

A NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

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Curriculum Authors

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UNHealthy Solutions

enhancing your public health capacity and strategy

Introduction

Public health professionals are increasingly working on policy, systems, and environmental solutions to health problems. A state legislature might be trying to enact policies to address the opioid epidemic, and state and local agencies might be planning for how to implement the policies. Advocates might be seeking to raise tobacco excise taxes or persuade local businesses to enact their own organizational policies to limit the use of tobacco products on their premises. A collective of non-profits and county agencies might be trying to improve the service system for children with special health care needs. Local or state agencies might want to reduce obesity rates by enhancing the built environment where people live, work, learn, and play.

To effectively work on policy change, professionals need skills and tools to articulate the problem, choose a solution, influence the change process to enact and implement that solution, and then evaluate its impact.

Systems Change for Health™ is a training program based on a curriculum written and copyrighted by James Emery, MPH and Carolyn Crump, PhD (part of the UNC Healthy Solutions team with the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health). Funded originally by the Directors of Health Promotion and Education, the curriculum has been taught at both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and throughout the country within state and local health departments.

The curriculum consists as either a packaged series of courses or as a tailored learning experience to meet the needs of clients. Each course is designed to meet multiple adult-learning styles by providing mini-lectures about concepts, and then facilitating experiential activities (e.g., role play, case study, small group exercises, and individual reflection). The instructors provide individual and team coaching during all activities.

The curriculum consists of one introductory course, and five skills-based courses:

- Introduction to the System/Policy Change Process (1 day)
- Course 1: Assessing and Framing the Problem (2 days)
- Course 2: Analyzing Potential Solutions (2 days)
- Course 3: Influencing the System/Policy Process (2 days)
- Course 4: Implementing Enacted Policies (2 days)
- Course 5: Evaluating System/Policy Change Interventions (2 days)

A description and sample agenda are provided for each course on the following pages.

Introduction to the Systems Change Process

Timeframe: 1 day

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize that a problem definition is socially constructed
2. Recognize how policy analysis tools can help guide solution development
3. Identify a range of advocacy strategies and tactics
4. Identify implementation components
5. Recognize how message framing is critical to the policy change process
6. Recognize the utility of a project logic model for evaluation planning

This introductory course orients participants to the systems change process, including how a local or state coalition might influence the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and built environments. Through interactive exercises, lecture, and group discussion, participants become familiar with five topics: 1) defining social/health problems; 2) analyzing potential solutions; 3) influencing the change process; 4) implementing enacted changes; and 5) evaluating system changes.

The course provides a gateway to the series of five skills-building courses or to other tailored learning experiences about changing systems to improve health and social problems.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE: Sample Agenda

Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introductory activities • Review agenda and materials
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing systems, policies, and built environments • Development of the curricula
Assessing and Framing the Problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining and framing health and social problems to encourage system solutions
BREAK (15 minutes)
Analyzing Potential Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of policy analysis
Influencing the Systems Change Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy strategies
LUNCH (60 minutes)
Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message framing and media sources
BREAK (15 minutes)
Implementing Enacted Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How government agencies implement system changes
Evaluating Systems Change Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of a policy
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional concepts and tools in Skill-Building workshop series • Feedback

Course 1: Assessing and Framing the Problem

Timeframe: 2 days

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how health evidence, stakeholder values, and social determinants of health contribute to a problem definition
2. Use systems thinking to develop a problem definition
3. Narrow a problem definition
4. Use framing elements to communicate a problem definition

During this 2-day, skills-building workshop, participants learn to define a health or social problem in terms of the systems and structures that perpetuate the problem.

Participants consider how problems are socially constructed in order to gain the attention of system and policy decision-makers. They learn how health disparities and social determinants of health are investigated to reveal root causes of problems that can produce health inequities. Participants are introduced to systems thinking to clarify the scope of a problem, and to point toward the type of solution to pursue. They acquire tools and skills for framing messages, and practice using a 3-part structure to define a health or social problem for different target audiences.

