



# Health and Society in a Global Context

Spring 2018

**Class code**

UGPH-GU 9010

**Instructor Details**

Maureen Malowany (Dr.)

Office Hours: By appointment

**Class Details**

Thursday, 13:30 to 16:30

NYU Tel Aviv

**Prerequisites**

None

**Class Description**

This course examines how social, behavioral, historical and political factors influence public health in community, national, and global contexts. We consider how health is influenced by factors such as age, gender, culture, race/ethnicity, social class, and geography. Public health problems and their solutions are analyzed in light of individual risk factors as well as larger structural forces, and we consider the rights of the individual versus the welfare of the public. We examine the ways our understandings of health and well-being shape, and are shaped by, the health care system, our own values, and our assumptions.

Lectures, Discussion, Presentations, Field Visits, Group Work

**Desired Outcomes**

This course has the following learning goals:

- Introduce the field of public health and its various dimensions
- Introduce students to a population perspective on health and disease
- Define and describe the social determinants of health and explain how they differ from other (biological) determinants of health.
- Encourage debates on individual versus societal rights related to the promotion of health and prevention of disease.
- Deepen students' understandings of the complex factors that shape health issues and policy, affect civil society and inform the response of government, institutions, International NGOs and local NGOs.

**Assessment Components**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive on time. Students must complete all assigned readings before the class meeting and be prepared to participate actively in discussions of the readings and current events. Students are required to submit a written response of not more than 500 words to the weekly assigned reading on the Wednesday before each class. Students will select three of these responses for grading at the end of the course. Students are required to submit all written assignments on the dates scheduled. Late work will be penalized.

Students will be evaluated on the following basis:

1. Portfolio of three student-selected responses 30%
2. Presentation of a case study of a global health problem with a partner or individually (no more than 15 slides) 30%;.
3. Written essay that incorporates class discussion of the case study of not more than 1000 words. 30%

#### 4. Participation in class (10%)

Failure to submit or fulfill any one of the required course component results in failure of the class.

#### Assessment Expectations

**Grade A:** Full attendance, thoughtful participation, assignments turned in on time and meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade B:** Full attendance, thoughtful participation, assignments turned in on time but partially meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade C:** Partial attendance, little participation, assignments turned in late and/or partially meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade D:** Partial attendance, no participation, assignments turned in late and/or do not meet assigned grading criteria

**Grade F:** Poor attendance, no participation, assignments turned in late and/or do not meet assigned grading criteria

#### Grade conversion

A=94-100

A-=90-93

B+=87-89

B=84-86

B-=80-83

C+=77-79

C=74-76

C-=70-73

D+=67-69

D=65-66

F=below 65

#### Grading Policy

No-shows for in-class presentations and assignments submitted after the deadline without requesting an extension will receive zero grades. <sup>[[ ]]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

If a student believes an inadvertent error was made in the grading of an individual assignment or in assessing an overall course grade, a request to have the grade re-evaluated may be submitted. To appeal an assigned final grade, the student should first email the course instructor requesting clarification about how the grade was determined. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion and wishes to appeal the grade further, a formal written appeal should be submitted to the site director. **This appeal must be submitted within 30 days after the grade has been posted; appeals that are submitted after this deadline will not be considered.**

## Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and **unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade**. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

All medical-based absence requests **MUST** be presented to the Manager of Student Life and Housing (MSLH). In the case of illness, contact the MSLH within seven (7) days of the absence or as soon as practicable and provide medical documentation. Non-medical requests should be made to the Assistant Director for Academics (AD/Academics) and in advance of the intended absence. Your instructors will be informed of any excused absence; they are not authorized to approve your absence, and they are required to report any absences to the AD/Academics.

### NYU Policy on Religious Holidays

1. Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should, whenever possible, notify faculty and the AD/Academics in advance of such anticipated absence.
2. Whenever feasible, examinations and assignment deadlines should not be scheduled on religious holidays. Any student absent from class because of his/her religious beliefs shall not be penalized for any class, examination, or assignment deadline missed on that day or days. In the event that examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on a religious holiday, any student who is unable to attend class shall be permitted the opportunity to make up any examination or to extend any assignment deadline missed on that day or days.
3. That no adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student who avails him/ herself of the provisions of the resolution.
4. A violation of these policies and principles shall permit any aggrieved student to bring forward a grievance, provided under the University Grievance Procedure.

## Late Submission of Work

All works must be submitted on time, unless you have received an explicit extension. Any late submission may result in grade deduction at the sole discretion of the instructor.

## Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website (<http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html>) for further information.

## Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Plagiarism constitutes an academic offence for which you can be disciplined. Punishment may include a failing grade, suspension or expulsion. In all confirmed cases, a report will be sent to the student's Dean at NYU or, in the case of a non-NYU student, to the home institution.

## Required Text(s)

Schneider, Mary-Jane. Introduction to Public Health, 5th edition. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1284089233; ISBN-10: 1284089231

All readings, required and recommended, are available on NYU Classes. Reference will be made to a selection of series on themes in global health published in *The Lancet*.

## Supplemental Texts(s)

## Internet Research Guidelines

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the internet to the build up of contemporary knowledge of the world around us. But it needs to be used wisely. This means that one must be selective and careful when relating to internet-based sources, identifying and distinguishing opinions from facts, and journalism from academics. One should make clear reference to internet sources, allowing the reader the opportunity to consult these resources as and if required. As with all sources of information, use the internet critically.

Please also note that the 'world-wide web' exists in many languages. Many sources about Israel in English, for instance, will be aimed at tourists or readers living primarily in English-speaking regions of the world. Sources might differ when reading them in other languages.

## NYUTA's Writing Center

Established in coordination with NYU's Expository Writing Center, NYUTA's Writing Center is available to help you with all genres of writing, from senior theses to smaller response papers; from personal statements to cover letters; from PowerPoint presentations to creative assignments. The Center can help you at any stage of the writing process, from figuring out the demands of an assignment, to working with or researching sources, to brainstorming a thesis and outline, to finalizing a project or reviewing a draft. However, please note that writing sessions are held as a joint session, an active exercise between the student and writing advisor – this is not a proofreading service!

Please view the Writing Center as an opportunity, not a punishment. It is meant equally for student-writers who are not confident in their skills as well as students who are quite talented and strong, but recognize the value of a second look. Moreover, rest assured that your instructors will value and appreciate your initiative to visit the writing center.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact NYUTA's AD/Academics, Edan Raviv (room 201; [edanr@nyu.edu](mailto:edanr@nyu.edu)).

## Session 1

Feb. 1

### Course Introduction: Setting the Contexts

Course Overview. Presentation of a Case Study – Refining questions, thinking about the local, cultural contexts

#### Required reading:

Schneider, Mary-Jane (2016) Introduction to Public Health (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.), Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett

- Chapter 1: Public Health: Science, Politics and Prevention
- Chapter 2: Why is Public Health Controversial?

#### Recommended reading:

Ay, P., *et al.* (2009) The influence of gender roles on health seeking behaviour during pregnancy in Turkey. *The European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*, Vol. 14, Iss. 4, pp.290-300.

## Session 2

Feb. 8

Feb. 15 – No class

### Problematising Global Health: Evidence and Social Determinants of Health

This session will introduce you to the investigation of health using epidemiologic methods, 'science' of health, to identify and investigate: (1) the causes of disease/ill health; (2) trends in disease incidence and prevalence and (3) design and evaluation of population-wide public health interventions.

#### Required reading:

- Chapter 4: Epidemiology: The Basic Science of Public Health

- Chapter 5: Epidemiologic Principles and Methods
- Chapter 6: Problems and Limits of Epidemiology

**Recommended Readings:**

Marmot, M. et al. (2008) Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health. *Lancet* 372, pp. 1661-69.

Farmer, P. et al. (2013) Introduction. In: P. Farmer, et al., eds., *Reimagining Global Health*. Berkeley: Univ of California Press, pp. 1-14.

**Session 3**

**Measuring Public Health: Statistics and Data**

Feb. 22

This session will help you to understand the role and value of data in public health, examine different types of public health data sets, and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their use. In addition to class readings, we will look at Hans Rosling’s innovative approach to understanding data – [www.gapminder.org](http://www.gapminder.org) – through his TED talks.

**Required reading:**

- Chapter 7: Statistics: Making Sense of Uncertainty
- Chapter 8: Role of Data in Public Health

**Recommended reading:**

Murray, CHL, Lopez AD (2013). “Measuring the Global Burden of Disease”, *N Engl J Med* 369, pp. 448-57.

**Session 4**

**Unpacking the Epidemiological and Demographic Transitions**

Mar. 1

- Chapter 9: The ‘Conquest’ of Infectious Diseases
- Chapter 10: The Resurgence of Infectious Diseases
- Chapter 11: The Biomedical Basis of Chronic Diseases

**Session 5**

**Health, Disease, Predicaments and Politics: Case study - Delivering Health in Malawi**

Mar. 8

**Required reading:**

Rosenthal, Anat (2015): “Doing the Best We Can”: Providing Care in a Malawian Antiretroviral Clinic, *Medical Anthropology*, DOI: 10.1080/01459740.2015.1076409

**Session 6**

**Health, Disease, Predicaments and Politics (1): What about Human Rights?**

Mar. 15

This session presents the development of human rights as the basis for global health organization and delivery. We will explore the roots of identity politics and an examination of the recognition and response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in North America, Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.

