



Epidemiology and Social Determinants of Health

IPBH-3000 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Argentina: Public Health in Urban Environments

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is representative of a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

Epidemiology and Social Determinants of Health is an interdisciplinary course that focuses on the epidemiological profile of Argentina and how living in urban environments can shape the health conditions of individuals. Living conditions have improved due to achievements in the public health sector in Argentina; however, great inequalities and inequities in health still exist. The course enables students to understand contemporary health challenges as they relate to epidemiology and social determinants of health, as well as to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to effectively engage in these issues.

Lectures, discussions, and visits are conducted in Spanish by a variety of professors and guest lecturers. Argentine specialists from diverse fields such as civil society leaders, health care service providers, and advocates will participate in the course. Lectures are held at ISALUD University, in Buenos Aires. In order to put into practice knowledge acquired in the classroom, the course considers visits to Community Health Centers in the City of Buenos Aires, different services in a General Hospital in the province of Buenos Aires, visit and hands on activities in a Day Care Center for Elders and dialogue with experts in different settings.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Discuss Argentina's epidemiological profile
- Argue the roles social structures, class, and politics play in determining health care and health care access
- Define the social determinants of health concepts, including the ability to articulate the principles of social justice, health equity, and human rights
- Outline the basic principles and measures of epidemiology, including risk factors, disease determinants, causation, and rates
- Identify and analyze current public health issues relating to epidemiology in Argentina

- Discuss the relationship between Argentina's epidemiological profile and population's health needs and examine how these needs are met by the national health system's, policies and programs in different contexts.

Language of Instruction

The academic content of this course is taught predominantly in Spanish; all orientation and logistical issues are provided in English.

Course Schedule

***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

Module I: Introduction to Epidemiology and social determinants of health.

Introduction to Epidemiology and the analysis of social determinants of health: concepts, basic assumptions and theories. The course provides tools for the analysis and evaluation of population's health conditions. Methodological approaches, indicators, concepts, and calculations; health and demographic indicators; morbidity and mortality in Argentina, its evolution and present situation; health disparities.

Session 1: Introduction to epidemiology as a scientific discipline, basic concepts and principles. The epidemiological research. Contributions of the demography to epidemiological studies. General overview on demographic and epidemiological transition in Argentina.

Session 2: Social determinants of health: disparities and main challenges.

Session 3: Visit to Health Institutions in the city of Buenos Aires focused on the use of epidemiological information in planning health services.

Session 4: The analysis of health indicators. Health disparities: concepts and assessments. Analysis of health disparities between different social areas in the country. Guided exercise. Discussion on the factors that contributes to health disparities.

Required readings:

Royer M. E., "Social Epidemiology: Introductory Notes". ISALUD Journal, vol.5, N° 22, June 2010 with Addendum (Translate from Spanish)

Furtherreading:

- Bonita, R, Beaglehole, R. Kjellstrom (2006) Basic Epidemiology. World Health Organization. Geneva. Chapters 1, 2 and 3. pp 1-61.
- Jorgensen, N, M. E. Royer (2013) Notas de clase.
- Evans R., Barber, M., Marmor, T. (ed). (1994). "Why are some people healthy and other not.", New York: Aldine de Gruyter, INC. Chapter 1 Introduction, 3-26
- Krieger N., Theories for social epidemiology in the 21st century: an ecosocial perspective. *International Journal of Epidemiology*2001;30:668-677

- OPS-OMS (2013) Situación de salud en las Américas. Indicadores Básicos 2012. En http://www.paho.org/mex/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=206&Itemid=319
- OPS (2004) Organización Panamericana de la Salud, Unidad de Análisis de Salud y Estadísticas (HA). Iniciativa Regional de Datos Básicos en Salud; Glosario de Indicadores. Washington DC. <http://www.paho.org/Spanish/SHA/glossary.htm#A>.
- Solar O, Irwin A. A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health. Social Determinants of Health Discussion, WHO, 2010
- Susser, M. & E. Susser. (1996), Choosing a future for epidemiology. Am. J. Public Health 1996; 86: 668-677.
- Susser, M y M. Bresnaham. (2001), Origins of Epidemiology, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 2001; 954:6-18.

