



PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
CANCER RESEARCH

Fred Hutch & NMSU Health Equity Field Experience Summer 2026 Syllabus

Faculty	
Merranda Romero Marin, Ph.D	Jean A. McDougall, Ph.D
Professor, Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist	Director, Recruitment & Retention Shared Resource Staff Scientist
Department of Family & Consumer Science, College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Science	Office of Community Outreach and Engagement Division of Public Health Sciences
New Mexico State University	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
mmarin@nmsu.edu	Jamcdoug@fredhutch.org

Description: This course is designed for graduate students who wish to learn more about health and cancer health disparities. In this course, students will learn to use publicly available data to examine population demographics, cancer risk and protective factors, screening prevalence, and cancer incidence and mortality rates. The course includes review and critical analysis of US-Mexico border health, social determinants of health, as well as the development of data-driven strategies for health education and outreach in the US-Mexico border region.

The first week of the course includes virtual instruction and a hands-on data analysis component. The second week of the course will be taught in-person at the New Mexico State University (NMSU) and includes site visits to local community organizations and clinics in New Mexico and West Texas. All travel and lodging will be arranged and expenses covered for participants in this two-week course.

Course Objectives: By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the burden of cancer and prevalence of cancer screening in New Mexico and the Southwest region.
2. Use publicly available cancer statistics (incidence and mortality rates) to identify areas and populations facing a disproportionate burden of cancer <https://cancerprogressreport.aacr.org/disparities/cdpr24-contents/cdpr24-understanding-and-addressing-drivers-of-cancer-disparities/>
3. Investigate multilevel drivers of health in New Mexico and the Southwest region (e.g. socioeconomic factors, social and built environments, healthcare access, etc.).
4. Develop a plan for targeted outreach for areas with a high burden of cancer and/or low screening prevalence.

Assignments & Course Project

Reading assignments will be completed during the first (virtual) week and are designed to serve as analytical lenses for understanding cancer disparities in New Mexico and the U.S.-Mexico border region. Rather than functioning as standalone literature reviews, readings will provide conceptual frameworks for examining structural inequities, rurality, Indigenous health systems, LGBTQ+ health, social determinants of health, and community-engaged research approaches.

Each reading will include structured comprehension and critical thinking prompts that guide students in:

- Interpreting publicly available cancer incidence and screening data
- Identifying multilevel drivers of cancer disparities
- Evaluating culturally responsive outreach strategies
- Connecting empirical evidence to observations during site visits

Students will draw explicitly on these readings for discussion as well as for the final presentation, integrating scholarly evidence with community-based insights to inform their targeted outreach proposal.

The course project will ask participants to explore the burden of cancer and prevalence of screening using the most recent public cancer data with the objectives of Identifying areas or populations with a high burden of cancer and/or low screening prevalence and developing strategies for targeted outreach and engagement.

Throughout the two-week course, students will work towards a presentation of your work to be delivered to faculty, staff, and community members on the final day of the course.

Course Materials

All course materials, including the full syllabus, assignments and session readings (selected by the faculty) will be made available to you through the HEFE website using Canvas by Instructure Learning Management System. Upon completion of the course, you will be asked to provide an evaluation of the HEFE (site visits, readings, discussion) course through a web-based survey.

Site Visits

The in-person week in New Mexico is centered around experiential learning. Course participants will travel throughout New Mexico and West Texas, visiting and learning from community-based organizations and clinics throughout the region. Site visits depend on the availability of local staff and may change due to the dynamic needs of local organizations. Past site visits have included:

Casa de Perigrinos

Ben Archer Health Center

La Clinica de Familia Inc.

Amador Health Center

Alianza of New Mexico

Cancer Support of Deming & Luna County Inc.

Cancer Aid Resource and Education (CARE)

Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe

Tentative 2026 Course Schedule

Date	Time & Topic
Monday 7/20	9-10 Welcome and course introduction 10-11 History of PACR 11-12 Introduction to cancer surveillance 12-1 Break 1-2 Publicly available data 2-3 Measuring cancer disparities 3-4 Community outreach and engagement
Tuesday 7/21	9-10 Article discussion 10-11 Current PACR Projects 11-12 New Mexico Tumor Registry Overview 12-1 Break 1-3 Hands-on data tutorial 1 3-4 Project brainstorm
Wednesday 7/22	9-10 Community-engaged research 10-11 Article discussion 11-12 Hands-on data tutorial 2 12-1 Break 1-2 Monitoring the burden of cancer 2-3 Facilitating research with community partners 3-4 Indigenous cancer health excellence
Thursday 7/23	9-10 Article discussion 10-11 US-Mexico Border Health 11-12 Cancer screening 12-1 Break 1-2 Project discussion 2-3 Community engaged research in the Yakima Valley 3-4 Addressing social needs in New Mexico
Friday 7/24	9-10 Food insecurity 10-11 Transportation challenges 11-12 Housing insecurity 12-1 Break 1-2 Article discussion 2-3 Project discussion
Saturday 7/25	Off
Sunday 7/26	Travel to NMSU
Monday 7/27	9-11 NMSU Welcome, Campus Tour, Faculty & Staff meet & greet 11-12 Project discussion 12-1 Break 1-4 Afternoon site visits
Tuesday 7/28	9-12 Morning site visits

	12-1 Break 1-3 Data analysis workshop 3-5 Afternoon site visits Evening tour of Mesilla (optional)
Wednesday 7/29	Site visits – all day
Thursday 7/30	9-10 Built environment exercise 10-11 NMSU lab tour 11-3 Site visits 3-5 Practice presentations
Friday 7/31	9-12 Project presentations Final celebration - TBD
Saturday 8/1	Travel

Note: **Tentative course schedule** (topics and presentations by date may change to accommodate schedule conflicts).