**Required reading:**

Epstein, S. (1995) The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in the Reform of Clinical Trials, *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, Vol. 20, No. 4, Special Issue: Constructivist Perspectives on Medical Work: Medical Practices and Science and Technology Studies, pp. 408-437.

**Session 7**

**Field Trip – Public Health site visit (Tel Aviv or Jerusalem). Details to be confirmed.**

Mar. 22

**Session 8****Health, Disease, Predicaments and Politics (2) : Case studies – Tobacco Control and the Obesity Epidemic**

Mar. 29

In the second part of this topic, we will discuss and debate government, institutional, international agency responses to tobacco control and the ‘obesity epidemic’ as strategies designed to protect but also limit societal rights.

**Required reading:**

- Chapter 15: Public Health Enemy Number One: Tobacco
- Chapter 16: Public Health Enemy Number Two and Growing: Poor Diet and Physical Activity

**Session 9****Mental Health: ‘No health without Mental Health’**

Apr. 12

Mental health is one of the most under-served and under-resourced areas of health/global health. In this session we will examine what constitutes mental health/ill-health in cross-cultural contexts and the strategy of task-shifting.

TED Talk, Vikram Patel,

[https://www.ted.com/talks/vikram\\_patel\\_mental\\_health\\_for\\_all\\_by\\_involving\\_all](https://www.ted.com/talks/vikram_patel_mental_health_for_all_by_involving_all)

Selected readings from *The Lancet* Series on Global Mental Health

**Session 10****Ethics and Medical Research**

Apr. 15

Through an examination of case studies of vaccine and drug trials (malaria, Ebola vaccine, Cerebro-spinal meningitis vaccine, HIV/AIDS), this session will deepen our examination of the development of ethics committees to meet the challenges of field research, public health practice and the role of ‘big pharma’.

**Required reading:**

Shuchman, M. (2015) Ebola vaccine trial in west Africa faces criticism, *The Lancet*, Vol. 385 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)60938-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60938-2).

**Session 11****Health in Humanitarian Crises and Post-Crisis Settings**

Apr. 26

This session will examine the range of health responses to humanitarian crises and the tension between emergency relief and post-crisis health interventions.

Selected readings from *The Lancet* Series, Health in Humanitarian Crises, June 2017.

**Session 12****Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Health**

May 3

Migration, forced and voluntary, is a major global health concern of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this session, we will examine the legal frameworks, the roles and responsibilities of global health practitioners.

**Required readings:**

Roberts, B., *et al.* (2009) An exploration of social determinants of health amongst internally displaced persons in northern Uganda, *Conflict and Health* 3:10 doi:10.1186/1752-1505-3-10

van de Vijver. S. *et al.* (2015), Challenges of health programmes in slums, *The Lancet*, Published online October 7, 2015 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)00385-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00385-2)

**Session 13****Class Presentations and Discussions**

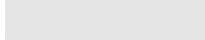
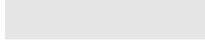
May 10

**Session 14**

**Overview of Global Health Challenges and Opportunities**

As our last session, we will consolidate and evaluate our understandings of global health and discuss how to meet the challenges of merging the global and local.

May 17



**Your Instructor**

Maureen Malowany is currently Lecturer at the Braun School of Public Health & Community Medicine, Hebrew University-Hadassah in Jerusalem and the Academic Coordinator for over 850 alumni, from 97 countries, of the Braun School's International Masters of Public Health Program. Following a PhD in History of Medicine and Sub-Saharan Africa, McGill University, Dr. Malowany was a Faculty Lecturer and Acting Director of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, University of Oxford where, in addition to teaching graduate students, she also conducted research on the history of malaria in East Africa. During that period, recognising the importance of understanding epidemiology, Dr. Malowany completed a Masters in Health Sciences/Public Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. She returned to McGill University, Montreal, Canada to co-direct a training program for doctoral and post-doctoral fellows in transdisciplinary public health research. Her move to Israel provided an opportunity to merge over 40 years of experience in sub-Saharan Africa with public health, global health and the exciting engagement of teaching and working with international students. Our students remind us of the challenges and opportunities of daily work in the field, in the practice of global health at the international, national and community levels.