The topics listed above will be covered at:

- ✓ Regular sessions at ISALUD
- ✓ Group discussions
- ✓ Visit to Health Community Centers in the City of Buenos Aires

Module II: Health equity: the vicious circle of disease and premature death. Maternal and infant health as example of inequities.

Module II offers elements to understand the situation of maternal and infant health as well as the disparities among different provinces. It also emphasizes the role of gender as a key determinant of health and its dynamics with normative framework, culture, social class, race/ethnicity and structure of the health system. The module provides the opportunity to discuss the transition from maternal and infant health to sexual and reproductive health approach and Argentina's brief history of transition to the paradigm of sexual and reproductive rights and health as a human right.

Session 1: Infant and maternal mortality in Argentina. Situation analysis, concepts, indicators, determinants.

Session 2: Gender as a health determinant. Impact in indicators measuring quality of care, service provision and competencies of providers.

Session 3: Brief history of reproductive health through the UN Human Rights Framework and UN Millennium Goals. Sexual and reproductive health care in Argentina, disparities and inequalities.

Session 4: Health disparities and inequities between provinces. Student work in small groups with professor guidance on databases of Argentinean sexual and reproductive health information.

Session 5: Visit to "Simplemente Evita" Hospital in La Matanza, Buenos Aires province. Discussion with health professionals on infant and maternal health situation and main challenges in assisting this population.

Session 6: Presentation of analysis results and discussion on factors determining health inequities on sexual and reproductive health between provinces.

Required readings:

- Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales, Presidencia de la Nación- Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (2013) Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio. Informe País Argentina 2012 en <http://www.politicassociales.gov.ar/odm/PDF/IP2012.pdf> (pp. 42-69)
- Lomuto C, Santa María C, Nigri C, Speranza A, Williams G. Evaluación de maternidades públicas (2010-2011). Hoja Informativa nº 6, Buenos Aires, OSSyR, Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva, octubre de 2012, p.8. http://www.ossyr.org.ar/pdf/hojas_informativas/hoja_6.pdf
- Romero, M.; Ábalos, E. y Ramos, S. (2013). La situación de la mortalidad materna en Argentina el Objetivo de Desarrollo del Milenio 5, Hoja Informativa nº 8, Buenos Aires, OSSyR, Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva, marzo de 2013, p. 8. http://www.ossyr.org.ar/pdf/hojas_informativas/hoja_8.pdf

Further readings:

- Ministerio de Salud de la Nación. Dirección de Estadísticas e Información de Salud. Información básica 2010. <http://www.deis.gov.ar/Publicaciones/Archivos/Serie5Nro54.pdf>.
- Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva de Argentina: www.ossyr.org.ar
- Ramos, S., Karolinski, A., Romero, M. y Mercer, R. (2007), "A comprehensive assessment of maternal deaths in Argentina: translating multicentre collaborative research into action", en *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, vol. 85, Nº 7, julio, pp. 615-622. <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/85/8/06-032334/en/>.
- Ramos, S., Romero, M. y Arias Feijoó, J., (2011) "El aborto inducido en la Argentina: ¿un viejo problema con un nuevo horizonte?", en P. Bergallo (comp.), *Aborto y justiciareproductiva*, Buenos Aires, Editores del Puerto, pp.57-89.
- Romero, M., Chapman, E., Ramos, S. y Ábalos, E. (2010), La situación de la mortalidad materna en Argentina, Hoja Informativa Nº 1, Buenos Aires, OSSyR, Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva, abril de 2010, pp. 7. http://www.ossyr.org.ar/pdf/hojas_informativas/hoja_1.pdf.
- Romero, M., Ramos, S. y Ábalos, E. (2010), Modelos de análisis de la morbilidad materna, Hoja Informativa Nº 3, Buenos Aires, OSSyR, Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva, octubre, pp. 7. http://www.ossyr.org.ar/pdf/hojas_informativas/hoja_3.pdf.
- Rosenstein, M. G., Romero, M. y Ramos, S. (2007), "Maternal Mortality in Argentina: A Closer Look at Women Who Die Outside of the Health System", *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, agosto, online. <http://rd.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10995-007-0268-2>.

