

Framingham State College
Division of Graduate and Continuing Education

Course Syllabus Requirements for:
Using Nutrition and Physical Activity Messages in Middle School Curriculum

- **Course Information**
Title: Using Nutrition and Physical Activity Messages in Middle School Curriculum
Instructor: Sharon Gallagher
Credits: One

- **Course Description:** Study of the integration of nutrition concepts into middle school curriculum using Planet Health. Planet Health is an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on improving the health of 6-8th grade students while building and reinforcing skills in physical education, language arts, math, science, social studies, and health, family and consumer sciences. The Planet Health curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks (Learning Standards) in these areas.

- **Course Objectives** – Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:
 - Understand the importance of good health in young people and current health trends for this population.
 - Work with their schools to become part of a solution for healthier students.
 - Become familiar with the Planet Health curriculum and its effectiveness across disciplines.
 - Implement the Planet Health curriculum into lesson plans in their discipline.

- **Course Expectations** – The course participants will be expected to independently complete the readings and written assignments corresponding to each module according to the timeline. Online discussions will be an integral part of interaction with classmates and instructor.

- **Course Content/Outline and Requirements–**

The course will be divided into 3 modules for this 5-week course.

I. Why Use Planet Health? (Week One- Power Point slides)

Features of Planet Health Curriculum

- 1) Interdisciplinary; can be incorporated into language arts, math, science social studies, physical education, health and family and consumer science classes
- 2) Encourages active, inquiry-based learning, emphasizes literacy across the curriculum, and addresses national learning standards.
- 3) Uses constructivist (student-centered) approach
- 4) Curriculum lessons aligned with the MA Frameworks (Appendix E)
- 5) Planet Health Goals on Nutrition and Fitness

Proven Benefits of the Planet Health Curriculum

- 6) Proven through scientific study to reduce obesity and TV viewing time, and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables
- 7) Teachers report satisfaction in use of curriculum in classroom; experienced positive impact on personal health
- 8) Improves student knowledge of nutrition and physical activity.

B. The Health of Young People: Trends in Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Inactivity

- 1) Trends in soda, fat, fruit/vegetable consumption
- 2) Trends in physical activity
- 3) Increasing rates of overweight among children and adolescents (=epidemic proportion)
- 4) Data on TV viewing
- 5) Benefits of healthy eating and active living

C. How Schools Can be Part of the Solution

- 1) Set school policies around physical education, physical activity, fundraising and food service to encourage healthy behaviors
- 2) Work with teachers and school staff to integrate nutrition and physical activity into the school day
- 3) Work with families to educate children and encourage change in behaviors
- 4) Statistics on nutrition and learning/achievement

D. Discussion Board Assignment

Do you have concerns about the eating and exercise habits of middle school children? What trends have you noticed at your particular school? Has your school taken any steps to combat the public health problems of overweight and poor nutrition? If not, what would you propose for your school? How do you think Planet Health might be able to help with the project?

Answer any or all of the above questions when summarizing your thoughts on this topic. Please respond to at least one other student's posting. (10 points)

II. Getting Acquainted with Planet Health (Week Two)

Reading Assignment: Read Introduction to Classroom Lessons (pp. 98-102 in *Planet Health text*).

Assignment: Complete Lesson 31, *Student Self-Assessment* (p. 117 in *Planet Health text*). It is recommended that all teachers utilizing the Planet Health curriculum administer this lesson to students before using any of the lesson plans. It is a good way to assess students' knowledge and lifestyle habits prior to any discussion on the topic. Then at the end of the year, this lesson can be done again and compared to the original responses. Improvements in knowledge and behavior changes can then be discussed as a whole for the entire class.

Discussion Board Assignment

After you complete Lesson 31, make a posting to the discussion board answering the following questions: (worth 10 points)

- Discuss any challenges you might encounter as you have students complete this activity.
- Are the directions clear, or do you think they will need to be modified?
- Considering the characteristics of your particular students, which graphing method do you think will work best?

