.

Instead of doing group discussions do a whole class discussion at the end of lecture.

Did not feel it helped me to retain the information.

**Kahoot**  
13 4 1

I preferred this than just having a study guide.

I really enjoy playing this game. It was fun and a competitive way to study for an exam.

This was fun and relaxed and helped us know what kinds of stuff you wanted us to know and study.

This was a fun way to learn. Everyone could easily interact with and see their scores so answering the correct answer was more valuable. I also helped many the information more memorable.

I thought this game was fun for the people that had studied and knew the questions because it had some competition that made the game entertaining.

Maybe not replace the exam with it but periodically throughout the semester have a review game like that, felt it helped me with retaining the info and seeing where I was at.

I really enjoyed this activity. I have never seen a review like this before,
and I really like the change of pace.

This was a helpful review game, but making the questions available for review after the review day would be helpful as there isn’t much in the way of knowing how to guide specific studying throughout the class.

I really enjoyed this session of playing the interactive game and it helps me in focusing on subjects/topics that necessary for final.

I feel hands-on experience with studying is always helpful. I didn’t care for the public scoring though.

I really appreciated using the interactive game as practice instead of taking the exam. I feel it made me more comfortable with the material and being able to recall information.

I really enjoyed playing Kahoot instead of taking the final exam the second time. It helped me see what I did really well on and what I needed to study.

I think this could be a fun thing to do periodically throughout the semester so we could review on topics we had been learning.

Though I wish we could have taken a practice test, I really enjoyed this game. It was fun and different from everyday Lecture. I’d say take the test still, but do more Kahoot games.

Not necessarily stop, but maybe modify to not have the answers on a timed response. I felt I was just clicking a shape and not looking for the right answer.

I would have much rather have gotten to take the exam again so I knew better what would have been on it for the final. I don’t think my peers
realized how useful this would have been and instead just didn’t want to take an exam that day. If you move it to a different day and still have exam 2 I think it would be helpful.

I was hoping that instead of playing that game we could have taken the exam again, but lost the vote. I would have like to have seen the questions and especially the essays again.

The game was really fast paced and it’s not a very good review tactic because it’s hard to keep up with the questions. It’s also really casual which makes it hard to pay attention to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest lectures</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a good way to learn specific details about programs. I like this because it showed us what kind of programs are out there and different avenues we can be involved in as a career choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think hearing from people who actually work in these industries really helps us to gain an understanding of what it takes to be successful in community nutrition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think that having speakers come in and talk about how they contribute to nutrition in the community is useful and appropriate to be kept with the course. It gives a good perspective as to what community nutrition looks like outside of the classroom setting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They gave us additional knowledge about nutrition. Made us aware of the food programs and what they are really about.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The guest lecturers were fun to listen to. I learned a great deal about topics I knew little to nothing about. I especially enjoyed the WIC and Meals on Wheels lecturers!</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I’ve had classes in which WIC and Meals on Wheels were briefly mentioned. Having guest speakers working for these programs helped me better understand the programs and the population served.

I learned a lot from both of the guest lectures and helped me to get an idea of the services available in Lincoln and what the community is doing to help certain populations.

I enjoy real-world experience, so more guest lectures would be appreciated, or ways in which we could get more involved.

I thought it was very interesting and helpful to hear from people who applied class concepts in the real world. If you could get the PowerPoints from all of them, though, that would be helpful in studying for the final.

I never feel like I take much away from a guest lecture especially when they are not interactive. It’s hard to stay focused a lot of the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative letter</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I also really liked the legislative paper. I think it would have been cool to learn more about the relevant nutrition issues in Nebraska but understand the time constraint with all the other info we need to cover.</td>
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<td>I think this is a valuable activity. Students should know where to find current legislation and how to contact their representatives.</td>
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<td>Why I liked this assignment is because it gave us a chance to not only write a legislative letter but to also look at other legislative letters and the examine the format of them for the future.</td>
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<td>It made me think a little more in depth about the possible ways I could impact our community. Before, I have never thought about writing to a member of Legislature.</td>
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It is a unique opportunity to look at current issues and decide which side you are on.

It is an important ability to write letters to legislative officials. That is how work gets done and we democracy functions.

I thought this was an interesting and practical assignment that made me pay more attention to local politics

This was an interesting way to look at what legal processes need to be taken in order to make a difference in the government regarding nutrition

I’m not one to be into government things typically, but this assignment made me learn more about how to see policies already in place. Now I know how to get involved if I want to.

Although I did enjoy the purpose of this assignment (to be able to reach out to government about bills to make our voices heard) I found it to be hard to find a bill limited to nutrition legislature that I would personally write to my senator about. Maybe giving out several bill examples and ask students to write about those that would help make this assignment more thought provoking and help understand what writing to your legislature is about.

This was somewhat unnecessary and was busy work in my opinion. But, it is helpful in the fact that if you go into a job in health policy making, you will have to write formal letters to lawmakers.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>King Corn</th>
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<th>5</th>
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It is a very good documentary, and shows a direct relation between policy and effect.