The topics listed above will be covered during:

- ✓ Regular sessions at ISALUD
- ✓ Groups exercises
- ✓ Group discussions
- ✓ Visit to Maternal and Child Health Services in Buenos Aires Province

Module III: Aging and Health. Professor: Silvia Gascón, MA (ISALUD University)

Module III covers demographic and epidemiologic transitions in Argentina and the aging process. It reviews the challenges that older people face living in great urban areas and how social and health systems adapt to the new socio-demographic scenarios. Protection systems for older people: health and social coverage.

Session 1: Aging process in Argentina. The role of government and civil society in addressing main challenges of a changing demographic population's profile. Presentation of the Global Age-Friendly Cities Project.

Session 2: Meeting local organizations working with older people. Discussion on social and health challenges and resources for meeting older people needs.

Required reading:

- Redondo, N., "El envejecimiento demográfico argentino y la situación social de los adultos mayores al finalizar la primera década del siglo XXI". Revista *Población*, Dirección Nacional de Población, Ministerio del Interior, Buenos Aires, 2012.
- Gascón, S. "Ciudades Amigables con las Personas Mayores: El caso de la ciudad de La Plata" <http://www.cepal.org/celade/noticias/paginas/3/40183/SilviaGascon.pdf>

The topics listed above will be covered during:

- ✓ Discussion with experts
- ✓ Meeting with institutions' officials
- ✓ Working with elder people in assessing their needs and opinions

Module IV: Young people's lifestyles and health: Social sciences methods applied to the analysis of young's urban life styles and health related issues.

This module analyzes how illness and well-being are shaped by the social and cultural context in which individuals and social groups develop. The epidemiological analysis of chronic diseases affecting young population is enriched by new social sciences perspectives to understand how social environments contribute to the emergence of new public health challenges like accidents, violence, obesity or problematic substances consumptions.

Based on a case study student will identify and analyze the conditions that leads to increased health risk within young population.

Session1: Young's urban living conditions and emerging health problems. Integrating new social sciences perspectives to deepen the comprehension of the processes that leads to chronic diseases in urban environments.

Session 2: Experts discuss current situation and factors associated to selected chronic diseases and present a related case study to be analyzed in small groups. Group work with professor guidance.

Session 3: Small group work. Through brainstorming, debate, and information analysis, students will analyze the case. Following expert's guidance the group will offer a general understanding of the analyzed problem and will identify issues for further research.

Session 4: Group presentations of case analysis findings. Discussion on common trends and specificities of chronic diseases within young population. Protective factors and care patterns in preventing its occurrence

Required Readings:

- Briceño, L. (2003) Las ciencias sociales y la salud: un diverso y mutante campo teórico. *Ciencia y saudecoletiva*, 8(1)33-45.
- Castro, R. (2011). Los determinantes sociales de la salud-enfermedad. Tres aproximaciones al tema para una epidemiología sociocultural reflexiva. En *Teoría social y salud*. Buenos Aires: Lugar Editorial, capítulo 2: 41-58.

