

PH 198: Independent Study – Internship in Public Health Practice Syllabus

Academic Year 2025–2026

Welcome

PH 198 is an independent study internship designed to provide undergraduate students with practical, hands-on experience in public health practice and research. The course is offered for variable units (1 or 2 units per quarter) with an expectation of 3–6 hours of work per week, depending on enrollment. Students are expected to commit to the entire academic year (Fall, Winter, Spring). Participation in the Workgroup on Student Food Insecurity is central to this internship.

Teaching Team

Faculty Mentor: Richard Garfein, PhD, MPH

Professor, Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science

Email: rgarfein@health.ucsd.edu

Additional support may be provided by staff and graduate students involved with the Workgroup on Student Food Insecurity.

Course Description

The Independent Study Internship provides undergraduate students with an opportunity to gain experience in public health practice and research. Students will contribute to the Workgroup on Student Food Insecurity, a cross-campus collaboration dedicated to understanding and addressing food insecurity among UC San Diego students. Interns will participate in data collection and analysis, policy evaluation, program development, and dissemination activities. The course emphasizes experiential learning, teamwork, and application of public health methods to real-world challenges.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Apply public health methods to address student food insecurity.
- Collaborate effectively within multidisciplinary teams.
- Interpret and communicate data to inform policy and program decisions.
- Demonstrate professional skills in project planning, analysis, and dissemination.

Required and Recommended Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings, resources, and materials will be provided via Canvas or distributed during Workgroup meetings.

Instructor Communication Policy

Communication is an essential part of your internship experience. You are encouraged to ask questions during Workgroup meetings and via email. Emails will generally be answered within 24 hours during the workweek. Weekend emails may receive responses the following Monday. Office hours with the Faculty Mentor can be arranged by appointment.

Course Components

The course involves participation in the Workgroup on Student Food Insecurity and completion of internship responsibilities. Components include:

- Workgroup Meetings: Biweekly on Mondays, 10:00–11:00 a.m.
- Internship Tasks: Data collection, survey distribution, recruitment, data entry/analysis, project planning.
- Dissemination Activities: Supporting posters, reports, or presentations.
- Reflection: Each quarter, students will complete a written reflection (1–2 pages).

Attendance and Participation

Participation in Workgroup meetings is required. Students are expected to attend at least 80% of meetings and engage actively in discussions and team decision-making. Absences should be communicated to the Faculty Mentor in advance.

Assessment and Grading

Grades are earned based on participation, contributions, and reflections. Evaluation will follow this system:

- Participation & Professionalism – 100 points (40%)
- Project Contributions – 100 points (40%)
- Quarterly Reflection – 50 points (20%)

Grades are based on the cumulative points earned over the academic year.

Expectations and Internship Guidelines

- Attend Workgroup meetings on time and participate fully.
- Communicate respectfully and professionally with faculty, staff, and peers.
- Contribute actively to projects and team efforts.
- Submit reflections and tasks by designated deadlines.
- Support your peers and work collaboratively.
- Respect professional standards of confidentiality and ethical conduct.

University Policies

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Students receiving financial aid must meet the academic standards outlined by UC San Diego. Please review SAP requirements and the appeals process if applicable.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and request that an Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter be sent to the instructor. Accommodations begin once the AFA letter has been received. They cannot be applied retroactively.

Academic Integrity

All work submitted must be your own and produced for this course. Use of sources must be properly acknowledged. Unauthorized aids, including artificial intelligence tools unless explicitly allowed, are not permitted. Violations of UC San Diego's academic integrity policies will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Ownership of Work

Per the California Education Code, students may not share or sell course materials without the instructor's permission. The Department of Public Health acknowledges that students are the immediate owners of their original work, except in cases where materials are submitted for departmental use (e.g., reports, posters).