# Syllabus for PH 2998 – Innovative Thinking

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| **Instructor & TA Information (for each Faculty and TA)** | • Roberta B. Ness, MD, MPH  
• [roberta.b.ness@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:roberta.b.ness@uth.tmc.edu)  
• 713-500-9017 (o)  
• RAS W114  
• Instructor Office Hours – Office Hours by appointment. Please e-mail to set up a consultation.  
• Jack W. Smith, MD, PhD  
• [jack.w.smith@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:jack.w.smith@uth.tmc.edu)  
• 713-500-3925  
• Instructor Office Hours – Office Hours by appointment. Please e-mail to set up a consultation. |

| **Course Description** | • PH 2998: Innovative Thinking  
• Spring  
• 3 credit hours  
• Face-to-face  
• Creativity and innovation can be taught. Join us for a mind-expanding experience as well learn to be more innovative thinkers. Topics include: cognitive biases and normal frames of reasoning; observation to inform thinking; thinking backwards; brainstorming; imagining the impossible as possible, and many other tools to your out-of-the box thinking tool kit. Senior scientists recognized for the creativity will share their wisdom. |

| **Textbook and Materials** | • DeBono’s Thinking Course Revised Edition, Edward DeBono, MICA Management, 1994  
• Roger von Oech’s Creative Whack Pack Version 2.1 2009, Roger von Oech CreativeThink.com Download onto IPod or IPhone  
• The textbook has been placed on reserve at the UTSPH Library (Circulation: 713-500-9121). Copies available for purchase from the Bookstore or from online sources.  
• Assignments and lecture slides will be posted on BlackBoard. |

| **Course Learning Objectives** | • Analyze examples of inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, and lateral thinking.  
• Assess cognitive biases.  
• Identify normal linguistic frames.  
• Compose a problem that lends itself to innovative solutions.  
• Propose and create a series of innovative approaches to your problem using lateral thinking tools. |

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September 2009
- Integrate innovative approaches so as to justify novel approaches to a public health problem.

### Learning Activities
- Weekly homework assignments from the Creative Whack Pack on topics including: 1) discovering the resources needed to create new ideas; 2) idea-generating techniques to transform resources into new ideas; 3) decision-making tools; 4) exercises to help translate ideas into actions.
- Students will keep a homework notebook that will be collected near end-of-term.
- Each week students will lead the class in a discussion of the homework.
- In class, small-group problem-solving is a critical part of the course and all students must actively participate.
- Final paper and presentation describing a novel approach to a public health problem.
- Attendance is required. Please notify faculty of absences in advance.

### Student Assessment and Grading Criteria
- Students will be evaluated on the basis of a letter grade (A, B, C, or F)
- Evaluation will be based on homework (33%); in-class participation (17%); final paper (50%)
- An overall grade of 70% is required to pass.
- Missed or late work: assignments submitted after the due date will be subject to no credit. Any exceptions must be approved by the instructor.

### Prerequisites and/or Technical Requirements
- None
- The maximum class-size is 20. If more than 20 students wish to enroll, priority will be given to doctoral students.
- Blackboard
  - This course will rely on the Blackboard Course Management System, which can be found at [https://bb.uth.tmc.edu/index3.html](https://bb.uth.tmc.edu/index3.html). For students enrolled in the class, PH XXXX will be one of the courses seen on your welcome page at the start of the semester when you log into Blackboard. All course materials will be accessed from within this course site. Since Bb does not allow changes to email addresses, it is important that you access your school email account for any messages pertaining to this class.
| Policies and Procedures | • Course Philosophy  
Learning is an active process and students need to do their part as well to ensure success. Mastering new concepts and skills is enhanced by the following:  
  o Attend class and take good notes.  
  o Keep up with the reading.  
  o Complete all home work assignments.  
  o Ask and answer questions in class.  
  o Work in study groups  
• Homework assignments  
  o Homework assignments will be submitted electronically through Blackboard (Bb)-detailed instructions will be provided on the Bb site.  
• Feedback  
  o Although students will be given an opportunity to give feedback on all aspects of the course at the end of the semester, students’ comments and suggestions to improve the course are welcome at any time.  
• Withdrawal Information:  
  o The procedures for withdrawal are established by the UTSPH and require signature of the instructor. Students electing this option should contact the instructor in person or by email to make arrangements for processing the necessary form.  
• Incomplete Grades:  
  o Consideration for incomplete grades will be made on a case-by-case basis. Students should contact the instructor directly regarding their request for an incomplete. Incompletes will not be granted because of poor performance.  
• Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in in-class exercises and class discussions. |
**Academic Dishonesty policies:**
Students are encouraged to share ideas and discuss freely any aspect of the course material. However, students are expected to do their own work and adhere to rules of acceptable student conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, falsifying research, cheating on assignments or examinations, or plagiarizing any aspect of work that is submitted as your own. Plagiarism extends beyond copying text verbatim from the writing or works of another individual – note that paraphrased text that is too similar to the original passage, even though it is correctly cited, maybe viewed as plagiarized text. Refer to website developed by The University of Texas at Austin for examples of plagiarism: [http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/students/writing/plagiarism.pdf](http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/students/writing/plagiarism.pdf).

Homework assignments will be periodically and randomly checked for plagiarism using SafeAssign software. Cases involving allegation of scholastic dishonesty may be forwarded to Dr. Cynthia Chappell, the Sr. Associate Dean for the School of Public Health. Scholastic dishonesty is grounds for awarding a class grade of “F” and suspension of student status for one year or expulsion from the School.

**ADA Accommodations**
If you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please contact Dr. Mary Ann Smith, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and notify your instructors as well.

| **Course Calendar** | • Separate document. |