

**PH 360 Selecting Medical Products and Services (3 units + 1 unit for PH 499 Directed Study)
California State University, Los Angeles, Spring 2013**

Instructor: William M. London, Ed.D., MPH, Professor of Public Health

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Consumer health, evaluation of health and accident insurance, quackery and fraudulent health practices, food and drug controls.

The catalog description will be modified. We will not address insurance matters since insurance is a major topic of other courses offered in the Department of Public Health. However, there is a chapter on health insurance in the textbook.

REQUIRED READING

Barrett S, London WM, Kroger, M, Hall, H, Baratz RS. *Consumer Health: A Guide to Intelligent Decisions, Ninth Edition*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ©2013. ISBN 978-0-07-802848-9. The lead author's Web site for the textbook is <http://www.chsourcebook.com>

PowerPoint presentations for all assigned chapters (1-21, 25) are available on the Moodle site for the course. Links to presentations are organized on Moodle by week devoted to corresponding chapters.

MyMoodle login page: <https://moodle.calstatela.edu/> (you can also access Moodle from your MyCSULA page)

Welcome to CETL Moodle Training: http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/cetl/cetlmoodle_training.php

Moodle Support Resources: http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/cetl/cetlmoodle_resources.php

Moodle Frequently Asked Questions: http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/cetl/cetlmoodle_faq.php

CETL (Center for Effective Teaching and Learning) is located in FA 138. Phone is 323-343-6594.

Students should subscribe for free to *Consumer Health Digest*, a weekly e-newsletter edited by Stephen Barrett, MD with assistance from associate editor William M. London, Ed.D., M.P.H. See <http://www.quackwatch.org/00AboutQuackwatch/chd.html>

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

Links to Skeptical and Antiquackery Web Sites

<http://l.webring.com/hub?ring=skeptic>

<http://g.webring.com/hub?ring=antiquackerysite>

Links to Dr. Stephen Barrett's Web Sites

Consumer Health Digest: <http://www.quackwatch.org/00AboutQuackwatch/chd.html>

<http://www.quackwatch.org>

<http://www.acuwatch.org> (acupuncture)

<http://www.autism-watch.org>

<http://www.cancertreatmentwatch.org>

<http://www.casewatch.org>

<http://www.chelationwatch.org>

<http://www.chirobase.org> (chiropractic)

<http://www.credentialwatch.org>

<http://www.dentalwatch.org>

<http://www.devicewatch.org>
<http://www.dietscam.org>
<http://www.fibrowatch.org> (fibromyalgia)
<http://www.homeowatch.org> (homeopathy)
<http://www.ihealthpilot.org> (finding trustworthy sources of health information)
<http://www.infomercialwatch.org> (infomercials)
<http://www.mentalhealthwatch.org>
<http://www.mlmlwatch.org> (multilevel marketing)
<http://www.naturowatch.org> (naturopathy)
<http://www.nccamwatch.org> (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
<http://www.nutriwatch.org> (sensible nutrition)
<http://www.pharmwatch.org> (pharmaceutical industry)
<http://www.ncahf.org> (Web site for now defunct National Council Against Health Fraud)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students should be able to:

1. Explain why consumer vigilance is important in the health marketplace and summarize the various problems consumers face in the health marketplace.
2. Describe the scope of deception in the health marketplace, its significance as a population health problem, why people are vulnerable to it, and how consumers can avoid it.
3. Describe relevant consumer protection laws and agencies and their limitations and how consumers can utilize consumer protection resources.
4. Apply strategies for consumers to distinguish fact from fiction regarding health products, services, and practices.
5. Identify trustworthy and untrustworthy sources of consumer health information.
6. Describe the strengths and limitations of government regulation and industry self-regulation of advertising for health products and services.
7. Explain considerations for consumer decision-making regarding selection, utilization, and avoidance of health-related products, services, and practitioners.
8. Distinguish responsible from irresponsible practices, products, and services related to mental health, dental health, major chronic diseases, nutrition, weight control, physical fitness, skin care, aging, care of the dying, care of the bereaved, personal image enhancement, and human sexuality.
9. Analyze the “complementary and alternative medicine” movement in terms of its common themes, scientific examination of its theories, its impact on the health marketplace, and its impact on the health of the public.
10. Identify priorities and pitfalls for economical medical self-care and caring for one’s family.