Further Readings:

- Macias, G., Almeida Filho, N., Alazraqui, M. (2010) Marcio. Análisis de las muertes por accidentes de tránsito en el municipio de Lanús, Argentina, 1998-2004. *Salud Colectiva*, [S.l.], v. 6, n. 3, p. 313-328, dec. ISSN 1851-8265. Disponible en: <<http://revistas.unla.edu.ar/saludcolectiva/article/view/287/324>>.
- Piaggio, L et al (2011). Alimentación infantil en el ámbito escolar: entre patios, aulas y comedores. *Salud Colectiva*, [S.l.], v. 7, n. 2, p. 199-213, aug. 2011. ISSN 1851-8265. Disponible en: <<http://revistas.unla.edu.ar/saludcolectiva/article/view/380/399>>.
- Camarotti, AC.; Romo-Áviles, N.; Jiménez Bautista, F. (2016) Vulnerabilidad y prácticas de cuidado en mujeres consumidoras de pasta base del área metropolitana de Buenos Aires. *Acta psiquiátrica y psicológica*, Volumen 62, Nº 2, Buenos Aires - Junio 2016.
- Palumbo, M. (2014). Noviazgos juveniles. Amor y violencia en las primeras relaciones de noviazgo en jóvenes heterosexuales de clase media del Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (2012-2014). *Argumentos*, Número 16, pp. 284-309. Buenos Aires - Noviembre 2014.

Module V: Urban Environment and Health

In Module 5 the relationships between environment and health are analyzed through a selected case. As an example, Tigre in the Paraná Delta, the second largest river system of the continent, the population of Tigre and in the isles that belong to the Delta are exposed to high level of water contamination. This particularly affects islanders that struggle to access to safe water and other health and environmental services.

Session1: Environmental quality and health in urban Argentina. Presentation, analysis, and discussion of the selected case.

Session 2: Visit to Tigre. Discussion with local professionals and local government officials on situation and main challenges in overcoming environmental problems.

Required Readings:

- Ministerio de Salud Argentina, Posgrado en Salud Social y Comunitaria. Programa Médicos Comunitarios. (2009). *Módulo 3 Salud y Medio Ambiente* (pp.13-46).Buenos Aires: República Argentina.
- Revisión de información de prensa.

The topics listed above will be covered during:

- ✓ Group discussion
- ✓ On-site visits
- ✓ Meetings with local stakeholders

Module VI: Epidemiology perspectives and methods: contributions to understanding populations' health challenges.

Session 1: Final discussion on epidemiology approaches. Discussion on the environmental, social, cultural and economic factors that impact on the health of the population groups studied. Analysis of health disparities and inequalities as main challenges for health and wellbeing living urban environments.

The topics listed above will be covered in:

- ✓ Group discussion

Course Requirements

Readings

Students are responsible for all the required readings, and should be prepared to bring them to bear on discussions in class. The readings will aid students to place the classes in their context, to challenge and engage lecturers, to generate questions for class discussions, and to deepen their knowledge of particular topics discussed in class.

Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Assignments

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, and depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Pre-departure Assignment (Question 2)	10%
In-class exercises and group discussions	20%
Case Resolution	20%
Final Term	40%
Participation	10%

- **Pre-departure Assignment** Based on the recommended bibliography, students will be required to complete a 2-page essay answering an epidemiological question.

- **Group Discussion Papers** Students will meet with an assigned group to complete an exercise and critically discuss issues concerning Argentina's epidemiological profile raised in lectures, excursions, and debriefings.
- **Case Resolution** Based on group analysis of the selected case, students will provide a written (ppt) and oral presentation to the class and professors.
- **Final Term** In preparation for the final seminar session students will summarize their learnings and reflections throughout the seminar in a written report. The exam is based on group discussions and all material covered in class.

Grading Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
Below 64	F

Student Expectations and Policies

- **Class Participation** Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips, and other activities. It also means polite, appropriate, and respectful behavior.
- **Readings** Students are responsible for all the required readings, and should be prepared to bring them to bear on discussions in class. The readings will aid students to place the classes in their context, to challenge and engage lecturers, to generate questions for class discussions, and to deepen their knowledge of particular topics discussed in class.
- **Assignments** Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.