



EPID 886: Public Health Professional Development

Course Syllabus Fall 2021 & Winter 2022

Course Instructor:	Bren Melles, Adjunct Lecturer and Senior Program Officer
Contact Information:	brenda.melles@queensu.ca; 613-533-6000 ext. 77099
Class time and location:	Fridays 10:00 – 11:30 am, Carruthers 102
Office Hours:	Carruthers Hall 206, Fridays 11:30 am – 12:30 pm Office hours appointments also welcome

1. Course Description

The course helps prepare students for their practicum placement and equip them for ongoing work as a public health professional.

Its purpose is to assist students to lay the foundation for continuing professional development in public health practice. Students are introduced to the MPH Competency ePortfolio and coached to chart their progress in developing skills and competencies through a combination of participatory workshops, seminars and online learning modules. Guest lecturers come from a variety of contexts, both within and outside the MPH program.

2. Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify your public health competency strengths and build strategies for competency development
2. Clarify and articulate your professional identity
3. Strengthen your ability to effectively demonstrate professional skills and competencies
4. Develop skills to effectively communicate, both verbally and in writing, to a range of audiences
5. Strengthen ability to search, assess and analyse public health evidence
6. Strengthen professional job-seeking skills to effectively secure a practicum placement and ongoing employment as a public health professional

3. Course Pre-requisites

All students must be enrolled as a full-time or part-time Master of Public Health (MPH) student. This is a required course for students in the Master of Public Health program (16-month).

4. Course Delivery and Technology

The course will be delivered on campus, in person. Some course content may be pre-recorded or online. Details on weekly class content and its mode of delivery is in the course schedule below and on the course onQ site. By midweek each week, the instructor will upload a short “Welcome to the week” video in onQ with an introduction to the week’s content and how to participate.

The course will use two technology platforms, described below.

Technology platform	Purpose	Details
onQ	Short “welcome to the week” videos from instructor, course content, readings, weekly schedule, discussion boards, assignment submission, grades	onQ is the Queen’s Learning Management system Login with your net ID at onq.queensu.ca View “My Courses” and select “EPID 886”
Zoom	One-on-one virtual meetings with Bren for office hours (in person meetings are also available), virtual class meetings	Download zoom.us app to your device Here is the recurring link for EPID 886 related meetings: Join Zoom Meeting https://queensu.zoom.us/j/97172865770?pwd=TTBwK1lnTmNZTDZKM3RjWDBDbXgvZz09 Meeting ID: 971 7286 5770 Passcode: 956186 One tap mobile +17789072071,,97172865770#,,,,*956186# Canada +12042727920,,97172865770#,,,,*956186# Canada

5. Assessment Plan

EPID 886 is graded on a PASS/FAIL basis.

To pass the course, you must complete all of the following required assignments, some of which are possible artifacts for your MPH Competency ePortfolio. Each required assignment is marked as complete or not complete and will be returned with instructor feedback. On rare occasions, when assignments are not submitted with sufficient quality, improvement and resubmission may be required for completion. Each required assignment, as well as each in-class practice task, is designed to help you demonstrate achievement of the course outcomes.

Details on required assignments are below.

Required Assignment	Due Date
1. Meet your classmates personal video introduction (note: this is an ungraded assignment)	September 24, 2021, 9 am
2. Initial competency assessment & reflection	October 1, 2021, 9 am
3. Briefing note	November 12, 2021, 9 am
4. Professional mission statement	December 3, 2021. 9 am
5. Fall reflective practice narratives for ePortfolio	Two by December 17, 2021, 9 am
6. Coded interview transcript	Part 1: March 4, 2022, 9 am Part 2: March 18, 2022, 9 am
7. Winter reflective practice narratives for ePortfolio	Two by April 1, 2022, 9 am
8. Working draft ePortfolio	Draft by April 1, 2022 for peer feedback clinic, 9 am Final due April 22, 2022, 10 pm
9. Final competency assessment and reflection	April 22, 2022, 10 pm

6. Detailed Assignment Descriptions and Instructions

1. Meet your classmates personal video introduction (Due Sept 24, 2021, 9:00 am)

Note: This is an ungraded assignment.

Select an (everyday) object from your home that symbolizes why you have chosen to pursue studies in public health. Record a 1-3 minute video of yourself where you share your name (and what you like to be called) and how your object symbolizes your interest in public health. Also, share one interesting or fun fact about yourself. Post your introductory video in the “Meet your Classmates” Discussion Board.

