

Governance and Social Inclusion: Public Health Policy

Master in International Development MID SEP-2024 S-1

Area International Relations

Number of sessions: 12

Term: Term 3

Category: elective

Language: English

Professor: **ELVIS GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ**

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Elvis Garcia is a distinguished global health expert with a multifaceted career spanning humanitarian assistance, research in epidemics, and vaccine accessibility in the pharmaceutical sector. He earned his Doctorate in Public Health from Harvard University and possesses master's degrees in Engineering, Architecture, Political Science and Public Health.

For a decade, Elvis was on the front lines with Doctors Without Borders, serving in over 20 countries. During this time, he played pivotal roles in responding to cholera and Ebola epidemics, providing medical aid in conflict zones, addressing hunger crises, designing mass vaccination campaigns, and offering healthcare in refugee and displaced settings. His extensive fieldwork in these challenging environments has not only honed his expertise but also underscored the importance of comprehensive and adaptable health strategies in diverse contexts.

His tenure at Harvard deepened his insights into the global health infrastructure, familiarizing him with the institutions and systems shaping global health dynamics. This gave him the chance to work at the Gates Foundation on pandemic preparedness before COVID-19 was a household name. Also, during that time, and merging his passions for public health, architecture, and epidemics, Elvis pioneered and taught a groundbreaking course on urban design and health at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Over the past five years, he has been immersed in the pharmaceutical industry, focusing on vaccine accessibility for marginalized communities and examining the potential role of pharmaceutical companies in the global health landscape.

A sought-after speaker, Elvis has been spotlighted by major local and global media outlets (CNN, BBC, France 24, DW, RTVE, El Pais, El Mundo...) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, recognized for his profound expertise in public health, vaccines, and epidemic response.

Office Hours

Office hours will be on request. Please contact at:

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of public health and its crucial role in global development, exploring the key concepts, challenges, and strategies for promoting health and well-being across the globe. Designed for future policy makers and global development practitioners, this course offers a series of interdisciplinary modules that examine a range of critical topics, including noncommunicable diseases, infectious diseases, behavioral health, environmental health and climate change, and universal health coverage.

Throughout the course, students will develop a good understanding of the complex interplay between health and development, and how addressing public health challenges can contribute to sustainable and equitable global development. The course emphasizes the importance of addressing these challenges through the lens of five critical frameworks: Health Systems Strengthening, Innovation and Access, Social Determinants of Health, Governance, Ethics and Health Equity, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of how these factors influence health outcomes and development progress.

Students will engage in a variety of learning activities, including lectures, case studies, group discussions, and problem-based learning exercises, designed to foster critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply public health concepts to real-world global development challenges. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation in the key principles and practices of public health in the context of global development, and will be well-prepared to integrate this knowledge into their future roles as policy makers, program managers, and advocates for sustainable and equitable global development.

This course also emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, systems thinking, and ethical decision-making in addressing complex global health and development challenges, preparing students to become effective leaders and change agents in the field of global development.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with a high level understanding of the various factors that impact public health policy and to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in debates around complex health challenges. During this course, we'll try to address the following:

- Identification of major Public health challenges and description of the key features of the current global health system.
- Description of the necessary functions of an effective public health system and evaluation of governance gaps in the current system.
- Evaluation of a wide range of challenges and mechanisms that shape public and global health.
- Analysis of threats and opportunities for health outside the health sector.
- Discussion around interventions for improved governance.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this public health class will be designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the key topics in public health and global health, while also emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues through the lens of five critical challenges: Health Systems Strengthening, Innovation and Access, Social Determinants of Health, Governance, Ethics and Health Equity.

Each module will be designed to address the five critical challenges, ensuring that students develop a holistic understanding of how these challenges intersect with and influence the various topics covered in the course.

Throughout the course, students will engage in a variety of learning activities, such as lectures, case studies, group discussions, student-lead presentations, and group exercises, to develop a good understanding of the complex and interconnected nature of public health and global health challenges.

