

# Course-description 2009/2010

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Sub-department  
Communication Science  
Hollandseweg 1  
6706 KN Wageningen

## Advances in health promotion

<b>Course-code:</b>	COM 36806
<b>ECTS:</b>	6
<b>Lecturer(s):</b>	Dr. Reint Jan Renes, room 4059 Dr. Kirsten Verkooijen, room 2056
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Sjoukje Atema, Annette Dijkstra and Sylvia Holvast Room 4052, tel. 484310
<b>Period:</b>	1
<b>Place and time:</b>	Wednesday and Friday 13.30h – 15.15h C106 Forum building
<b>Exam date</b>	No additional examination



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## **Contents and aims**

The field of health promotion has facilitated the development of new approaches towards improving the health of individuals and communities that go beyond approaches such as disease prevention and population health. Some of the distinguishing features include: a holistic and ecological view on health, a focus on determinants of health (e.g. biology, social and physical environments, lifestyles, and health services), participatory approaches, and the use of multiple strategies to promote the health of individuals and communities. In this course attention is paid to developments in theory and research related to the action areas and key strategies in health promotion. Specific attention will be paid to different perspectives and basic strategies for health promotion, to developing skills at individual, organisational and community level, and to characteristics of community action, health supportive environments and healthy public policies. These topics are discussed in relation to health promotion planning, intervention and research.

## **Aims**

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- distinguish health promotion from related concepts, such as disease prevention and population health;
- apply theories for health promotion at an individual, community and societal level;
- describe the meaning and importance of the action areas of health promotion;
- apply the key features and values that shape health promotion research and practice;
- identify different health promotion strategies and select appropriate (mix) of strategies.

## **Activities**

The course consists of lectures, literature study, discussion groups and writing a project proposal in tutor groups. During the lectures the important concepts are explained, discussed and illustrated with practical examples. In week 2, 3, 4 and 5, students have to write a critical reflection on the literature belonging to these lectures. Lectures and literature study encompass 80 hours. In addition, students work in small tutor groups to develop a health promotion project proposal, focusing on the action areas and key strategies for health promotion. Each group will have a tutor for supervision. The group work consists of 88 hours.

## **Examination**

The final mark for this course is based on:

- four individually written critical reflection papers on the obliged literature which contributes 1/2 of the final mark;
- the group project which contributes 1/2 of the final mark.

Note: both marks should be sufficient (5.5 or higher) in order to pass the course.

## **Literature**

Literature related to the lectures is provided in a reader which is available at Eduweb. For the group work and the individual assignments participants have to search additional literature.

For students with little pre-knowledge of Health Promotion we recommend to consult the book: Koelen, M.A. & van den Ban, A. (2004). Health education and health promotion. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

## Programme

<b>Part 1: The health promotion context</b>	
09-09	<i>Perspectives on health:</i> In the health sector three dominant models of health can be distinguished: the bio-medical model, the behavioural model, and the socio-environmental model. We discuss how these models influenced the development of health promotion in relation to disease prevention.
11-09	<i>Basic strategies for health promotion:</i> Enabling, mediating and advocacy are widely accepted as the fundamental strategies for effective health promotion. We discuss the meaning of these concepts for health promotion practice and research.
<b>Part 2: Health promotion action areas</b>	
16-09	<i>Developing skills at individual, organisational and community level:</i> Skills refer to the abilities of individuals, organisations and communities to influence the determinants of health. At the individual level, skills refer to health literacy and empowerment. At organisational and community level it refers to building partnerships, strategic planning and leadership. We discuss how capacities at the different levels are inter-related and where and how such capacity can be build.
18-09	
23-09	<i>Create supportive environments for health:</i> Supportive environments refer to the physical, social, economic and political aspects of the places where people live, work and play (e.g. their home, the local community, workplace, school) and of the health system. The main aim is to make the environments health enhancing. We discuss ways to identify and prioritise environmental 'interventions' to create supportive environments.
25-09	
30-09	<i>Strengthening community action:</i> Community action refers to collective efforts by communities to increasing community control over the determinants of health. Key concepts are citizen participation and intersectoral work. We discuss factors contributing to success or failure of community action, and how to deal with these factors.
02-10	
07-10	<i>Building healthy public policies:</i> Policy refers to the objectives and rules that guide the activities of governments, organisations and other institutions at (inter)national, regional and local level. Healthy public policy is characterised by an explicit concern for health and equity, and it defines priorities for action in response to health needs, available resources, and political pressures. We will discuss characteristics of effective policies and ways to identify stakeholders for policy development, - implementation and - evaluation.
09-10	
<b>Part 3: Research</b>	
14-10	It is generally accepted that working on the health promotion action areas is promising for the promotion of health, but how to prove that our efforts are worthwhile? Health promotion programmes often are complex: they focus on multiple factors, and aim at multiple outcomes at multiple levels. Moreover, health promotion research functions not only as a tool to <i>measure</i> change and innovation, but also as a tool to <i>facilitate</i> these outcomes. In this final lecture we will discuss how research contributes to practice, science, and the development of a theoretical basis for health promotion.
16-10	