MAJOR COURSE THEMES

The course will emphasize principles of skeptical inquiry, scientific reasoning, and scientific evidence to prepare students to critically analyze promotional claims made in the health marketplace for products, services, and practices. The course is designed to help students distinguish health-related fact from fiction and to spot health-related schemes, scams, superstitions, sensationalism, fads, fallacies, frauds, bunk, and bunco. Students will engage in critical thinking as they discuss how consumers can get good value for their health-related financial expenditures.

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK READING SCHEDULE

Week **Textbook Chapter**

- 1 1, Consumer Health Issues
25, Consumer Laws, Agencies, and Strategies
- 2 2, Separating Fact from Fiction
3, Frauds and Quackery
4, Advertising and Other Promotional Activities
- 3 5, Science-Based Health Care
6, Mental and Behavioral Help
7, Dental Care
- 4 8, The “CAM” Movement
9, A Close Look at Chiropractic
- 5 10, Basic Nutrition Concepts
11, Nutrition Fads, Fallacies, and Scams
- 6 12, Weight Control
13, Fitness Concepts, Products, and Services
- 7 14, Personal Health and Safety
15, Cardiovascular Disease
- 8 16, Cancer
17, Drug Products
- 9 18, Skin Care and Image Enhancement
19, Sexual and Reproductive Health
- 10 20, Health Devices
21, Coping with Death

GRADING

Overview: Grades will be based on points earned in required course activities. Students will be given the opportunity to earn up to 105 points (excluding extra credit). Total points earned by the end of the course will be translated into a final grade as follows.

Grading Scale

<u>Points</u>	<u>Course Grade</u>
93-108	A
89-92	A-
85-88	B+
81-84	B
77-80	B-
73-76	C+
69-72	C
65-68	C-
61-64	D+
57-60	D
53-56	D-
0-52	F

Activity

Maximum Number of Points Offered

1. Open-Book, Open-Notes, No-Electronics Exam on
Friday, June 14th from 1:30-4:00 PM

50

2. Consumer Health News Digest Item Writing (3 items @ 16 points per item)	48
3. Classroom Scholarship/Participation (face-to-face and online) for Weeks 1-5	5
4. Classroom Scholarship/Participation (face-to-face and online) for Weeks 6-10	5
Total	<u>108</u>
5. Extra Credit (Textbook Error Detection)	??

Descriptions of Graded Activities

1. Open-Book, Open-Notes, No-Electronics Exam on Friday, June 14th from 1:30-4:00 PM (0-50 points)

The exam will include a variety of question types (multiple choice, fill-in, list, essay, etc.). Many (but not necessarily all) of the questions will be designed to test students' mastery of textbook chapter learning objectives to be listed on Moodle. During the exam, students are free to use their textbook, any notes they've taken, and any other printed materials they bring, but they are not permitted to receive messages from classmates or use electronic devices. For some questions, the answers can be found in the book. For other questions, the book can be an aid in preparing an answer, but the answer won't simply be available in the book. For some questions, students should be able to come up with an answer without consulting the book at all. Students will have no more than 190 minutes to complete the exam. Students who attempt to consult the book for every question may be at risk for running out of time to complete the exam. It is essential that students know their way around the book before the exam begins.

2. Consumer Health News Digest Item Writing (three items @ 16 points per item = 0-48 points total)

A news digest is a summary of newsworthy stories. Each student will write three **original** (not already covered in *Consumer Health Digest* or addressed by a classmate) consumer health news digest items for 2013 in the style and length of news items that have been published since 2001 in *Consumer Health Digest*, a weekly e-mail newsletter edited by Stephen Barrett, M.D., with help from your instructor. See <http://www.quackwatch.org/00AboutQuackwatch/chd.html>, which has links to pages with hundreds of items that can be useful as models. Appropriate consumer health news digest items include: (1) summaries of scientific reports; (2) legislative developments; (3) enforcement actions; (4) news reports and investigations; (5) new resources for consumer advocacy; and (6) other information relevant to consumer protection and consumer decision-making.

Students should make sure that they have a solid understanding of library research strategies before attempting to write news digest items. The tutorial on "Navigating the Sea of Information" at <http://www.calstatela.edu/library/tutorial/new/> should help. The Appendix of your textbook provides a list of trustworthy sources of consumer health information. Internet Health Pilot <http://www.ihealthpilot.org> provides links to other helpful resources. Use RSS feeds or news alerts to receive news updates on topics of interest sent to you. Follow trustworthy sources of information on social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and GooglePlus. Web sites that are part of the Skeptic and Antiquackery rings (see Syllabus p. 1) can tip you off to news items. News travels fast when you are connected online with people and organizations that share information.