COURSE 1: Sample Agenda

Day 1
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory activities
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing systems, policies, and built environments • Development of the curricula
What is a “Problem”? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social construction of problems
Case Example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to case example
BREAK
Learning about the problem (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence and data
Learning about the problem (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying stakeholders and their values
LUNCH
Learning about the problem (Part 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social determinants of health
BREAK
Put it together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems thinking
Define the problem (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting a boundary
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback

Day 2
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review from Day 1 • Agenda for Day 2
Define the problem (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions (built environments)
BREAK
Define the problem (Part 2 – continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions (policies)
Define the problem (Part 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact and feasibility
LUNCH
State “What’s Wrong” (Part 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a 1-sentence description
Define the problem (Part 5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the 3-part problem definition
BREAK
Communicating the problem (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing 101
Communicating the problem (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing the problem
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback

Course 2: Analyzing Potential Solutions

Timeframe: 2 days

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Construct and use a stakeholder power analysis
2. Develop feasibility and impact criteria
3. Construct and use an impact analysis
4. Synthesize the results to formulate a decision
5. Describe how to structure a policy brief

During this 2-day, skills-building workshop, participants learn to analyze (compare) and select system/policy/environmental solutions to pursue.

The workshop introduces the need for analysis methods and how they can incorporate the socio-political values of the stakeholders. Participants learn about the policy analysis process and how to sequence analysis with windows of opportunity for influencing decision agendas. Stakeholder perspectives are introduced in a simulated role-play experience and information is recorded in a log. Participants use a stakeholder power analysis and an impact analysis, and combine the results to inform the decision-making process. The workshop concludes with a review of sample policy briefs.

COURSE 2: Sample Agenda

Day 1
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introductory activities Review agenda and materials
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing systems, policies, and built environments Development of the curricula
What is policy analysis? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition Reasons for using
BREAK
What is policy analysis? (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System context for solutions to problems Definition, models, and tools
Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicting perspectives in America Key values
LUNCH
Understanding the policy process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to policy process and policy agendas Timing and windows of opportunity Application to your job
BREAK
Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role-play using case information Using a stakeholder log to record issue-position and power
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Day 2
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review from Day 1 Agenda for Day 2
Possible solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate list of solutions and select for analysis
Policy analysis (Part 1. Stakeholder Power Analysis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to using stakeholder analysis matrix
BREAK
Policy analysis (Part 2. Impact Analysis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to decision criteria Orientation to impact analysis matrix, goal weights, and impact categories
LUNCH
Policy analysis (Part 2. Impact Analysis) - continued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recording impact data Overview of economic analysis methods
BREAK
Making the decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizing results and making decisions Interpreting the results
Policy brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlining a policy brief Critically review sample policy briefs
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Course 3: Influencing the Systems Change Process

Timeframe: 2 days

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Frame written and spoken messages
2. Stay on message during interviews
3. Identify direct and indirect strategies to influence change
4. Plan for action

During this 2-day, skills-building workshop, participants learn to plan and use advocacy skills.

The workshop introduces the process of influencing decision-makers who develop and manage systems, and who enact policies and built environments. Instructors will integrate theory and practice-based evidence to explain the range of techniques used when influencing system change. Participants will learn how to frame and reframe messages, both on paper and in the context of a live conversation or interview. Participants will be introduced to persuasion and pressure strategies and tactics, and will learn to incorporate them into a plan for action.

COURSE 3: Sample Agenda

Day 1
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introductory activities Review agenda and materials
Reflections on the change process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal reflections about the ability to influence change
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing systems, policies, and built environments Development of the curricula
BREAK
Education, advocacy, and lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitions Relevance to job Limits and constraints
LUNCH
Case example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce case example for workshop Review results from previous policy and stakeholder analyses
Framing written and spoken messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a template to practice framing written messages Use a template to practice framing spoken messages
BREAK
Reframing messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn a method for reframing messages Practice reframing media stories
Interviewing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn tips for speaking in an interview Practice framing and reframing while being interviewed by a reporter
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Day 2
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review from Day 1 Agenda for Day 2
Advocacy coalitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition, recruitment, membership Debate ethical situations regarding membership
Advocacy in the context of a campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign model (5 stages) Description of campaign stages
BREAK
System/Policy strategies (to <u>directly</u> influence decision-makers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing strategies for case example Review story of escalating tactics
Media strategies (to <u>indirectly</u> influence decision-makers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing strategies for case example Use template to plan general media story elements Review checklist for preparing media events
LUNCH
Develop your campaign plan for action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a planning template
BREAK
Develop your campaign plan for action (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a planning template
Reacting and responding strategically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning to think strategically during changing circumstances
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Course 4: Implementing Enacted Policies

Timeframe: 2 days

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Analyze the authority granted in policy
2. Identify planning components when influencing a policy
3. Analyze rules and regulations
4. Identify political games that can influence implementation

During this 2-day, skills-building workshop, participants learn to plan for the implementation of a newly enacted system change decision (e.g., enactment of a law, organizational policy, procedure or process).

