A. Course Description
This course critically explores public health issues as they are portrayed in popular films and discusses the scientific, social, and political underpinning of the public health issues portrayed in these movies. The course will cover environmental health and infectious disease issues, disease outbreaks, occupational and environmental poisonings and toxicity, epidemics as well as disease clusters. Specifically, diseases such as leukemia, AIDS, radiation sickness, multiple chemical sensitivity, cancer, or hemorrhagic fever will be discussed from biomedical and social perspectives. The health issue portrayed in the feature will be covered in class in order to allow students to evaluate the medical accuracy as it is presented in the movie.

B. Course Development
This course has been taught in Winter 2001 and is currently being taught in Winter 2002.

C. General Education Goals

Inquiry and Critical Thinking
The professor has extensive experience in the health field and will lecture for one hour about a specific health topic to assure high quality training of the students. Subsequent to the health lecture a community member joins the discussion and shares his or her experience from the "field". The combination of these two lecture styles assures content and breadth of the health topic covered. Students will become familiar with how the different disciplines of environmental health, medicine, epidemiology, and toxicology are integrated into the practice of public health. Students will learn a variety of analytic tools to evaluate public health problems including outbreak investigations, toxicology, epidemiology, cluster investigations and exposure assessment. They will learn how these methods apply to specific health issues and learn about their strengths and weaknesses. Students will gain familiarity with science and scientific inquiry by learning to identify health effects of infectious agents and toxic exposures. Students will explore applications of many fields of study, including media advocacy, environmental law and public health policy.

Communication
Students will research, develop and plan a short screenplay incorporating important health issues. Students will assess and interpret graphs of and tables with public health surveillance data and learn to express orally the content of quantitative concepts. Students will critically evaluate and discuss the way the media presents health issues in popular movies.
Human Experience
Students will explore gender, class and sexuality and determine how these factors influence health. Critical discussion of gender stereotypes in these movies will be emphasized. Students will learn to analyze gender dynamics and societal structures that lead to social injustice and environmental inequity. A critical approach will be taken to analyze social diversity on a local and national level. This course will highlight how socially disenfranchised and disadvantaged groups in society can achieve self-empowerment through active inquiry into health issues pertaining to their lives and targeted activism.

Ethical Issues
Ethical dimensions of corporate and community interests with implications for society at large will be discussed. Students will appreciate the impact of personal decisions and responsibilities on communities, work environment, and society and learn to appreciate the role of diversity in achieving environmental, social, and personal health.

Cluster Integration
Since this course is interdisciplinary in nature it speaks to a variety of students with different backgrounds. In the past students have had a very valuable classroom experience because students from different educational backgrounds contribute to the discussion. One of the strengths of this class is based on the fact that students from five different clusters join the discussion and enrich the learning experience.
This course will be integral to the Healthy People/Places Cluster, because it draws on issues from health and environment. Film and Health is a course that lends itself to discuss current societal issues from a philosophical perspective and is therefore part of the Morality Cluster. It is very well integrated into the Popular Culture Cluster because it uses popular movies to illustrate public health issues. Health effects from technological advances such as nuclear power, energy production, and manufacture will be discussed which makes it appropriate for the Freedom/Privacy/Technology Cluster. This course also addresses several Environmental Sustainability Cluster issues such as the impact of environmental degradation on human health and thus illustrates why it is important to sustain the environment.

D. Course Outline:

Week 1: Introduction; Outbreak Investigations. Movie: “Outbreak”
Week 2: Multiple Chemical Sensitivity. Movie: “Safe”
Week 4: Radiation and Nuclear Power. Movie: “Silkwood”
Week 7: Multiple Sclerosis. Movie: “Hilary and Jackie”
Week 8: Chromium Toxicity. Movie: “Erin Brockovich”
Week 9: Genetic Testing. Movie: “Lorenzo’s Oil”
Week 10: AIDS. Movie: “Philadelphia”

E. Instructor:

Jan C. Semenza, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor of Community Health
PSU
E-mail: semenzaj@pdx.edu
Phone: 725-8262
Film and Health

Course: PHE 410-008, CRN: 42745;  PHE 510-008, CRN: 42760
Instructor: Jan C. Semenza Ph.D., M.P.H.
Term: Winter 2002
Time: Wednesdays 18:00 to 21:40
Place: Shattuck Hall, Room 212
Office Hour: Thursday 15:30 to 17:30; or by appointment only
Office: School of Community Health: 450L - URBN
Phone: (503) 725-8262
Fax: (503) 725-5100
E-mail: semenzaj@pdx.edu
Teaching Assistant: Ryan Goldsmith
E-mail: goldsmithryan@hotmail.com
Office Hour: Tue 13:00 to 14:00
Office: School of Community Health: 450-03 - URBN