## Lecture plan

Lectures are on Wednesday and Friday from **13.30** till **15.15** in **C106** of the Forum building

Week	Date	Lecturer	Topic	Activity
1	Wed 9.09	Dr R.J. Renes Dr K. Verkooijen	Health promotion perspectives	Introduction to assignments
	Fri 11.09	Dr K. Verkooijen	Health promotion strategies	Class discussion of literature
2	Wed 16.09	Dr R.J. Renes	Developing skills I individual skills	
	Fri 18.09	Dr I. Bakker	Developing skills II organisation skills	Hand in assignment 1 and group project part A
3	Wed 23.09	Dr R.J. Renes	Supportive environments I	Feedback assignment 1
	Fri 25.09	Dr R.J. Renes	Supportive environments II	Hand in assignment 2 and group project part B
4	Wed 30.09	Dr K. Verkooijen	Community action I citizen participation	Feedback assignment 2
	Fri 2.10	Dr K. Verkooijen	Community action II intersectoral work	Hand in assignment 3 Interim presentations group projects
5	Wed 7.10	Dr R. J. Renes	Healthy public policies I	Feedback assignment 3
	Fri 9.10	Dr K. Verkooijen	Healthy public policies II	Hand in assignment 4 and group project part C
6	Wed 14.10	Dr K. Verkooijen	Health promotion research	Feedback assignment 4 Hand in project part D
	Fri 16.10	Dr R.J. Renes Dr K. Verkooijen	Closing off and evaluation	Presentation of group projects
7	Fri 23.10			Hand in project part D (final piece) before 17 h!

## Assignments

### Individual assignments – critical reflection paper

Each week you have to use (online) library databases to search for a scientific, peer reviewed, empirical article related to the topic of that week. In addition, you have to write in week two to five a critical reflection paper with a maximum of 2 pages. The first page should contain a short summary and discussion of the selected empirical article (max, 500 words). The second page should contain a reflection on all articles provided in the reader that week together with the article selected by yourself (max. 500 words). Be aware, a reflection is not the same as an abstract or summary. The goal of this part of the assignment is to relate and reflect on the information distributed by the different articles, to select the main issues raised, and to discuss the main issues in-depth in relation to that week's topic and your own group assignment (see for an overview of the assessment criteria appendix x).

Read appendix 1 “some tips on how to select and read a scientific research paper” included at the end of this course guide, and **use appendix 2 “Format Individual Assignment” to structure your paper!**

### Group work – project proposal

During the course participants work in small tutorial groups (max. 5 participants) on the stepwise development of a group project. Each group will have its own tutor who will provide relevant advice and support.

The purpose of the group project is to produce a proposal for a health promotion programme related to reducing health inequalities. The project has to include (some of) the action areas and key strategies for health promotion which are central to the course. The project can be:

- a plan to address a specific health topic (e.g. overweight, heart disease, diabetes, sexual health);
- a plan to promote health in a specific group (e.g. children, teenagers, adults, man/woman, elderly, asylum seekers);
- a plan to promote health in a specific community or setting (e.g. neighbourhood, school, workplace, youth centre).

Effective health promotion requires systematic planning. Decisions have to be made about objectives, people to involve, people to address, strategies for action, the organisation of activities and the evaluation plan. Several planning models have been developed to guide you through this process. For the project work **you have to use the following planning framework:**

Koelen, M.A. & van den Ban, A. (2004). Designing health education and health promotion. Chapter 8 in: *Health education and health promotion*. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

In developing the project you can use the literature as provided for the course, but it also requires additional literature search. The project is developed in four steps: (A) project announcement, (B) analysis of the problem, (C) development of the programme, (D) writing a full project proposal. Your tutor will provide you with feedback on the parts that you hand in prior to the final project proposal (part A to C). Make an appointment with your tutor about when to receive the feedback. The project has to be presented in week 4 (provisional proposal) and in the last week of the course (final proposal) in a plenary session.