The course will also emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and systems thinking in addressing these challenges, encouraging students to consider how different sectors, disciplines, and stakeholders can work together to promote health and well-being for all.

Each class is a double session of 150 min per week and is designed following the same pattern as the table below (with the exception of the first and last modules):

DURATION	ACTIVITY	DRIVER
70 min	presentation + class discussion	student group , class
10 min	break	
70 min	topic introduction (to be discussed on the next day through the student presentation)	instructor

Group Presentation:

Every week, One group will have the chance to present a case study introduced the week before. The selection of groups and cases will be done by the students. In case of disagreement, the instructor will assign the groups and cases randomly.

The cases study are already included on the syllabus.

Group work:

Quantitative Exercise: Global Health Policy Analysis and Comparison

Objective: Groups of students will conduct a high-level analysis of specific health policies and their outcomes in various countries, using data from reputable global health databases. The goal is to understand the impact of these policies on health outcomes and to compare these effects across different socioeconomic and geographic contexts.

Databases Suggested for Data Retrieval:

1. World Health Organization (WHO) Global Health Observatory (GHO): Provides a wide range of data on global health priorities, including disease prevalence, healthcare access, and health system resources. WHO GHO
2. World Bank Open Data: Offers comprehensive datasets on health, nutrition, population statistics, and healthcare financing across countries. World Bank Health Data
3. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Compare | IHME: Facilitates exploration of global health trends and outcomes, allowing for detailed comparisons by country, age, and gender. GBD Compare
4. The Global Health Data Exchange (GHDx): A catalog of global health, demographic, and health-related statistics collected from publicly available data sources. GHDx

The different exercises will be shared in the first part of the semester.

Learning Activity	Weighting
Discussions	15.0 %
Exercises in class, Asynchronous sessions, Field Work	25.0 %
Group work	20.0 %
Individual studying	40.0 %
TOTAL	100.0 %

PROGRAM

SESSIONS 1 - 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1: Introduction to the course

From Local to Global: Unraveling the Threads of Public Health

This introductory session to the class and to public health and global health. We'll cover the definition and scope of public health, and global health, its history and evolution, core functions and essential services, basic concepts and challenges.

PART 2: Introduction to a new topic

Tackling the Silent Epidemic: Strategies for Combating NCDs in the 21st Century

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes, have emerged as the leading cause of death and disability worldwide, accounting for over 70% of global mortality. This module will explore the complex landscape of NCDs in the 21st century, focusing on the global burden, risk factors, and strategies for prevention and control. Among other topics we'll discuss:

- Global burden of NCDs
- Dynamics and differences between HIC and LMICs
- Risk factors and social determinants of NCDs
- Prevention and control strategies
- Market forces and health systems

Article: The Future of Public Health. The new England journal of medicine. October 29, 2015. (CED)

Article: Action to address the household economic burden of non-communicable diseases. The Lancet. v391 n10134 (May 19, 2018): 2047-2058 (The Lancet)

Article: Investing in non-communicable disease prevention and management to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. The Lancet (London, England) v391 n10134 (20180519): 2029-

2035 (*The Lancet*)

Article: *NCD Countdown 2025: accountability for the 25 x 25 NCD mortality reduction target. The Lancet.v384 n9938 (Jul 12, 2014): 105-7 (The Lancet)*

The attached reading is not compulsory, but on this article, Dr. Thomas Frieden, former director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), discusses the key challenges and opportunities facing public health in the 21st century, including the need for stronger public health systems, better use of data and evidence, and a focus on the social determinants of health. Which offerst a view of the status quo and challenges ahead form the US (representative of a high income economy) vs the rest of the world (LMICs)

SESSIONS 3 - 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1 Case study presentation by students

The rise of diabetes in urban India

Analyze the factors contributing to the increasing prevalence of diabetes in urban India, discuss the challenges in prevention and management, and propose strategies for addressing this growing public health issue.

Literature: Pradeepa, R., & Mohan, V. (2017). Prevalence of type 2 diabetes and its complications in India and economic costs to the nation. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 71(7), 816-824.