2. Initial competency assessment and reflection tool (Due Oct 1, 2021, 9:00 am)

Complete the Initial Competency Assessment & Reflection Tool, available on the class OnQ site. This tool is intended to help you identify your strengths and areas for growth and development in the core competencies of public health. The tool lists the 7 categories and 36 core competency statements from [Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada¹](#) and asks you to rate yourself using a provided scale. For each competency category, you will identify the supporting evidence (include real-life examples) that supports your competency level rating. Using prompt questions, the tool invites you to write a short reflection to consider your strengths and areas for growth.

¹ <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/php-ppsp/ccph-cesp/pdfs/cc-manual-eng090407.pdf>

3. Briefing note (Due Nov 12, 2021, 9:00 am)

You are a Research Officer at a local public health agency. You report to the Director of Health Promotion at that local health unit. (This Director has the job of providing the Board of Health with recommended actions to address social determinants of health and reduce health inequities among the region's residents.) Your Director has asked you to watch and review the proceedings of a recent Special Kingston City Council meeting held June 1, 2021, and summarize Council's discussion and decisions that may impact a (select one) determinant of health. **Write your Director a one-page briefing note.**

Video recordings of all Kingston City Council meetings, along with accompanying agendas, minutes, reports are found here: <https://www.cityofkingston.ca/city-hall/council-meetings>. Details for the Special City Council Meeting on June 1, 2021, including a 2 hour video of the meeting, are here: <https://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/city-calendar-events/-/calendar/QUmzuR567ExT/event/38776361>

Briefing Note Template

An outline for organizing your briefing note is below. The briefing note must be **no longer than one-page** (no smaller than 11 point font size, 1 inch margins). Use these headings.

Date:

Prepared by: (Your name and Job Title)

To: Director of Health Promotion

Purpose: Why are you writing this? One sentence.

Background: Describe the relevant context/background related to the health outcome and determinant at hand. (No outside research needed here. Use the available minutes/documents/reports.)

Findings: Describe and summarize Council discussion and decisions that may impact the social determinant of health. Highlight and interpret relevant data. Cite the motions so the Director can find them in the meeting minutes. Identify any partners or delegations mentioned or involved.

Implications: Explain how the Council decisions and actions relate to health outcomes using a social determinants of health lens.

Conclusion and next steps: Write a brief statement summarizing the Council decision and actions and their relevance to the determinant of health.

Assessment

Your briefing note will be assessed using the following categories as “Meets expectations” or “Below expectations”:

- **Audience and tone:** Is the document tailored to the audience, with appropriate professional language and neutral tone?
- **Clarity of purpose:** Is the purpose of the document clearly articulated?

- **Technical proficiency:** Does the document demonstrate understanding of key public health concepts? Is relevant data identified and interpreted?
- **Summary:** Does the document clearly and briefly summarize the main points?
- **Writing, grammar and mechanics:** Is the document smoothly written and error-free, including correct mechanics and grammar?

4. Professional Mission Statement (Due Dec 3, 2021, 9:00 am)

A professional mission statement is a short statement of no more than one to two sentences (approximately 30 words) that conveys your unique professional purpose. Submit your carefully crafted and concise professional mission statement, applying knowledge and skills from the workshop.

5. Reflective Practice Narratives (Two due Dec 17, 2021 9:00 am; Two due Apr 1, 2022 9:00 am)

The purpose of these reflections is to:

- Strengthen your ability to effectively demonstrate your professional skills and competencies.
- Help you clarify and articulate your professional identity
- Function as a talking points for a job interview for your practicum placement or other work
- Create text to set alongside artifacts in your Competency ePortfolio

Instructions:

- Select an artifact that you have collected for your MPH Competency ePortfolio
- At the top of your Reflective Practice Narrative submission, list one (or more) of the 7 public health competency categories and/or one (or more) of the 36 core competency statements that the artifact demonstrates.
- Write a short reflection (100-300 words) on the artifact using START as an organizing framework:
 - Situation** — the context of what happened
 - Task** — what you were supposed to do
 - Action** — what you did to accomplish the task
 - Result** — what you accomplished, how your accomplishment impacted others
 - Takeaway** – the impact of the accomplishment on your own learning (knowledge, skills, attitudes); and the implications on your future work as a public health professional
- Post your reflection and the relevant artifact in onQ.