**A. Project announcement** (hand in Friday 12.09)

**The first step is to decide about the topic on which your group is going to work throughout the course. Once you have agreed on this you need to write a short project announcement (max. 1 page), which should contain the following information:**

1. Authors including names and (e-mail) addresses
2. Preliminary title of the project
3. Introduction to the topic
  - Short description of the topic you want to address
  - The target group you want to focus on
  - Justify why is it important to address the chosen topic
4. Aims and objectives

**B. Analyse the health problem** (hand in Friday 19.09)

Health problems usually are complex. Therefore, it is important to analyse the problem in terms of factors which, positively or negatively, contribute to the problem.

1. Describe the positive and negative factors related to the problem. Find additional literature to support your analysis.
2. Describe how your topic relates to inequalities in health. Make reference to the Charters of Ottawa and Bangkok and the critical reflection papers on the charter (literature week 1).
3. Describe the important stakeholders. How you will involve them in the programme?
4. Select priorities for action and, if necessary, redefine your aim and objectives. Also consider the distinction between process and outcome objectives, and the distinction between the individual level and the community level.

**C. Develop a programme** (hand in Friday 03.10)

Once the problem is clear and the aim and objectives are set, you can develop a health promotion programme to address the problem. You can use the literature provided for the course, but you also have to find additional literature to support your choices. Note that you have two weeks for this part. Don't forget however to discuss the progress with your tutor in between.

1. Outline the programme you want to develop in order to achieve your aims and objectives.
2. Also pay attention to how your programme relates to the health promotion action areas and key strategies.
3. Describe the expected results of your programme, both in terms of processes and outcomes.
4. Describe the setting in which you want to implement the programme.
5. Give a description of the project organisation and provide a time-plan.
6. Describe the expected opportunities and constraints while running the project.
7. Describe how you wish to evaluate the programme

**D. Final project proposal** (hand in before Friday 17.10.09, 17 h!)

The final project proposal is made up of the previous ones, but it is more than just pasting them all together. It has to be a complete report. Think of it as a product that you need to convince your employer to grant the proposal. The final report should be no longer than 1500 words (approx. 5 pages excluding title page and references). It has to contain, as far as possible, the following aspects:

1. Details of the project group
  - Names, addresses
2. Title of the project
3. Abstract (Max. 150 words)

- briefly outline the aim and objectives, methods, results or expected results of your project. It should trigger the reader to read the full text.
- 4. Three or four key-words which best describe the topic you address
- 5. Description of the problem / situation, including
  - background information about the problem / situation
  - who is involved (stakeholders)
  - relevance of the topic for reducing inequalities in health
  - theoretical framework, including a short review of relevant literature
  - aims and objectives
- 6. Description of the proposed programme
  - outline of the programme in relation to your aims and objectives
  - reflection on the programme in relation to the health promotion action areas and key strategies
- 7. Expectations, including
  - expected opportunities and constraints while running the project
  - expected results
- 8. Project organisation, planning
  - organisation, overall duration and time schedule related to phases in the project
  - an evaluation plan

## E. Project presentations

During the course, each group presents their project twice during a plenary session. On Friday 26.09 (week 4) a tentative project proposal has to be presented and on Friday 10.10 (week 6) the final project plan. Input and feedback from the audience can be used to improve the project. For the presentations you have 10 minutes, added with 5 minutes for questions and discussion (15 minutes total). The groups are free to decide about the design of the presentation. You can appoint one of the group members to do the presentation, but you can also make a group-performance. You can use power point, but you also can decide to design a role-play or any other kind of act. Keep in mind that with the presentation you aim to 'sell' the project in order to convince your employer, colleagues, or a funding agency that the project is necessary and good.

## Project assessment

The written project proposals will be assessed on the following criteria:

<p><b>Overall points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Is the project related to reducing inequalities in health?</li> <li>* Is the wider relevance of the project for health promotion recognised?</li> <li>* Does the project reflect health promotion strategies and principles?</li> <li>* Does the project, where appropriate, establish networks or make full use of existing networks?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Introduction and background</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Is the context of the project clear?</li> <li>* Has the subject been explored adequately prior to developing the aims and objectives, both practical and theoretical?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aims and objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Are the aims and objectives clearly defined?</li> <li>* Are they realistic and achievable in light of the available resources and constraints?</li> <li>* Are they measurable?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Methods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Are the (action and/or research) methods adequately explained?</li> <li>* Will the chosen methods meet the specified aim and objectives?</li> <li>* Are the expected constraints and opportunities taken into account?</li> </ul>

**Results and Evaluation**

- \* Is there a clear project plan?
- \* Is there a realistic evaluation plan?