The analysis should be done through the following framework:

- Health Systems Strengthening
- Innovation/Access
- Social Determinants of Health
- Public Health Governance
- Ethics/health Equity

PART 2: Introduction to a new topic

Microbes, Medicine and Mayhem: The Fight Against Infectious Threats

In this captivating module, we will embark on a journey through the tumultuous world of infectious diseases. Through a critical lens, we will analyze the effectiveness of prevention, control, and elimination strategies, questioning whether outbreaks like COVID-19 or Ebola could have been prevented as well as the reason behind its proliferation in the last decades or if there will be another pandemic of an infectious disease in the near future. Amongst other things we'll discuss:

- Global burden of infectious diseases and their impact on health and development.
- Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. Why?
- Prevention, control, and elimination strategies for infectious diseases. Was COVID preventable?
- The multilateral system. It's role in pandemic preparedness

As an exception, since this is the first case study I'll offer the volunteers some queues for the group:

1. Health Systems Strengthening:

- Analyze the capacity of the Indian healthcare system to manage the increasing diabetes burden.
- Discuss the need for strengthening primary care, improving access to screening, and enhancing the availability of essential medicines and technologies.
- Propose strategies to train healthcare workers in diabetes management and promote the integration of diabetes care into existing health services.

2. Innovation and Access:

- Examine the role of innovative technologies, such as telemedicine and mobile health apps, in improving access to diabetes care and management.
- Discuss the potential of low-cost, point-of-care diagnostics to enhance early detection and monitoring of diabetes in resource-limited settings.
- Propose strategies to promote the development and adoption of affordable, culturally appropriate, and evidence-based interventions for diabetes prevention and management.

3. Social Determinants of Health:

- Analyze the impact of urbanization, changes in dietary patterns, and sedentary lifestyles on the rising prevalence of diabetes in urban India.
- Discuss the role of socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, education, and access to healthy food options, in shaping the risk of diabetes.
- Propose strategies to address the social determinants of health, such as promoting healthy urban planning, improving food environments, and enhancing health literacy.

4. Public Health Governance:

- Examine the existing policies and programs for diabetes prevention and control in India, and assess their effectiveness and limitations.
- Discuss the need for multi-sectoral collaboration and partnerships between government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector to address the diabetes epidemic.
- Propose strategies to strengthen public health governance, such as developing a national diabetes strategy, establishing surveillance systems, and promoting evidence-based decision-making.

5. Ethics and Equity:

- Analyze the ethical implications of the growing diabetes burden in urban India, considering issues such as access to care, patient autonomy, and the allocation of resources.
- Discuss the disproportionate impact of diabetes on vulnerable populations, such as the poor and marginalized communities, and the need for equitable access to prevention and care services.
- Propose strategies to promote health equity, such as targeting interventions to high-risk populations, reducing financial barriers to care, and addressing the social determinants of health.

SESSIONS 5 - 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1 Case study presentation by students

Lessons learned from the Ebola outbreak in West Africa

Discuss the factors that contributed to the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, analyze the global response, and identify key lessons learned for future infectious disease outbreaks.

Literature: Moon, S., Sridhar, D., Pate, M. A., Jha, A. K., Clinton, C., Delaunay, S., ... & Piot, P. (2015). Will Ebola change the game? Ten essential reforms before the next pandemic. The report of the Harvard-LSHTM Independent Panel on the Global Response to Ebola. *The Lancet*, 386(10009), 2204-2221.

