

Prep course helps students pass complex exam

by Jennifer Monroe - Monday, August 20, 2012

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/20428/prep-course-helps-students-pass-registered-environmental-health-specialistsanitarian-exam/>

When Jayme Schenk was promoted to a supervisor position at Tri-County Environmental Health in Montello, Wis., her boss told her she had to pass the Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS) exam within six months.

After she registered for the exam, Schenk bought the recommended study guide and prepared to learn the material. Though she has experience and education in her field, because of the depth and variety of information on the exam, Schenk knew that she could benefit from additional instruction.

“I got this big ol’ book, which is really long and pretty dry, and I was trying to learn information I have never worked with in my position,” Schenk said. “It was really intimidating.”

When one of Schenk’s colleagues recommended the REHS/RS Exam Prep course at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, she saw it as an opportunity to study targeted instruction material, which she said made her feel more prepared to pass the exam.

According to the exam prep course program manager, Bunny Hansen, Schenk’s motivation to gain supplemental material and instruction is typical of students who are studying for the exam.

“It’s a difficult exam, and people have a lot riding on whether or not they pass,” Hansen said. “We hope that our course gives students like Jayme the opportunity to focus on the topics that are likely to be included on the national exam, increasing their chances to successfully pass the REHS/RS exam.”

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) website says the passing rate for the REHS/RS exam is only 60 percent. Like Schenk, many individuals who take the exam have current or future employment goals that require REHS/RS certification.

The exam questions are compiled through a job task analysis of current REHS/RS certified workers. There are 15 topic areas addressed by the exam, ranging from general environmental health, to food and water protection, to the handling of hazardous and radioactive materials.

The UW Oshkosh prep course breaks instruction down by those 15 content areas and quizzes students after each lesson.

“I was most thankful for the quizzes in the course, because they are formatted a lot like the actual test,” Schenk said. “I didn’t feel like I was going into the exam blindly.”

The eight-week, 16-hour prep course provides participants with a study guide. It is delivered completely online and is led by Jeffrey Phillips, RS, the environmental health supervisor and preparedness

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coordinator for the Winnebago County Health Department in Oshkosh, Wis.

Students also have an opportunity to earn one undergraduate credit from UW Oshkosh.

The next REHS/RS Exam Prep Course begins Sept. 18, 2012. For more information on the course or credit options and to register, visit the [website](#) or call the Division of Lifelong Learning and Community Engagement at (920) 424-129 or toll free (800) 633-1442.

Learn more:

- [REHS/RS Exam Prep Course](#)