

## **Health and Human Rights in Kenya** IPBH-3000 (3 credits)

### **Kenya: Global Health and Human Rights**

*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.*

#### **Course Description**

How do social class, place of residence and gender affect access, and utilization of health care and health outcomes in tropical locations? To delve into this question, lecturers and excursions will specifically address healthcare issues experienced by women and youth, in addition to other groups made vulnerable through their social or geographic positions, including those with chronic/stigmatized health conditions and/or in rural communities. Secondly, the course focuses on the theoretical foundations underlying the assessment of human rights as they relate to public health. The course explores the overarching economic and political policies of Kenya and how they impact access to healthcare and related public health outcomes. Students analyze specific case studies that illuminate the problems, prospects, and potential methods of promoting health within the specific socio-cultural environment of Kenya. Finally, the course explores models and strategies for management of tropical diseases and their human rights dimensions. Course content is provided via lectures, discussions, readings, presentations, and educational excursions. The course draws on site visits to a variety of social spaces in Kenya, from KEMR health surveillance sites to rural villages, factory settings.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe the strategies for human rights advocacy within Kenya's public health program planning;
- Explain the alternative healthcare systems in Kenya delivered in a variety of different sociocultural contexts;
- Define the role of various state and private actors and institutions in healthcare policy in Kenya; and;
- Distinguish between modern public health agenda and notions of human rights as they intersect with processes of social, economic and political change.

#### **Language of Instruction**

The course is taught in English.

## **Instructional Methods**

Lectures with key personalities in public health and human rights are complemented by case studies at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and Centers for Disease Control in Kisumu, excursions and field visits to a rural village just outside of Kisumu, case studies of Kisumu City Department of Public Health, WOFAK (Women Fighting AIDS in Kenya), Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), Kibera School for Girls/Shining Hope, and Gender Violence Recovery Centre.

## **Required Texts**

See course schedule for a full listing. Students are expected to complete all assigned reading by the scheduled readings discussions sessions, and they should be prepared to bring them to bear at scheduled reading discussions sessions. Readings help students place the classes in their context, to challenge and engage lecturers, to generate questions for class discussions and to deepen your knowledge of aspects encountered on the course.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

### Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

#### 1) Health and Human Rights Paper (30%)

What does “health as a human right” mean? What are the different perspectives on “health as a human right”. In what ways is “health as a human right” context dependent? What is “the human rights framework to health? Students should write a 1500 essay answering these questions, citing at least three online sources and two journal articles.

#### 2) HHR Creative Assignment (30%)

For this assignment students could do one of the following:

1. Write a 1500-page essay that assesses the extent to which Kenya is achieving the key ideal and principles of health as a human right. Where are the gaps in health care delivery? Why?
2. Prepare a photo essay or an art project that depicts the health care delivery across gender, space (rural vs urban), and the age (youth, elderly), supported by a 500-word narrative to be presented to the group as shown on the program calendar.

#### 3) USOMA Project Paper (30%)

Instructions will be provided prior to the USOMA Action Research Week.

#### 4) Participation (10%)

This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.

- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

### Assessment

Health and Human Rights Paper - 30%  
 HRR Creative Assignment - 30%  
 USOMA Paper Project - 10%  
 Participation - 10%

### Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

### Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination (projects, ISP, case studies, internship, etc.). It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If reason for request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

### Grading Scale

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

### **Program Expectations**

- 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.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.

### **SIT Policies and Resources**

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

## 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 1: The Historical and Cultural Context of Western Kenya

This module introduces students to the histories and cultures of western Kenya, and to the political history of Kenya more broadly. Students will begin to trace the links between social structure, health and human rights, through the lens of Luo cultural practices. After an introductory lecture, students visit the Kisumu Museum, which provides students visual and textual data with which students begin to gain insights into these issues.

#### *Assigned Reading:*

Hornsby, C. (2012). *Kenya: a history since independence*. London: I. B. Tauris, Chapters 1, 13 & 14.

### Module 2: Introduction to Public Health and Human Rights

This module provides students with an overview of the healthcare systems in present-day Kenya. Students examine the philosophy and practice of public health in tropical settings in both rural and urban contexts. Students will study several issues impacting healthcare such as population dynamics, public health education, HIV/AIDS, orphaned and vulnerable children, women's healthcare needs, differential access to healthcare, and issues regarding mental healthcare in various cultural contexts.