The analysis should be done through the following framework:

- Health Systems Strengthening
- Innovation/Access
- Social Determinants of Health
- Public Health Governance
- Ethics/health Equity

PART 2: Introduction to a new topic

Mind Over Matter: Decoding the Science of Behavior Change for Healthier Lives

In this module, we will explore the fascinating and complex world of behavioral health, a critical yet often overlooked aspect of public health. We will examine how individual behaviors, such as diet, physical activity, and substance use, shape health outcomes and contribute to the burden of disease. Drawing on insights from psychology, sociology, and public health, we will delve into the social and environmental determinants that influence health behaviors, including cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and the built environment. We'll delve into ideas like:

- Role of behavior in health and disease
- Social and environmental determinants of health behaviors
- Successes and failures of behavioral interventions in public health
- Integrating behavioral health into primary care and public health

Article: Will Ebola Change the Game? Ten Essential Reforms Before the Next Pandemic. The Lancet.v386 n10009 (Nov 28, 2015): 2204-2221 (The Lancet.)

Article: Use of Psychology and Behavioral Economics to Promote Healthy Eating. American journal of preventive medicine.v47 n6 (201412): 832-7 (American journal of preventive medicine)

Article: Risk Perceptions and Health Behavior. Current opinion in psychology.v5 (20151001): 85-89. (Current opinion in psychology)

Article: Taxation of sugar sweetened beverages and unhealthy foods: a qualitative study of key opinion leaders' views. Israel Journal of Health Policy Research.v7 n1 (20180731): art 43, 1-11 (Israel Journal of Health Policy)

SESSIONS 7 - 8 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1 Case study presentation by students

Tobacco control: Sin Tax in the Philippines

In 2012, the Philippines enacted the Sin Tax Reform Law, which significantly increased the excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol products. The law aimed to reduce tobacco consumption, generate revenue for health programs, and address the growing burden of tobacco-related diseases in the country. This case study examines the implementation of the Sin Tax Reform Law and its impact on tobacco control efforts in the Philippines

The analysis should be done through the following framework:

- Health Systems Strengthening
- Innovation/Access
- Social Determinants of Health
- Public Health Governance
- Ethics/health Equity

PART 2: Introduction to a new topic

Healthy Planet, Healthy People

In this section we will dive into the intricate web of connections between the environment and human health, exploring the ways in which our surroundings shape our well-being. From the air we breathe to the water we drink and the spaces we inhabit, we will examine the myriad environmental hazards that threaten our health, such as air pollution, toxic chemicals, and climate change. Among others, we'll discuss the following topics:

- Environmental hazards and their health impacts
- Environmental policies and regulations Epidemiology and risk assessment
- The built environment
- Emerging environmental health issues

Book Chapters: Sin Tax Reform in the Philippines: Transforming Public Finance, Health, and Governance for More Inclusive Development. World Bank.

Article: Diseases due to unhealthy environments: an updated estimate of the global burden of

disease attributable to environmental determinants of health. *Journal of Public Health (Oxford, England)* v39 n3 (2017): 464-475 (*Journal of Public Health*)

Article: *Changing the urban design of cities for health: The superblock model. Environment International.* v134 (202001) (*Environment International*)

Article: *The 2019 report of The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: ensuring that the health of a child born today is not defined by a changing climate. Lancet (London, England)* v394 n10211 (20191116): 1836-1878 (*Lancet*)

SESSIONS 9 - 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1 Case study presentation by students

Addressing air pollution in Beijing, China

Air pollution is a significant public health issue in Beijing, China, with the city experiencing high levels of particulate matter and other pollutants. The Chinese government has implemented various strategies to address this problem, including the Air Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan. This case study aims to analyze the sources and health impacts of air pollution in Beijing, discuss the government's interventions, and evaluate their effectiveness.

Literature: Huang, J., Pan, X., Guo, X., & Li, G. (2018). Health impact of China's Air Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan: An analysis of national air quality monitoring and mortality data. *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 2(7), e313-e323.

The analysis should be done through the following framework:

- Health Systems Strengthening
- Innovation/Access
- Social Determinants of Health
- Public Health Governance
- Ethics/health Equity

PART 2: Introduction to a new topic

Health for All: Bridging the Gap Between Access and Affordability

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a global health priority that aims to ensure that all individuals and communities have access to essential health services without experiencing financial hardship. UHC is based on the principle that everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic status, should have access to quality healthcare services that promote physical and mental well-being. Achieving UHC requires a strong, efficient, and well-run health system that provides a comprehensive range of health services, including health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care, while also ensuring financial protection for those who need it.