The workshop explores how the governance or organizational system will implement the enacted changes. Participants will learn about public and private administrative structures and functions. Case activities will explore how to assess and monitor the authorities and procedures used by agencies during implementation. Participants will apply critical thinking skills to analyze rules and regulations.

COURSE 4: Sample Agenda

Day 1
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introductory activities Review agenda and materials
Reflections on "Bureaucracy" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion based on quotes
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing systems, policies, and built environments Development of the curricula
Policy and implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief review of policy terminology, codification, and content assessment
BREAK
Planning for implementation: Part A – authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority, discretion and control
LUNCH
Planning for Implementation: Part B – structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government agencies and structures for implementing policy
BREAK
Rules and regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining and reviewing rules and regulations Case examples
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Day 2
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review from Day 1 Agenda for Day 2
External implementation forces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 1) Preemption
BREAK
External implementation forces – (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 2) Sources of control, and political games
Planning for implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation components
LUNCH
CASE WORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part1) Introducing the case
CASE WORK – (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 2) The Regulation
BREAK
CASE WORK – (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 3) Navigating the politics
CASE WORK – (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 4) Planning for implementation
CASE WORK – (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Part 5) Epilogue
Influencing implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional considerations when influencing the process
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Course 5: Evaluating Systems Change Interventions

Timeframe: 2 days

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Define “evaluation” and distinguish it from “research”
2. Use a logic model to plan an evaluation
3. Identify evaluation questions for a policy change project
4. Identify an evaluation design for a policy change project
5. Identify evaluation indicators for a policy change project

During this 2-day, skills-building workshop, participants learn to plan how to evaluate a policy-change project.

The workshop will draw from both theory and practitioner expertise to provide concepts, tools, and skill practice. Participants will learn about evaluation designs and methods; review examples of policy interventions needing evaluation; critically review and help plan for the evaluation design of a 2-phase case example including developing evaluation questions and selecting evaluation indicators; and explore how policy evaluation has evolved over the past 30 years.

COURSE 5: Sample Agenda

Day 1
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introductory activities
Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing systems, policies, and built environments Development of the curricula
What is evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation definition, context, and comparison to research
BREAK
Projects needing evaluation (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation needs of selected system/policy intervention projects
Your evaluation project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify evaluation needs for your own project
Evaluation framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards, steps, and CDC framework for evaluation
System or policy context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting the project into the larger policy context
Project logic model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering a template logic model for <i>Systems Change for Health</i>
LUNCH
Evaluation design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation purpose, types, and causal inference potential
BREAK
Evaluation design (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats to internal validity and evaluation designs
Evaluation questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing evaluation questions
Evaluation indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting evaluation indicators
Data collection and analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting methods for data collection and analysis
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

Day 2
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review from Day 1 Review agenda and materials for Day 2
Projects needing evaluation (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation designs of selected system/policy intervention projects
BREAK
CASE: Phase 1 (initial pilot project) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review project information
CASE: Phase 1 (planning the evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a formative evaluation using a template
LUNCH
CASE: Phase 2 (expanding the pilot) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review project information
CASE: Phase 2 (planning the evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning a summative evaluation using a template
BREAK
Policy projects and evaluation approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General evolution of policy project evaluations
Your evaluation project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the evaluation needs for your own project
Evaluation steps and ethical issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review evaluation steps and discuss ethical concerns
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback

About Us

UNC Healthy Solutions uses evidence-based solutions to help agencies, foundations, organizations, and citizens transform communities to achieve equitable health and social outcomes.

We are a service-oriented team within the Department of Health Behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. Because we are part of a major research institution, we specialize in tailoring evidence-based practice to help local, state and national organizations build their public health capacity and strategy.

Contact Us

We look forward to hearing from you to explore how Systems Change for Health™ could help you meet your professional development goals.

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