SUGGESTED REFERENCE: Syd Field (1982). Screenplay; The Foundations of
Screenwriting. A Dell Trade Paperback; New York.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course critically explores public health issues as they are portrayed in popular films and discusses the scientific, social, and political underpinnings of the public health issues portrayed in these movies. The course will cover environmental health and infectious disease issues, disease outbreaks, occupational and environmental poisonings and toxicity, epidemics and disease clusters. Specifically, diseases such as leukemia, AIDS, radiation sickness, multiple chemical sensitivity, and cancer will be discussed from both biomedical and social perspectives. The health issues portrayed in the feature films will be discussed in class in order to allow students to evaluate the medical accuracy as it is presented in the movie.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1) Inquiry and Critical Thinking
Students will become familiar with how the different disciplines of environmental health, medicine, epidemiology, and toxicology are integrated into the practice of public health. Students will be introduced to a variety of analytic tools used to evaluate public health problems including outbreak investigations, toxicology, epidemiology, cluster investigations and exposure assessment. They will learn how these methods apply to specific health issues and how to analyze their strengths and weaknesses. Students will become familiar with science and scientific inquiry and will gain knowledge of the health effects of infectious agents and toxic exposures. The course will address applications of many fields of study to solving environmental and health problems, through
the use of media advocacy, environmental law and public health policy.
2) Communication
Students will research, develop and plan a short screenplay incorporating an important health issue. Students will assess and interpret graphs and tables of public health surveillance data and learn to express both qualitative and quantitative concepts. Students will critically evaluate and discuss the way the media presents health issues in popular movies.

3) Human Experience
Students will explore gender, race, class and sexuality as they are portrayed in the media and determine how these factors influence health. Critical discussion of gender stereotypes in these movies will be emphasized. Students will learn to analyze gender dynamics and societal structures that lead to social injustice and environmental inequity. A critical approach will be taken to analyze social diversity on a local and national level. This course will highlight how socially disenfranchised and disadvantaged groups in society can achieve self-empowerment through active inquiry into health issues pertaining to their lives and through targeted activism.

4) Ethical Issues
Ethical dimensions of corporate and community interests with implications for society at large will be discussed. Students will consider the impact of personal decisions and responsibilities on communities, work environment, and society and gain an appreciation of the role of diversity in achieving environmental, social, and personal health.

CLUSTER INTEGRATION:
This course is integral to the Healthy People, Healthy Places Cluster, because it draws on issues relating to health and environment. It is also integrated into the Popular Culture Cluster because it uses popular movies to educate students about public health issues. Health effects from technological advances such as nuclear power, energy production, and manufacture will be discussed which makes it appropriate for the Freedom/Privacy/Technology Cluster. This course also addresses several Environmental Sustainability Cluster issues such as the impact of environmental degradation on human health and thus illustrates why environmental sustainability is important.

ASSESSMENT:
- Open Book Quizzes 25%
- Midterm Paper 25%
- Final Paper 40%
- Class Participation 10%

1) Open Book Quiz (25%)
This class will assess class participation each week through an open book quiz. Every Thursday a WebCT quiz will be posted on the web at http://www.webct.pdx.edu. The quiz will cover questions regarding that week’s class (Wednesday) and will include the health
topics discussed in class, the movie screened in class, the assigned reading on the web (website reading assignments), and the assigned reading from the class text (A Civil Action). Students are required to complete the quiz and to submit their answers on line. The quiz will be automatically graded (after the quiz has closed for the week) and the grade will be recorded through WebCT. The quiz will be active for one week only, and students are required to complete the open book quiz between 5:30 pm Thursday and 5:30 pm the following Wednesday. In order to have access to WebCT students need to have an ODIN Account through PSU; be sure to apply for an account immediately since it might take 48h to be activated. Apply through http://www.account.pdx.edu. There will be no make-up quizzes for any reason.

Optional WebCT Student Orientation Sessions in 322 CH (PC side):
Wednesday 9 January 4:00-5:00 PM
Thursday 10 January 9:00-10:00 AM
Wednesday 16 January 3:00-4:00 PM
Thursday 17 January 3:00-4:00 PM

2) Midterm Paper (25%). Due Feb 6, 2002 at 21:40 (no exceptions)
Students must identify an original and real (not fictional) public health problem of local, national, or international importance, and describe the health issue from a public health, medical, or scientific perspective. The health issue must be a real health problem that actually exists. The paper should be no longer than one (1) typed page for undergraduate and five (5) pages for graduate students (12 point, single-spaced with 1-inch margins) and must describe the health issue that you will portray in your screen play for the Final Paper (see below). For the Midterm Paper you are expected to demonstrate that you have researched the health issue and that you are knowledgeable about it. For example, if you are planning a documentary on West Nile Fever; for the Midterm Paper you must describe key elements of the disease, such as the epidemiology, the natural history of the disease, or the vector/host relationship, etc. The paper must be referenced with three (3) peer-reviewed publications for undergraduate and ten (10) for graduate students. Peer-reviewed references can be found in Medline (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PubMed) Web sites are acceptable, but are not a substitute for the three peer-reviewed journal article references. The list of references is included in the one page limit. References must be cited according to a standard scientific bibliographic format and a copy the abstract of each paper must be submitted along with the assignment (abstracts not included in 1-page limit). The paper will be graded based on the accuracy of the health issue; clarity of writing; and grammar, spelling and organization (be sure to use the spell check on your computer); plagiarism results in a non-passing grade. The paper is due on Feb 6, 2002 at the end of class at 21:40 (9:40 PM). Late papers will be marked down one (1) letter grade per day, beginning at 21:41.