This video was extremely interesting. It gave a good look into policies in
a setting similar setting to Nebraska as well.

This video may have been boring but it was so informational once you start to listen to it

I thought the documentary was intriguing and worth watching. It was very relevant to the course community nutrition.

I got a lot out of the exposures to real community nutrition, so I think adding more in these ways (documentaries & volunteering during class time) would be very beneficial.

I love food documentaries, mostly because it gives a different perspective from what we learn in class. I feel we are told that food quality doesn’t matter in most of our classes, but I see it differently and it is nice to see that perspective and the impact it makes on the community. Thank you.

I’m not sure if you should stop doing this or maybe just clarify a little more about it afterward. After watching this documentary I didn’t really learn anything about the policies, my group members and I discussed that we only learned that they had to go through some regulations and policies to be able to plant the corn, we didn’t feel like we learned anything that benefited us in the class. It was more just entertaining to watch, than a learning experience.

The movie did not actually teach much about policy, which is what I thought it was supposed to do, but instead taught more about agricultural processes.

Unfortunately, I did not see entirely how this related to conducting a needs assessment. Maybe having a discussion after the documentary would be more beneficial.
I love documentaries like this that expose what’s going on behind the scenes in the agriculture and food industry. I think it was a great example of policy but I would’ve liked more direction as to what policy-making steps to look for in the movie. It was hard to pick out each one and I’m still kind of lost as to which scenes showed examples.

The documentary also served as a real life application to the things we were learning about. I would have liked to incorporate more documentaries related to other topics we covered.

I didn’t really learn much from the video but it was an interesting video to watch.

If this is continued, at least make it a more involved process. “What part is stretched and false? Is corn companies actually evil?”

I think that the King Corn documentary could be eliminated as I am not sure it contributed much to learning more about community nutrition. I did not find a large correlation between the documentary and the objectives of this course.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Needs Assessment Critique</th>
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<td></td>
<td>I felt this activity helped me gain a better understanding of how a group needs assessment is conducted. By critiquing it, I was able to notice limitations, which gave me ideas as to how to do things differently for our group project.</td>
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<td>Analyzing a professional needs assessment helped a lot in determining how to write our own needs assessment.</td>
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<td>This is the major medium for which nutrition needs are shared in our field. I feel this is critical to learn for our future careers.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This activity helped me to have a better understanding and get a grasp on what a Needs Assessment is and also helped with the needs</td>
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This assignment gave us an introductory experience with Needs Assessments and helped us see how our needs assessment should look.

I didn’t get a lot out of this assignment but I thought it may be a good idea to do after the group project because then the students would know a lot more about needs assessments.

| Grow Food Rap video | 2 | This video is hilarious and it’s important that we, as dietetic/nutrition students, know effective ways of advertising and marketing healthy foods. Marketing is usually reserved for big companies and many of them do not place much importance on local, fresh foods.

I loved this video. I even showed it to a friend of mine who grew up in Minneapolis and she thought it was super relevant. (Look up hot Cheetos and takis) |

| Class discussions | 3 | 4 | Always feel collaborating as a class allows me to see different viewpoints and grasp and understand information.

Class discussion was pretty limited and I think more time devoted to discussion would have allowed us to collaborate more and bounce ideas off each other.

Instead of just asking the class straight up to answer questions, have us discuss in groups and then ask as a group what we thought. You’ll get more class participation that way and more people talking.

You are a very personable and “easy to talk to” teacher, therefore I believe you should keep the class discussions. I usually hate talking in class, but in your class it was easier for me because you were not judgmental.

I really liked when we discussed the pros and cons of placing limits on
the foods that people can buy with SNAP. I wish we had discussed more controversial topics with regards to policies and nutrition issues. Many problems have multiple different perspectives and it’s important that we are at least aware of other perspectives.

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<tr>
<th>Other</th>
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<th>Either one can increase practical experience, which can enhance understanding to specific definitions, terms, regulations, principles, etc. OR create a easy way (table, chart) to distinguish differences among programs, regulations, legislation etc.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biweekly quiz (5-10pt ea)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I think it would be helpful to give bi-weekly quizzes over stuff that was in the PowerPoints, stuff that you want us to know that will be on the final test. This way we have to actually study the material throughout the class rather than hear it in lecture then forget about it until the final.</td>
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| Pre/post test | 1 3 | Not sure if I liked only having one test throughout the semester, as I study for the final I am feeling nervous and unprepared since I have not been tested over any of the material yet. The pre-test was too long ago to even remember what it was over. If anything, keep the mid semester test.

There’s a lot of lecture material to cover and recall over the course of the entirety of the semester. The comprehensive review is helpful but vague, and the lectures are information dense, so something that helps in reminding what the exam questions will look like would be helpful. Particularly knowing some more specific information on the essay questions would be nice as we haven’t seen what those are in nearly 4 months.

It would help to keep us fresh on the material and what you wanted us to know if you kept the midway test.

Maybe having a midterm and then a final could be a consideration instead of just having one exam throughout the whole semester. I felt
good about the material while learning it, but then we took a very long break of not learning or reviewing and I am finding it hard to remember some of the things learned in class.