



The statistics are staggering: Americans are getting fatter. One in five Americans is obese; three in five are either overweight or obese. Among African-Americans 20 years and older, more than two-thirds are overweight or obese—defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25 pounds or more. Being overweight or obese can increase your risk of Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, arthritis, and some kinds of cancers. Obesity has more negative health consequences than smoking, drinking, or poverty.

Dillard University's School of Public Health, Dillard Dining Services, and the Dillard University Community Development Corporation are collaborating to host a 4 week Weight Management class. The classes began on Thursday, March 14 at 12:30 pm in the West Wing of Kearny Dining Hall. The classes are open to Dillard University faculty, staff, students, and community members free of charge. The classes will include discussions on why people gain weight, eight keys to successful weight management, learning new eating habits, positive reinforcement, increasing physical activity, positive self-esteem, stress management, and more.

"March is National Nutrition Month. The School of Public Health is offering the Free Weight Management classes to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating habits," says Dr German. "With over \$70 billion a year spent by the United States health care system to treat obesity and the resulting medical conditions, a change in weight management education is drastically needed," she adds.

German realizes getting New Orleanians on board could be a struggle. "There can be a misperception that eating healthfully means giving up your favorite New Orleans inspired

dishes. We want to encourage the Dillard community to include the foods they love as part of a healthful eating plan that is tailored for their lifestyles, traditions, health needs and, of course, tastes," says the public health professor.

For more information, please contact Dr. Valandra German at 504-816-4401 or [vgerman@dillard.edu](mailto:vgerman@dillard.edu).