

## CrCrTh 653 Epidemiological Thinking and Population Health, Spring 2019 Students' Synthetic Statements, from the Final Course Evaluation

*The synthetic statement is the fourth question on formal course evaluations for the Critical and Creative Thinking Graduate Program. See questions 1-3 listed on <http://bit.ly/CCTEval>*

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Question 4: "Building on your comments from Questions 1-3 in the formal evaluation, compose a synthetic statement (1 or 2 paragraphs) evaluating this course. (Imagine readers who might not be willing to wade through all the answers to Qs 1-3, but are willing to read more than simply the numerical averages of standard course evaluations.) Please make comments that help the instructor develop the course in the future and that enable some third party appreciate the course's strengths and weaknesses. Among other things you might comment on the overall content and progression of classes, the session activities, and the use of mentors to support the learning in the course."

Below are the Synthetic Statements from the respondents who gave permission for these comments to be shared on the web.

- This course did an excellent job in helping me gain skills in epidemiological and literacy and research literacy. I did find that, at times, my lacking in a technical background influenced how well I was able to absorb the material, but overall I think it was a great introduction to "thinking skills" in the world of epidemiology.
- There were specific things I wanted to get out of this course that I believe I achieved. Entering this class, I wasn't 100% sure what to expect but know that it would help me in my future studies and broaden my critical thinking processes around epidemiology. I enjoyed the discussion portion of this class. In addition, I enjoyed the ability to take what I was interested in and bring it into the course. I am taking a lot away from this class including a better understanding of how epidemiology is studied, how to ask better questions, and critically thinking. I think the major personal obstacle was having little to no knowledge in public health and epidemiology. If I were to retake this course I would put more time aside to read and understand the topics at hand; however, there is only so much time I was able to give this class each week. This class has a lot of reading and writing involved. Along with the weekly writing assignments, there were the revisions which needed to be done as well. Overall, I took a lot out of this course, some of it I was expecting, but I know going forward it will help me with future studies and work.
- It is quite a privilege to be able to take this course with Peter Taylor as his knowledge and experience lends to a rich learning experience which is not limited to one narrow aspect in the field of epidemiology, or biology or policy. Instead of being a course which could easily be very dry, Peter provides a diverse set of materials to work with and an environment in which students can jump off from and take in directions that match their own interests. The class requires that students are comfortable with the extensive scientific readings that must be done weekly and the expectation that students should be at least somewhat versed in stats, as mentioned in the description holds true, however, a smart and determined student with strong interest could make up for any previous lacking in training if they are willing to do a bit extra on their own, with Peter's support.
- This is a graduate level course that introduces the student to the field of epidemiology of public health. The course is designed to build off of your knowledge of social science research. You will be expected to know how to read and evaluate research articles. While the required

readings are not terribly complicated, you should have basic knowledge of research methods and design to be able to understand the content. The amount of reading required is average for a graduate level course, and you must complete the required readings to be able to participate in the class. It is very clear if you are not prepared for class. This is mostly independent work, which is nice for students that cannot travel campus easily. The professor is knowledgeable, respectful, professional, and supportive. I highly recommend this course