Tips for Reflective Practice:

- **Go deeper than description to purposeful critical analysis.** A good reflection goes beyond just reporting or describing what you did, and analyses the experience to determine its meaning and implications. Make it unique to you, written in first person using “I.”

- **Move beyond the present to the future.** Don't just report on something you did, but reflect on the implications of what you learned for the future. What will you do differently as a result? Think about "what", "so what", "now what".
- **Make connections** between the theory/concepts and your practice.
- **Consider multiple experiences together.** Consider referring to more than one artifact or experience to weave together a cohesive portrait of who you are as a public health professional.
- **Watch the length.** Text should be easy to scan on a screen, and easily spoken without losing the interest of your listener. You should be able to read your reflection aloud in 1-2 minutes. Longer is not necessarily better. Be clear, thoughtful, readable, and concise

6. Coded Key Informant Interview Transcript (Part 1 Due March 4, 2022 9:00 am; Part 2 Due March 18, 2022, 9:00 am)

Note: This is a two-part assignment

Part 1 Key informant interview transcript:

In the topic area of "Graduate student wellness":

- Define a research question related to this topic
- Create a semi-structured interview guide with at least three questions (not including probes)
- Conduct a short (5-7 mins) interview with a classmate. (Note: avoid working in pairs where both people interview each other)
- Transcribe your interview (2 pages minimum). Include at least two memos. Memos are comments about the interview experience that you would like to remember later, when it comes time to analyse the transcript
- Remove any personal identifiable information from transcript. Once you have transcribed the interview, erase the recording from all devices.
- Post your research question, interview guide and transcript to onQ. Transcripts will be viewed by the instructor alone.

Part 2 Coded key informant interview transcript:

- Analyse your interview transcript, using one of the qualitative coding methods you learned during the workshop.
- Create a first level code list and a list of categories. (You do not need to do the synthesis step or to write a report.)
- Post your transcript, with your research question, your first level code list and your list of categories.

7. Reflective Practice Narratives (Two due April 1, 2022 9:00 am)

See #5 above for detailed instructions

8. Working Draft ePortfolio (Draft by April 1, 2022 for peer feedback clinic; Final due April 22, 2022 10:00 pm)

The MPH Competency ePortfolio is a purposeful collection of electronic evidence that demonstrates your learning and achievement in public health over time. Your eportfolio should include the following components:

- a. **Home page/intro section** – this may include a table of contents, a photo (if desired) and some short introductory text
- b. **Professional mission statement** – a short statement that expresses your professional mission and goals in public health (see course assignment #4)
- c. **Resume** – a high quality professional resume that includes your education, public health and other relevant work experience, honours and awards and special skills
- d. **Theme pages/folders (at least three) with artifacts and reflections** – A theme reflects your professional interest in a particular disease, population group, issue, analytical technique or a combination of the above. Each theme page/folder should include short narrative reflections (see course assignments #5 and #7) with links to artifacts that demonstrate your skills and competencies in that theme

The tone and content of your eportfolio should be geared to a potential public health employer. Your ePortfolio can be presented in the technology platform of your choice. Former students have used Wix, Weebly, Wordpress, LinkedIn, PowerPoint etc.

Further detail on the eportfolio – both process and product – may be found in the MPH Competency ePortfolio Handbook on the EPID 886 onQ site, and will also be discussed frequently in class.

9. Final Competency Assessment (and Reflection Due April 22, 2022 10:00 pm)

Complete the Final Competency Assessment & Reflection Tool, available on OnQ site. This second iteration of the Initial Competency Assessment and Reflection (see assignment #2) reflects on changes and progress from the first assessment, and focuses on opportunities for competency growth during the practicum placement.

7. Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Instructor	Related Public Health Core Competency	Related Assignment	Due Date by 9:00 am
Fall 2021					
Sept 17	Course introduction and core competencies of public health	Bren Melles	All	“Meet your Classmates” Personal Video Introduction (Ungraded) Initial Competency Assessment & Reflection	Sep 24, 2021 Oct 1, 2021
Sept 24	Introduction to MPH Competency ePortfolio	Bren Melles	All	Note: Draft of eportfolio needed for peer feedback April 1, 2022	
Oct 1	NO IN-PERSON CLASS MEETING. Complete online module, “Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion”. Then complete reflection survey (link to be provided by Bren) https://www.queensu.ca/hreo/education/introduction-equity-diversity-and-inclusion Recommendation: Attend Dean’s Action Table on Equity Diversity and Inclusion Forum, Oct 1-2, 2021.	Human Rights and Equity Office	All	Note: Login to training with your netID. You will receive a confirmation of completion email from HREO. On completion of online module, complete reflection survey at link provided by Bren.	
Oct 8	Demystifying the literature review process	Sandra McKeown	Assessment and Analysis		
Oct 15	Advanced database searching	Sandra McKeown	Assessment and Analysis		
Oct 22	Professional communication, with a focus on reports and briefing notes	Bren Melles	Communication Assessment and Analysis	Briefing Note	Nov 12, 2021
Oct 29	Knowledge translation in action: Policy to public	Paula Muis	Communication Assessment and Analysis		
Nov 5	NO CLASS. Public Health Sciences Day 8:30 am – 4:30 pm (timing and location TBC)				
Nov 12	Professional resumes and cover letters	Miguel Hahn	Communication +job-seeking skills	Note: Draft resume and cover letter needed for Dec 3	