Grading of each submitted news digest item will be based upon a scale from 0 to 4 applied to each of these criteria:

1. **Relevance.** To what extent does the item address a *consumer health* topic? How well would the topic

fit in an updated edition of the textbook or in *Consumer Health Digest*?

2. **Importance.** How helpful would it be to consumers or consumer advocates to publicize this item? How consistent is the item with principles of consumer protection and other key concepts in consumer health? What implications does the item have for intelligent consumer decision-making?

3. **Style.** Did you begin the item with an appropriate headline in bold font? How clear is the writing? How well organized is it? How efficiently and effectively did you make your point? How appropriate is the attention paid to citing references as needed? (References should be cited in the style used in *Consumer Health Digest*.) How successful were you at spelling, grammar, punctuation, using proper letter case, quoting when appropriate, paraphrasing when appropriate, hyperlinking text, etc.? How successful were you at making the item interesting to read? (It really helps to have a friend read your work before you submit it. Also read it aloud to someone—perhaps someone at University Writing Center.)

4. **Perspective.** How successful were you at providing background needed so that intelligent readers who aren't knowledgeable about consumer health can understand the item and appreciate its significance? How successfully did you share valuable insight in this item? How original is your contribution? (It would be unoriginal to just submit excerpts of other writings without providing your own "voice.")

For each of the three items you submit, you can earn for each criterion:

- 4 points for meeting the criterion fully and strongly.
- 3 points for meeting the criterion fully, if not strongly, or strongly for the most part.
- 2 points for addressing the criterion to a significant extent, if not fully or strongly.
- 1 point for addressing the criterion marginally.
- 0 points for being way off target in addressing the criterion.

Submission Procedure:

1. In the designated Moodle discussion forum for posting items you plan to submit, make a "claim" on your item by posting a message with your planned headline in the Subject field and your first draft of the item in the body of the message. Your classmates will be able to see and read your draft (and you'll be able to receive feedback from your instructor and classmates). Once a draft is posted that addresses a particular news item, no one else will be able to post on that news.
2. Use the separate links provided to post your first, second, and third items respectively for grading. It is recommended that you write each item using a word processor and then paste your item into the appropriate field. Include your headline in the subject field and also include it as part of the body of the text in bold font followed by the text of the news item with a non-bold font.

Due dates:

- First item for grading: Friday, May 3rd at 9:00 AM
- Second item for grading: Friday, May 17th at 9:00 AM
- Third item for grading: Friday, May 31st at 9:00 AM

Lateness penalty: 1 point for missing the deadline and 1 additional point in each 24-hour period thereafter.

3 & 4. Classroom Scholarship/Participation (Face-to-Face and Online) (0-5 points for Weeks 1-5, 0-5 points for Weeks 6-10)

Students have the opportunity to submit a list of their intellectual contributions to the class (not including questions or statements about course policies, procedures, requirements, scheduling, etc.). The list must be limited to *specific*, relevant questions, comments, responses to questions, and statements of fact offered in small-group discussions *in class*, large-group discussions *in class*, and forum discussions about study questions on Moodle. The list must *not* include your lecture notes, a discussion of what you learned, comments about the course, how many points you think you deserve, your participation in study groups outside of class, assistance you provided classmates outside of class or outside of Moodle; or anything else outside of class.

The list for Weeks 1-5 must be pasted in the designated area of Moodle (near the News Forum) by 9:00 AM on Friday, May 10th.

The list for Weeks 6-10 must be pasted in the designated area of Moodle (near the News Forum) by 9:00 AM on Saturday, June 15th.

The instructor will use the list as an aid to judging points to be awarded for scholarship. For students who do not submit a list, the instructor will make his own judgment about points to be awarded. Students who submit materials not requested will receive a minimal grade for class participation. Grading of class participation will be based on this scale:

<u>Rating of Class Participation</u>	<u>Points</u>
Scholarly	5
Semi-scholarly	4
Generally positive	3
Occasionally positive	2
Consistently present and not much more	1
AWOL or not much better	0

Very few students have earned 0 or 5 points for participation in previous quarters of other classes. Most students have earned 1 or 2 points. Most of the students who have had the most to say have earned 3 or occasionally 4 points. Some students have thought that this is unfair. The instructor likes to point out that total points in the course are set at 108 (not 100) and the cutoffs for various passing grades are set low so that students who don't earn many participation points can still earn C or better grades and even grades of A. But in a class emphasizing discussion such as this one, it is expected that students will earn more points than in classes with more lecturing from the instructor.