**Group process**

- \* Did the group members work well together and did all members contribute to the group work?
- \* Has feedback from the tutor and information from lectures during the course been used to improve the group work?

## **Appendix 1. Some tips on how to select and read a scientific research paper (Partly based on Ann McNeal's "How to read a scientific research paper").**

1. **Skimming.** Skim the paper quickly, noting basics like headings, figures and the like. This takes just a few minutes. You're not trying to understand it yet, but just to get an overview.

2. **Vocabulary.** Go through the paper word by word and line by line, underlining or highlighting **every word and phrase** you don't understand. Don't worry if there are a lot of underlinings; you're still not trying to make sense of the article.

Now you have several things you might do with these vocabulary and concept questions, depending upon the kind of question each is. You can

- a. **Look up simple words and phrases.** Often the question is simply vocabulary—what's *salutogenesis*, or *literacy*, or *dissemination*.
- b. **Get an understanding from the context in which it is used.** Often words that are used to describe the procedures used in a study can be understood from the context, and may be very specific to the paper you are reading. Of course, you should be careful when deciding that you understand a word from its context, because it might not mean what you think.
- c. **Flag this phrase as belonging to one of the major concepts of the paper**—it's bigger than a vocabulary question. For example, a paper about diet and cancer might refer to "risk reduction," which you would need to understand in context and in some depth.

3. **Comprehension, section by section.** Try to deal with all the words and phrases, although a few technical terms in the Methods section might remain. Now go back and read the whole paper, section by section, for comprehension.

In the **Introduction**, note how the context is set. What larger question is this a part of? The author should summarize and comment on previous research, and you should distinguish between previous research and the actual current study. What is the hypothesis of the paper and the ways this will be tested?

In the **Methods**, try to get a clear picture of what was done at each step. What was actually measured? It is a good idea to make an outline and/or sketch of the procedures and instruments. Keep notes of your questions; some of them may be simply technical, but others may point to more fundamental considerations that you will use for reflection and criticism below.

In **Results** look carefully at the figures and tables, as they are the heart of most papers. A scientist will often read the figures and tables before deciding whether it is worthwhile to read the rest of the article! What does it mean to "understand" a figure? You understand a figure when you can redraw it and explain it in plain English words.

The **Discussion** contains the conclusions that the author would like to draw from the data. In some papers, this section has a lot of interpretation and is very important. In any case, this is usually where the author reflects on the work and its meaning in relation to other findings and to the field in general.

4. **Reflection and criticism.** After you understand the article and can summarize it, then you can return to broader questions and draw your own conclusions. It is very useful to keep track of your questions as you go along, returning to see whether they have been answered. Often, the simple questions may contain the seeds of very deep thoughts about the work.

## Appendix 2. Format Individual Assignment

*1<sup>st</sup> page (max. 500 words)*

**Reference:** Author(s) (Year), Title, *Journal*, volume (issue), pages

**Introduction:** What is the overall purpose of the research? How does the research fit into the context/literature of its field? Is it, for example, attempting to settle a controversy? show the validity of a new research method? open up a new field of inquiry?

**Findings:** What is the one major finding? What are additional interesting findings worth mentioning?

**Conclusion & Discussion:** What are the major conclusions and most important limitations and omissions? What are the implications for that week's topic?

**Short critical reflection:** The implicit questions below are an effective basis for a short discussion of the empirical article.

- Do you agree with the author's rationale for studying this issue (in this way)?
- Was the research methodology appropriate for the questions the researcher was approaching?
- Do you agree with the conclusions drawn by the author? Are there other factors that could have influenced, or accounted for, the results? Are the conclusions drawn over-generalized or appropriately careful?
- Are there other issues that should have been taken into account?

*2<sup>nd</sup> page (max. 500 words)*

After reading, reviewing and understanding all articles provided, you must return to broader questions related to that week's topic and draw your own conclusions. It is very useful to keep track of your (implicit) questions as you go along, returning to see whether they have been answered.

This is where you set the articles in a larger context (i.e. that week's topic), to understand its relation with each other, and to force yourself to think beyond the outlines of the article, examining other factors that may not have been explored in the research or issues related to the topic that have not been raised. End this part of the assignment with final overall conclusions (and possible suggestions and implications) related to your own group assignment.