Bryan, John (2009) Kenya's Cash Transfer Program: Protecting the Health and Human Rights of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in *Health and Human Rights* 11(2): 65-76. <http://www.hhrjournal.org/index.php/hhr/article/viewFile/174/272>. Last accessed online 3 December 2012.

Coburn, David (2010) "Inequality and Health" in Leo Panitch and Colin Leys (eds.) *Morbid Symptoms: Health under Capitalism*. Left World Books/Merlin Press: London. 39-58.

Green, Judith (2010) "Working for Equity Whilst Improving Urban Public Health: Some Challenges" in Sanjoy Bhattacharya, Sharon Messenger, Caroline Overy (eds.) *Social Determinants of Health: Assessing, Theory, Policy and Practice*. Orient Black Swan: New Delhi. 294-306.

Hunt, Paul and Rajat Khosla (2008) "The Human Right to Medicines" in *Sur* 5(8):99-115.

Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2011) *Silenced Minds: The Systematic Neglect of the Mental Health System in Kenya*.

[http://www.knchr.org/Portals/0/Reports/THE\\_%20MENTAL\\_HEALTH\\_REPORT.pdf](http://www.knchr.org/Portals/0/Reports/THE_%20MENTAL_HEALTH_REPORT.pdf). Last accessed 3 December 2012.

Yamin, Alicia Ely. 2003. "Not Just a Tragedy: Access to Medications as a Right Under International Law" in *Boston University International Law Journal* 21(2):325-371.

### **Module 3: Public Health and Disease Surveillance**

This module draws on current ongoing work at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) collaboration, through which students explore the incidence, distribution and possible control of the major tropical and nontraditional tropical diseases. HIV/AIDs, malaria, and Tuberculosis are employed as the major cases studies.

#### *Assigned Reading:*

Nwaka, Solomon (2005) “Drug Discovery and Beyond: The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Improving Access to New Malaria Medicines” in Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene 99:S20-S29.

Petchesky, Rosalind Pollack (2003) Global Prescriptions: Gendering Health and Human Rights. London: Zed Books.

Shretta, R; Walt, G; Brugha, R and RW Snow (2001) “A Political Analysis of Corporate Drug Donations: The Example of Malarone in Kenya” in Health Policy and Planning 16(2):161-170

### **Module 4: Public Health and Human Rights in a Rural Tropical Setting**

This module draws upon the rural homestay in western Kenya. Students will conduct a profile of rural public health infrastructure, and explore health care financing, the structure of rural health care systems, and how national health care policy translates into health services for rural people. Students will complete an assignment on these issues, following which the academic director facilitates a discussion to draw out insights and lessons learnt.

#### *Assigned Reading:*

Lee, Kelley (2010) “How Do We Move Forward on the Social Determinants of Health: The Global Governance Challenges” in Sanjoy Bhattacharya, Sharon Messenger, Caroline Overy (eds.) Social Determinants of Health: Assessing, Theory, Policy and Practice, Orient Black Swan: New Delhi. 11-23.

Seuba, Xavier (2006) “A Human Rights Approach to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines” in Bulletin of the World Health Organization 84(5):405-407.

Jenkins, R., Baingana, F., Ahmad, R., McDaid, D., & Atun, R. (2011). Social, economic, human rights and political challenges to global mental health. *Mental Health in Family Medicine*, 8(2), 87–96.

### **Module 5: National and International Level Approaches to Public Health Promotion**

This module oriented towards case studies of international NGOs and local grass roots-based organizations) and Q & A sessions with program expert partners. Students do a comparative assessment of the work of local grassroots/community-based organizations and large international and national level organizations.

## **Module 6: Comparative Study of Rwanda's Healthcare Systems**

Rwanda stands out in the East African region for its exceptional gains in rolling back malaria and in implementing a universal health insurance system. Rwanda is also pursuing urbanization processes in ways that are quite opposed to what is being implemented in Kenya. How has Rwanda made such progress in health promotion, and what lessons do we draw for implementing successful public health programs in tropical settings? Through various field visits, and lectures, students begin this module by exploring Rwanda's recent history, and then conduct case studies of Rwanda's Universal health insurance scheme, HIV/AIDS, and malaria.

### *Assigned Reading:*

Twahirwa, Aimable. "Sharing the burden of sickness: mutual health insurance in Rwanda." Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Nov. 2008, p. 823

J E Epping-Jordan, S D Pruitt, R Bengoa, E H Wagner (2004) Improving the quality of health care for chronic conditions. Qual Saf Health Care 2004; 13:299–305. doi: 10.1136/qshc.2004.010744.