General Descriptions of Levels of Participation

Scholarly: Comments/answers/questions *frequently* impress the instructor and advance the quality of dialogue about learning objectives and terminology. Plays an active role in discussions (ongoing). Consistently prepared for participation. Actively supports, engages, and listens to classmates regarding substantive topics. Does not distract or slow down the class. This rating is rarely given to students.

Semi-Scholarly: Comments/answers/questions *occasionally* impress the instructor and advance the level and depth of the dialogue about learning objectives and terminology. Plays an active role in discussions

(ongoing). Consistently prepared for participation. Actively supports, engages, and listens to classmates regarding substantive topics. This rating is infrequently given to students.

Generally positive: Frequently makes relevant comments or raises relevant questions or answers less difficult questions. Level of discussion are occasionally better (never worse) because of the student's presence. Participates constructively in discussions (ongoing). Typically, if not consistently, prepared for participation. Makes sincere effort to interact substantively with peers.

Occasionally positive: Occasionally makes relevant comments or raises relevant questions or answers less difficult questions. Level of discussion are occasionally better because of the student's presence. Typically, if not consistently, prepared for participation. Falls short of positive, semi-scholarly, or scholarly presentation or meets criteria for generally, positive, semi-scholarly presentation, but also makes distracting contributions.

Consistently present and not much more: Falls short of positive, semi-scholarly, or scholarly presentation or meets criteria for positive, semi-scholarly presentation, but also makes distracting contributions.

AWOL or not much more: Barely going through the motions (at best) for being a serious, participating student.

5. Extra Credit (Textbook Error Detection)

Students can earn extra credit points by being the first in the class to identify errors of substance or style in the textbook (and be able to convince the instructor that they have done so). One point will be awarded for each sentence identified that contains minor errors. Two to four points will be awarded for each sentence identified that contains major errors. Point awards for errors are at the instructor's discretion. To announce a find of an error, be the first to post a message in the Error Detection Announcement Forum in the course setup on Moodle. You cannot earn points for finding errors already noted in the forum.

You may not agree with every point or judgment made in the book. But disagreeing with what is in the book is not sufficient to qualify as error detection.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honesty

The University in its quest for truth and knowledge embraces honesty and integrity. These fundamental values must not be compromised. The trust and respect among professors, students and the society need to be vigilantly protected. Cheating and plagiarism can neither be justified nor condoned as this would destroy the ideals and purposes of higher education. Students enter the University to gain the knowledge and tools necessary for participation in society. Academic integrity is a foundation for society based on trust and honesty. Therefore, the University takes seriously its responsibility for academic honesty.

Policy for the Provision of Services to Students with Disabilities

The California State University is committed to providing opportunities for higher education to students with disabilities in its student enrollment, and to make its programs, activities and facilities fully accessible to persons with disabilities. During the first week of classes, please give your instructor an official copy of accommodations recommended for you from the Office for Students with Disabilities [(323)343-3140].

COURSE POLICIES:

Each student is responsible for obtaining and reading the Student Handbook available for purchase in the Bookstore.

Add-Drop Policy

California State University, Los Angeles instructors DO NOT add students to classes. It is the student's responsibility. If an instructor indicates a "P" (permit) or "U" (authorization) to add a course, you must register within (3) three days. An instructor may drop any officially enrolled student who fails to attend the first class meeting. However non-attendance does not mean the student has been dropped from a class. If you wish to add or drop a class after the second week, you must:

- Obtain a university add/drop form
- Procure all appropriate signatures, and
- Turn in the form to Administration 146.

Late adds or drops will only be considered for strongly compelling and verifiable reasons on a case-by-case basis. After the seventh week of the quarter, only complete withdrawals will be considered.

Additional Course Policies

1. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class.
2. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in this class.
3. Incompletes will only be granted for compelling medical or emergency reasons.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE DURING CLASS.

*You are strongly encouraged to use the **University Tutorial Center services** offered free to students. Call (323) 343-3971 or www.calstatela.edu/centers/tutorctr*

*It is highly recommended you contact the **University Writing Center** to assist you in writing your assignments. The earlier you seek assistance the better. Call (323) 343-5350 or www.calstatela.edu/centers/write_CA*