

## Perspective on Global Health

IPBH 3000 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

### Switzerland: Global Health and Development Policy

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

#### Description

*Perspective on Global Health* explores current issues impacting global public health in populations affected by humanitarian crises, such as natural disasters or conflicts. The course also analyzes the impact of violations of human rights on health, with an emphasis on the rights to health, water, and food.

#### Learning Outcomes

The *Perspective on Global Health* course comprises 45 hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the roles and mandates of major players in humanitarian action, and human rights;
- Analyze the relationship between global and local health issues, challenges, and solutions;
- Characterize how determinants of health impact the burden of disease in various settings;
- Appraise public health programs and make recommendations for refinements;
- Produce working papers in selected fields of global health, with a focus on humanitarian action and human rights.

#### Language of Instruction

This seminar is taught in English, but students will be engaging local community members in French as part of the course and will be exposed to vocabulary related seminar content as well as the nuances of global health and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits.

#### Schedule

Students will be provided a detailed course schedule during orientation on the program. 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.

Class time will include lectures, case studies, briefings at international organizations and NGOs, field visits in Geneva and Morocco and class discussions. Participation is expected in the form

of questions and discussions pertaining to the class content and reflections/comparisons with reading material. Course evaluation includes a mid-term exam, a final exam, as well as participation in group discussions.

### **Module 1: Humanitarian Governance and Action**

The module introduces basic features of humanitarian governance and action. It gives a historical perspective to understand how Geneva became the world capital of humanitarian action. It reviews legal and operational issues in humanitarian relief including briefings by three major humanitarian actors: Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at their headquarters, and the World Food Program (WFP). Issues around water delivery in challenging settings will be reviewed as well, and the importance of ethics of humanitarian images highlighted.

#### Session 1: Introduction to humanitarian governance and action

The session is an introduction to humanitarian action focusing on governance and coordination of humanitarian relief. It introduces the cluster system as one of the main instruments of the international community to coordinate humanitarian relief, focusing on the Global Health Cluster led by the World Health Organization, based in its Geneva headquarters.

##### *Required Readings:*

World Health Organization (2015). Health: At the Heart of Humanitarian Action. WHO position paper for the World Health Summit (WHS).

Humphries, V. (2013). Improving humanitarian coordination: Common challenges and lessons learned from the cluster approach. *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, 30.

#### Session 2: Geneva, the world capital of humanitarian action

The session reviews historical events explaining how Geneva became the world capital of humanitarian action. It includes a visit to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum.

##### *Required Readings:*

Nayef Al-Rodhan (2015). *The Meta Geopolitics of Geneva 1815-2015*. International Relations and Security Network, ETH Zurich. <http://www.css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/publications/publication.html/188954>

Davey Eleanor (2012). *New players through old lenses, why history matters in engaging with Southern Actors*. HPG Policy group 48, July 2012, Overseas Development Institute

#### Session 3: International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian operations: a briefing at ICRC headquarters

The session examines security and safety challenges faced by humanitarian agencies in delivering emergency health relief. Students will visit the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) headquarters and will learn about the Committee's role in the promotion of International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

##### *Required Reading:*

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). (2011). *Health Care in Danger: Making the Case*. Retrieved from: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-4072.pdf>

Levy, B. S., & Sidel, V. W. (2013). *Adverse health consequences of the Iraq War*. The Lancet,

381(9870), 949-958.

Session 4: Health relief in humanitarian emergencies: a briefing at Doctors without Borders (MSF) headquarters

MSF is an International NGO providing assistance to populations affected by natural or man-made disasters and by armed conflicts. MSF staff will present their relief programs. While MSF did play a crucial role in responding to the Ebola epidemics in Western Africa, this session also looks into the strategic role of other actors such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in the context of the Ebola epidemic.

*Required Reading:*

Levich, J. (2015). *The Gates Foundation, Ebola and Global Health Imperialism*. The American Journal of Economics and Sociology, Vol 74, issue 4, Sept 2015, pages 704-742.

Session 5: Food security: a briefing at the World Food Program (WFP) Geneva office

During the session, students will interact with an expert from the UN World Food Program, the leading humanitarian organization delivering food assistance, and discuss food security, nutrition programs, and the access to safe and healthy food as a human right.

*Required Readings:*

Seal A and Bailey R. (2013). *The 2011 Famine in Somalia: lessons learnt from a failed response?* Conflict and Health 7:22

<https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s13031-017-0114-0>

United Nations General Assembly. (2014). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter*, 24 January 2014.

Valente F. (2014). *Towards the Full Realization of the Human Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition*. Development, 2014, 57(2), (155–170) Society for International Development 1011-6370/14, www.sidint.net/development.

Session 6: Water and public health

The session addresses the importance of providing safe water supplies, and hygienic sanitation for global health, particularly in humanitarian contexts where the risk of cholera and other diarrheal disease outbreaks is at its highest and explores ways of safeguarding the human right of access to safe drinking water. The lecture will be given by a high-level expert and representative of the non-governmental agency WaterLex.

*Required Readings:*

ICRC. *Clean drinking water, a vital lifeline for the people of South Sudan*. (2017).

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/clean-drinking-water-vital-lifeline-people-south-sudan>

Taylor Dawn L., et al. (2015). *The impact of water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions to control cholera: A systematic review*. PLoS ONE 10(8):e 0135576. doi 10.1371/journal.pone.0135576.

Obeng-Odoom, F. (2012). *Beyond access to water*. *Development in Practice*, 22(8), 1135-1146.

Session 7: Ethics of humanitarian images

The session offers a critical introduction to the concepts of image, representations, and ethical principles in visual communication within the humanitarian sector by one of the lead experts in the field.