During this class we'll address challenges like:

- Core UHC principles
- Global progress and challenges
- The heavy reliance on health financing to achieve UHC
- Examples and lessons learned from efforts around the world

Article: *Health impact of China's Air Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan: An analysis of national air quality monitoring and mortality data. The Lancet. Planetary health* v2 n7 (201807): e313-e323. (*The Lancet*)

Article: *Moving towards universal health coverage: lessons from 11 country studies. Lancet (London, England)* v387 n10020 (20160220): 811-6 (*Lancet*)

Article: *Progress on catastrophic health spending in 133 countries: a retrospective observational study. The Lancet Global Health.* v6 n2 (2018 02 01): e169-e179 (*The Lancet Global Health*)

Article: *Universal healthcare: the affordable dream. (The Guardian)*

SESSIONS 11 - 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

PART 1 Case study presentation by students

Thailand's Universal Coverage Scheme

In 2002, Thailand introduced the Universal Coverage Scheme to provide affordable health coverage to all Thai citizens not covered by existing government health insurance schemes. The UCS aimed to reduce financial barriers to accessing healthcare, improve health outcomes, and promote health equity. Is this a success story?

literature: Tangcharoensathien, V., Witthayapipopsakul, W., Panichkriangkrai, W., Patcharanarumol, W., & Mills, A. (2018). Health systems development in Thailand: a solid platform for successful implementation of universal health coverage. *The Lancet*, 391(10126), 1205-1223.

Evaluate the implications of this implementation through the lenses of our framework:

- Health Systems Strengthening
- Innovation/Access
- Social Determinants of Health
- Public Health Governance
- Ethics/health Equity

PART 2 EXAM

Exam Structure:

Part 1: Analytical Essays (30 minutes)

Students choose one of the following essay prompts to analyze. These essays should not only demonstrate the student understanding of the topics but also his/her ability to critically assess global health challenges and propose innovative solutions.

Part 2: Case Study Analysis (30 minutes)

A brief based on a case study that incorporates elements from the course topics but introduces new variables or challenges as provided. Students are tasked with analyzing the case and proposing a solution based on their knowledge. This part tests the student ability to apply theoretical understanding to practical scenarios.

Article: Health systems development in Thailand: a solid platform for successful implementation of universal health coverage. The Lancet. v391 n10126 (Mar 24, 2018): 1205-1223 (The Lancet)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

criteria	percentage	Learning Objectives	Comments
Final Exam	40 %		
Group Presentation	25 %		
Group Work	20 %		
Class Participation	15 %		

FAILING GRADE AND REASSESSMENT

When students receive a Fail in a course, they have the opportunity to present themselves for reassessment in order to earn the necessary credits toward graduation.

The reassessment of students should be scheduled between 5 and 10 working days after the review session takes place.

Grades for the reassessment are limited to a Low Pass and Fail.

Both, the initial Fail as well as the grade of the reassessment remain on the transcript. For the purpose of calculating the GPA however, only the grade of the reassessment is to be considered. Students receiving a failing grade in the reassessment of a course will not be able to continue in the program.

BEHAVIOR RULES

Please, check the University's Code of Conduct [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please, check the University's Attendance Policy [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

ETHICAL POLICY

Please, check the University's Ethics Code [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

AI Policy

In this course, students are permitted to use Generative AI Tools such as ChatGPT for specific assignments, as designated by the instructor. To maintain academic integrity, students must disclose any use of AI-generated material. As always, students must properly use attributions, including in-text citations, quotations, and references.

A student should include the following statement in assignments to indicate use of a Generative AI Tool: "The author(s) would like to acknowledge the use of [Generative AI Tool Name], a language model developed by [Generative AI Tool Provider], in the preparation of this assignment. The [Generative AI Tool Name] was used in the following way(s) in this assignment [e.g., brainstorming, grammatical correction, citation, which portion of the assignment]."