Assignment: Find the section of the Planet Health text that pertains to your discipline. For example, if your expertise is in science, you would read through "Science At a Glance" (p. 304). Select two lessons that you think you could potentially incorporate into your classroom. For the final project, you will be coordinating one of those lessons with other teachers in this course, implementing it in your classroom, and writing up a review of it. (see module III)

III. Implementing Planet Health (Weeks Three and Four)

Talking to Youth about Health and Physical Activity (power point slides)

- 1) How to get students on board with Planet Health
 - Identify specific concerns/fears of students
 - Dispel myths
 - Emphasize benefits of exercise and good nutrition
 - Emphasize healthy behaviors, NOT dieting
 - Discuss societal pressure, media influences on body image
- 2) How to get parents on board with Planet Health
 - Review “Connecting with Parents and Families through Planet Health”

Discussion Board Assignment

As your students are exposed to Planet Health, they may experience some personal concerns regarding weight and exercise, particularly during class discussions. Can you anticipate some reactions you might encounter as you implement any of the Planet Health lessons?

You will be making a posting to the discussion board for this assignment (worth 10 points). Choose one of the issues mentioned in the slides (examples; student is overweight, has an eating disorder, doesn't like to exercise, etc.) and discuss how you might deal with this in the classroom.

Working Together to Deliver the Message

To facilitate the interdisciplinary nature of the Planet Health program, teachers are encouraged to choose health topics that can be taught in several subject areas at once. Ideally, teachers from different disciplines may want to teach related lessons during the same time frame. When this is done, students move from one subject area to the next, but they study the same topic, making the day more holistic and adding more depth and richness to the subject matter.

A school site coordinator, who might be the health education teacher or other teacher who would like to champion the program, can also be a great asset in coordinating the implementation of this curriculum. Several sessions of joint planning time over the course of the school year would also be of great benefit.

Assignment: Final Project

You will be assigned to a group of 4 students. Each of you should represent a different specialty area (science, language arts, etc.) As a group, you will discuss how you would coordinate the lesson plans of Planet Health as if you all work in the same school. Then you will write one outline to describe how the lesson plans would be incorporated in the school's overall curriculum.

Part 1: As noted in Module II of this course (section D), each course participant will identify 2 lesson plans in his or her discipline that could feasibly be added to the curriculum for the year. Each member of the group will be responsible for choosing **one** of those lesson plans. As a group, all participants will coordinate the content of his or her lesson plan with other members of the group (use forms found on pages xvi-xxii of the Planet Health text for assistance).

The written outline should specify a total of 4 lesson plans that will be taught in the school over a period of one academic year (one lesson plan per discipline). The outline should include a rough time schedule, time and materials needed for the planned lessons, and evaluation forms/rubrics for grading.

Use weeks three and four of this course to correspond with your team and decide on a plan.

You should also be using either week three or week four to implement your chosen lesson into your classroom.

Part 2: Each member of the group will be responsible for reviewing and implementing his or her lesson plan, only. Review the lesson beforehand, noting any challenges you might encounter based on your particular students' needs. In your paper, please include the following:

- ✓ Title/page number of your selected lesson plan, and the learning strand of the Frameworks to which the lesson corresponds (see Appendix E).
- ✓ Evaluation of the lesson's content. Do you think the content and supporting activities are appropriate for the intended grade level? Does the lesson plan come with enough background material and supporting resources to allow confidence in teaching the material?
- ✓ Discuss ease of use, flexibility of your lesson. Identify possible modifications that may be needed for your particular group of students.
- ✓ Discussion of ways the lesson can be extended to the families of your students (see slide "Connecting with Parents and Families through Planet Health" for ideas).

You will then teach this lesson to your students. You don't have to teach it exactly as written; feel free to make modifications as needed. After implementing the lesson in the classroom, you will write a review of how it went. In your paper, you should answer the following questions:

- ✓ How did the students respond to the lesson? Did they actively participate?
- ✓ Do you think the goal of the lesson was achieved? How did you evaluate this?
- ✓ Did you make any changes to the original lesson, and why?
- ✓ Now that you've actually taught the lesson, what changes would you make if you were to teach it again?

Part 1: Written outline (one per group) should be emailed to the instructor. The outline is worth 10 points.

Part 2: Written paper (one per course participant) should be emailed to the instructor. Each course participant will also be posting a short summary of his or her paper to the discussion board, due on the same day. The paper and posting are worth 60 points (combined).

- **Course Texts and Materials** – Each participant will be provided with a complimentary copy of the Planet Health curriculum, funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Massachusetts (BCBSMA).

On-line reading:

<http://www.healthinschools.org/sh/obesityfacts.asp>

- **Grading Criteria** – Course participants will be able to earn a total of 100 points through written assignments and active participation in discussion board topics. All written work will be evaluated on the basis of valid content, organization, clarity, original work, grammar, spelling, and appearance.