Date	Topic	Instructor	Related Public Health Core Competency	Related Assignment	Due Date by 9:00 am
Nov 19	a. Professional Mission Statements b. Designing and delivering presentations for adult learning	Bren Melles	Communication	Professional Mission statement	Dec 3, 2021
Nov 26	This is Canada: Living anti-racism	Jermaine Marshall	Partnerships, Collaboration and Advocacy; Diversity and Inclusiveness	Note: Complete 30-minute interactive eCourse in advance: “Call it Out: Racism, Racial Discrimination and Human Rights”	
Dec 3	Resume and cover letter peer feedback clinic; ePortfolio check-in; mid-term course evaluation	Bren Melles	Communication +job seeking skills	Reflective Practice Narratives	Two by Dec 17, 2021

Date	Topic	Instructor	Related Public Health Core Competency	Related Assignment	Due Date by 9:00 am
Winter 2022					
Jan 14	Winning job interviews for public health	Miguel Hahn, Career Services	Communication +job seeking skills	Note: Check onQ for list of potential job interview questions, and suggestions on how to prepare a strong response.	
Jan 21	Professional communication, with a focus on email	Bren Melles	Communication, +job seeking skills		
Jan 28	Simulated job interview session	Bren Melles	Communication +job seeking skills		
Feb 4	Conducting a key informant interview - Qualitative data 1	Bren Melles	Communication	Part 1: Interview transcript	Mar 4, 2022
Feb 11	Conducting a focus group - Qualitative data 2	Bren Melles	Communication		
Feb 18	Focus groups and interviews in public health practice: Lessons from experience - Qualitative data 3	Suzanne Biro, KFL&A Public Health	Assessment and Analysis, Communication		
Feb 25	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES				
Mar 4	Analysing an interview transcript - Qualitative data 4	Colleen Davison (pre-recorded)	Assessment and Analysis, Communication	Part 2: Coded interview transcript	Mar 18, 2022

Date	Topic	Instructor	Related Public Health Core Competency	Related Assignment	Due Date by 9:00 am
Mar 11	Skills for community engagement & stakeholder analysis	Bren Melles	Partnerships, Collaboration and Advocacy, Communication		
Mar 18	Cultural safety and intercultural competency 1	Lee Richard	Diversity and inclusiveness		
Mar 25	Cultural safety and intercultural competency 2	Lee Richard	Diversity and inclusiveness		
Apr 1	Peer feedback clinic – MPH Competency ePortfolio	Bren Melles		Reflective Practice Narratives Note: Bring draft eportfolio for feedback to this class	Two by Apr 1, 2022
Apr 8	Course synthesis Practicum briefing session #3 and send off	Bren Melles Paula Muis	All	Final Competency Assessment Working Draft ePortfolio	Apr 22, 2022 Apr 22, 2022

8. Readings and Resources

Human Rights and Equity Office. Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:

https://www.queensu.ca/equity/secure/iedi/complete_training.php

Ontario Human Rights Commission 30-minute interactive eCourse. [“Call it Out: Racism, Racial Discrimination and Human Rights”](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada. 2008. Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada. Release 1.0.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/php-ppsp/ccph-cesp/pdfs/cc-manual-eng090407.pdf>

Review of Core Competencies for Public Health - An Aboriginal Public Health Perspective. 2015,

<https://www.cnsa-nccah.ca/docs/context/RPT-CoreCompetenciesHealth-Hunt-EN.pdf>

Note that the [Queen’s Human Rights and Equity Office has a list of resources](#) to support inclusion as well as a series of [online education modules](#).