*Required Reading:*

Calain P. (2013) Ethics and images of suffering bodies in humanitarian medicine. *Social Science & Medicine* 9:278-285

## **Module 2: Health Across Borders, Health of Migrants and Refugees**

The module introduces the international health regulations lead by the World Health Organization (WHO) and explores the International Organization of Migration (IOM) approach to access to basic health care by migrant and refugee populations. A Geneva-based local/international NGO will review the situation of migrants and refugees in Switzerland.

### Session 1: International Health Regulations

The session reviews the International Health Regulations (IHR), an international legal instrument binding 196 countries across the globe, including all the Member States of WHO. Their aim is to help the international community prevent and respond to acute public health risks that have the potential to cross borders and threaten people worldwide.

*Required Readings:*

World Health Organization. (2008). *International Health Regulations (2005)*. World Health Organization.

Hardimann, et al. (2012). *WHO Perspective on Implementation of International Health Regulations*. [www.cdc.gov/eid](http://www.cdc.gov/eid). Vol 18 num 7 July 2012.

### Session 2: International management of migrant healthcare: a briefing at IOM

The session examines the health risks specific to international migrants and the roles of governmental and non-governmental agencies to help improve access to basic health care by vulnerable migrant populations. IOM staff will present their programs.

*Required Reading:*

Gushulak, B. D., Weekers, J., & MacPherson, D. W. (2011). *Migrants and emerging public health issues in a globalized world: threats, risks and challenges, an evidence-based framework*. *Emerging Health Threats Journal*, 2(1), 7091.

### Session 3: Migrants and refugees in Switzerland

At the occasion of a visit to Switzerland of the SIT Study Abroad Program Jordan “Health and Humanitarian Action”, the two programs jointly organize an inter-active session and discussion on the situation of migrants in Switzerland, including Syrian refugees, and their access to healthcare. The discussion will take into account perspectives from Jordan, Morocco, and Switzerland.

*Required Reading:*

Khan et al. (2016). *Pathogens, Prejudice and Politics: The Role of the Global Health Community in the European Refugee Crisis*. *Lancet Infect Dis*; 16:e173-77, vol 16 August 2016.

## **Module 3: Human Rights and Health**

This module reviews health as one of the human rights, human rights-based approach to programming public health interventions, and possible ways to prevent the gravest violation of human rights: genocide.

### Session 1: Right to health

The session presents health as a fundamental human right indispensable for the exercise of other human rights and shows that the realization of the right to health may be pursued through numerous, complementary approaches, such as the formulation of health policies, or the implementation of health programs developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), or the adoption of specific legal instruments.

#### *Required Readings:*

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). (2013). General Comment No. 14: The Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (Article 12).  
Davis Sara L.M., et al. (2009). Survey of abuses against injecting drug users in Indonesia. *Harm Reduction Journal* 2009, 6:28, 6 p.  
Video 7': KELIN (NGO in Kenya) – TB is not a Crime. <http://www.kelinkenya.org/2016/10/tb-not-crime-2/>

### Session 2: A human-rights-based approach to tuberculosis (TB): a briefing at the STOP TB Partnership

The session presents the STOP TB Partnership Global Plan to end TB and its call for a human rights and gender-based approach to TB that is grounded in international, regional, and domestic law that establish rights to health, non-discrimination, privacy, freedom of movement, and enjoyment of the benefits of scientific progress, among others.

#### *Required Reading:*

A human rights-based approach to tuberculosis: the Nairobi Strategy  
<http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/communities/NairobiTBStrategyFINAL.pdf>

### Session 3: Preventing hate and genocide: a public health approach

The session uses a public health approach to analyze the risk factors potentially leading to a genocidal situation and discuss ways to prevent the gravest of all human rights violations: genocides.

#### *Required Readings:*

United Nations. (2010). Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide Booklet.  
[http://www.un.org/ar/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/osapg\\_booklet\\_eng.pdf](http://www.un.org/ar/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/osapg_booklet_eng.pdf)  
Heidenrich, J. G. (2001). *How to prevent genocide*. Westport, London, 1-20.

## **Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

Evaluation will be based upon the following:

### Description of Assignments:

#### Critical Essay (40%):

The assignment is to write a critical essay on a subject matter freely chosen by the student in the field of Global Health. This critical essay is based on a review of the relevant literature regarding the chosen topic. This essay will show what is the current state of knowledge about a certain topic and what are the current theoretical or policy issues related to that topic. The

subject matter might be linked to health although this is not a requirement. Students write a research paper of about 10 pages. No interactive field research is required for this assignment. It is a take-home essay.

Oral Exam (50%):

Each student will pick a random question and will have 5 minutes to prepare their presentation on it. A jury with two faculty members will listen to the student's brief and ask a couple of questions in order to better grasp the student understanding of the question. The main themes and materials included in the exam will be cleared and reviewed in the review session that takes place prior to the exam.

Class Participation (10%):

Attendance and informed participation at all scheduled lectures, briefings, and review sessions are required. In the framework of the review sessions, each student will present one select required reading.

PGH Assessment:

Critical Essay: 40%  
Oral exam: 50%  
Class Participation: 10%

Grading Scale

Grades are given both fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the system below. They will reflect a combination of quality of performance, progress made, the ability to take into account and assimilate the Academic Directors' and the teachers' advice. An "A" letter grade reflects exceptional work, perfect combination of academic competences and personal research and analysis. It shows great ability to integrate field-based investigation and personal reflection into a structured and well argued paper. A "B" letter grade reflects serious and methodical work as well as a substantial effort at analyzing and understanding cross-cultural issues. A "C" letter grade shows the work meets the requirements but needs more in-depth reflection and personal involvement. A "D" letter grade is insufficient and clearly reflects lack of work or serious deficiencies.

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

**Expectations and Policies**

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

**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](mailto: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>.