3) Final Paper (40%). Due on March 13, 2002 at 21:40 (no exceptions)
Students will write a screenplay about the health issue they chose for their Midterm paper.
The issue can be approached from a public health, racial/ethnic, gender, ethical, societal, policy, scientific, environmental, or simply human standpoint as long as the story works. The Final Paper must be no longer than ten (10) typed page for undergraduate and fifteen (15) for graduate students (12 point, double-spaced with 1-inch margins) and must be grounded on a sound and accurate health foundation (Midterm Paper); however, there is artistic freedom to create a story line that fits the screen, as long as the scientific basis is not violated. The paper will be graded based on the accuracy of the health issue; incorporation of gender, race, class and sexuality, etc; orthography and clarity of writing (be sure to use the spell check on your computer); and effectiveness of the plot. Plagiarism results in a non-passing grade. The paper is due in class on March 13, 2002 at 21:40 (9:40 PM). Graduate students will present their paper during exam week in class (March 20th at 15:30-17:20).

For example, students that propose a documentary about West Nile Fever could develop a screenplay that illustrates the vulnerability of public health in Oregon for an outbreak of West Nile Fever and the need to establish surveillance in the state.

4) Attendance and active participation in class discussions (10%) Attendance will be taken every class at the beginning, during, OR end of class. Students are expected to prepare for class by reading all background reading assigned for the day as well as the assigned chapter from "A Civil Action". You will be evaluated on your verbal participation and demonstration that you have engaged with and critically considered the materials in the required text and the topic discussed in class. Graduate students will also be graded based on their presentation of their finals paper during exam week.

CLASS SCHEDULE – Winter 2002; Wednesdays 18:00 to 21:40

Jan 9  
Reading: Syllabus
Film: Outbreak
Web Sites:  http://www.healthhd.pdx.edu/~semenzai/Film and Health.htm  
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/vrlyfvr/vrlyfvr.htm

Jan 16  
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: Boston, Woburn, The Lawyer
Film: And the Band Played on
Guest Speaker: Amanda Schnell, BA; Cascade AIDS Project
Web Site:  http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/facts.htm

Jan 23  
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: Rule 11, Orphans and Dogs
Film: Erin Brockovich
Guest Speaker: David Paul, JD; Paul and Sugerman, PC
Web Sites:  http://www.cdc.gov/health/cancer.htm
Jan 30
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: Discovery, The Woodshed
Film: Safe
Guest Speaker: TBA
Web Site: http://swinfo.tamu.edu/poison/multchem.htm

Feb 6
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: Billion-Dollar Charlie, Facher’s Plea
Film: The Insider
Guest Speaker: Dr. Lawrence Wallack, School of Community Health, PSU
Web Site: http://www.cdc.gov/health/smoking.htm

Feb 13
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: The Trial
Film: Panic in the Streets
Guest Speaker: Dr. Luis Ruedas, Biology, PSU
Web Sites: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/plague
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/ermergplan/index.htm

Feb 20
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: The Vigil
Film: Silkwood
Guest Speaker: Lloyd K. Marbet
http://www.cdc.gov/ncelh/radiation/default.htm

Feb 27
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: The Negotiation
Film: Lorenzo’s Oil
Guest Speaker: Dr. Susan J. Hayflick, OHSU
Web Sites: http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/bd

March 6
Reading: A Civil Action; Chapters: Blindman’s Buff
Film: Vision 2000
Guest Speaker: Andre Semenza, Maverick Motion
Web Site: http://www.maverickmotion.com/

March 13
Reading: A Civil Action; review
Film: A Civil Action
Web Sites: http://www.cdc.gov/health/cancer.htm
TO ACCOMPANY PROPOSAL FOR ADDITION OF COURSE
TO AN EXISTING CLUSTER

Name of proposing faculty member: Jan C. Semenza
Title of proposed course: Film and Health
From which department(s): School of Community Health
For which cluster: Morality
Name of cluster coordinator: Byron Haines

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COURSE APPROVED FOR CLUSTER INCLUSION BY

DEPARTMENT CHAIR(S): [Signature] DATE: 10/20/01

CLUSTER COORDINATOR: [Signature] DATE: 10/19/01

CHAIR, CLUSTER COORDINATORS: [Signature] DATE:

CHAIR, UNST COMMITTEE: [Signature] DATE:

Copies of completed document are to be filed with appropriate cluster coordinator(s) as well as sent to appropriate department chair(s), UNST Scheduling, and Chair, Cluster Coordinators.

University Studies: November 2000
Film and Health
Wed 5:30 - 9:10 PM
Winter 2001

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B. Course Development
This is a new course in development.

C. General Education Goals
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