Other resources will be provided on a week by week basis. You will be able to find these resources on the course OnQ site.

9. Course and University Policies

Participation policy

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism by being present and punctual, and by participating actively in all sessions. Participation in this course is important; most sessions have active learning and formative assessment tasks built into the session itself.

Students must inform the Instructor in advance if they will be absent from a session because of illness or other compassionate grounds. If a session is missed, it is up to the student to gather missed information from other students who were present in order to fulfill their assessment requirements.

Academic integrity

Queen’s students, faculty, administrators and staff all have responsibilities for upholding the fundamental values of academic integrity; honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values

expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the “freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas” essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principles-and-priorities>).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments and their behaviour conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the SGS Calendar (<https://www.queensu.ca/sgs/graduate-calendar/academic-integrity-policy>) and from the instructor of this course.

Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery, falsification and unauthorized use of intellectual property, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen’s. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Students are encouraged to consult their course instructors regarding appropriate use of materials if in doubt about how their use may relate to academic dishonesty. Please visit these helpful websites to help you make sure that you are able to write things in your own words:

- <https://www.queensu.ca/academicintegrity/students/avoiding-plagiarismcheating>
- <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/academic-writing/avoiding-plagiarism-paraphrasing>
- http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html

Copyright of Course Materials

Course materials created by the course instructor, including all slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other similar course materials, are the intellectual property of the instructor. It is a departure from academic integrity to distribute, publicly post, sell or otherwise disseminate an instructor’s course materials or to provide an instructor’s course materials to anyone else for distribution, posting, sale or other means of dissemination, without the instructor’s express consent. A student who engages in such conduct may be subject to penalty for a departure from academic integrity and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

Accommodation of graduate students with disabilities

Queen’s University is committed to achieving full accessibility for people with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. The Senate Policy for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities was approved at Senate in November 2016 (see

<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uslclwww/files/files/policies/senateandtrustees/ACADACCOMMPOLICY2016.pdf>).

If you are a student with a disability and think you may need academic accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the **Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS)** and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the QSAS website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/>

Academic Consideration for Students with Extenuating Circumstances

Queen's University is committed to providing academic consideration to students experiencing extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control and are interfering with their ability to complete academic requirements related to a course for a short period of time. The Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances is available at <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uslclwww/files/files/policies/senateandtrustees/Academic%20Considerations%20for%20Extenuating%20Circumstances%20Policy%20Final.pdf>

Each Faculty has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances. School of Graduate Studies students can find the Academic consideration information at: <https://www.queensu.ca/sgs/accommodation-and-academic-consideration>

If you need to request academic consideration for this course, you will be required to provide the name and email address of the instructor. Please use the following:

Instructor Name: Bren Melles

Instructor email address: Brenda.melles@queensu.ca

10. Helpful Resources Available to You

***Please consult the MPH Student Handbook for further information on services and supports:** <https://phs.queensu.ca/graduate-programs/master-public-health> (near bottom right corner)

School of Graduate Studies Habitat

This amazing resource brings together resources for living well and staying well in grad school. There is information on: taking care of yourself and managing stress, finding friends and fun, living in Kingston, managing finances, accessibility, building a career and more. <https://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-habitat>

Student Wellness Services

Student Wellness Services (SWS) supports the personal, academic, and social health development of students at Queen's University by providing a range of programs and services. Student Wellness aims to offer a welcoming, confidential, and integrated service that is responsive to students' health and wellness needs. For a full listing of services, including urgent help, medical and mental health appointments, information on COVID-19 tests and vaccines and more, visit the Student Wellness website here: <http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/home>

Student Academic Success Services

Student Academic Success Services (SASS) comprises Learning Strategies and the Writing Centre. They offer academic support to students who wish to develop their skills in critical thinking, reading, learning, studying, writing, and self-management. Students can access individual appointments, workshops, and online resources. Further information is here: <http://sass.queensu.ca/>

Queen's Libraries

You can access library materials on-site or via the internet with a Queen's net ID. In addition, you can book study space, borrow materials from other libraries, seek advice on searching for the information you need, and access information about copyright, open access and scholarly communications. For service descriptions visit: <http://library.queensu.ca/>

Career Services

Career Services provides career education and employment support services at Queen's for students in all disciplines. A comprehensive range of services are offered including drop-in career advising, supporting graduate students in making informed decisions about career options, job search strategies, and CVs/resumes. For a full description of services see: <http://careers.queensu.ca/>