Course Description

This seminar will cover a variety of topics, including communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases and scourges such as malaria, the effectiveness of foreign aid, and the challenges of reforming health care systems around the world. These issues have become major concerns for political science, policy studies, and political economy, so the seminar will approach these topics from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The seminar divides into several areas: (1) approaches to and conceptualizations of public health, (2) problems and challenges of public health around the world (neglected tropical diseases, HIV/AIDS, sanitation, medicine delivery systems and infrastructure, and food security), (3) reforms of health care systems (a comparison of challenges to reform in the advanced capitalist countries and the developing world), (4) foreign aid and health, and (5) climate change and public health security.

The purpose of this course is to explore these topics and develop a working understanding of the main concepts, theories, and research questions. Beyond intense discussion and periodic debates, students in this seminar will be expected to delve deeper into topics that most interest them. Most of the work of students will focus on a term-long research project that will culminate in a 25-page paper and oral presentation in the classroom.

What is Expected of Students

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. That will require keeping up on reading assignments and attending class regularly. Students must be fully prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous class meetings. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and their in-class discussion.

Reading Materials

The four required books for this course have been ordered and are presently on sale at the college bookstore. All are paperbacks. The texts are:


In addition to these texts, this course requires your study of a number of other readings from diverse sources. These readings, as well as electronic clippings from multiple sources, are available on the course Moodle page.

**Grading**

As a true research seminar the assessment of students’ performance will focus on the process and work product of sustained research. The seminar paper has several graded components: the quality of the first draft, the oral presentation, and the final draft. Seminar participation in the form of sustained discussion of readings and cases as well as structured debate performances will account for the rest of the evaluation. The grade breakdown follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debates</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Research Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Debates**

This seminar will use a series of adversarial debates (2x2 or 4x4) to address the literature on global public health. Students will be instructed in how to organize these debates and how to participate with an emphasis on rejoinder and argument development.

**The Seminar Paper**

The culmination of student work in this seminar will be the composition of a seminar paper of 20-25 pages of text (typed, double-spaced, 12cpi, one-inch margins, paginated) and a research bibliography of a minimum of three pages, single-spaced. All drafts of the work prior to the final as well as the final must be handed in by 5 p.m. on the student’s Dropbox directory on the due date (see below). All files, except for data files, must be in PDF format.

The composition of the seminar paper will be broken down into the following steps:

1. By **Wednesday, April 10**, students will have decided upon a research topic in consultation with me. Each student will prepare a preliminary abstract of the project.
(2) By Friday, April 19, students will hand in a copy of a preliminary research bibliography of no fewer than 3 pages, single-spaced. A handout will define the proper citation and bibliographic reference format for the paper. Weak bibliographies and/or bibliographies that do not follow the required format will generate negative points assessable on the rough draft score.

(3) By Friday, May 10, students will hand in a first draft of the argumentative section of their paper (the first seven-eight pages) with an updated abstract and bibliography.

(4) On May 27 and 29 and June 3 and 5, each student will orally present their research for no less than 15 minutes. All colleagues will offer their input. If possible, we will schedule a couple of early presentations to free up the schedule at the end of the course.

(5) On Monday, June 10, the final draft of the seminar paper will be due at 5:00 p.m.

Consultation with me during each of these steps is crucial. We will also discuss the format and direction of paper topics and issues as part of the normal discussion of the research seminar. One of the most important lessons of the seminar is that good research depends upon the input and support of colleagues. Students will be expected to contribute their share to this effort.

Class Participation

Typically, I will begin each class session by offering a general overview of the issues to be discussed. I will also present you with a set of reading and discussion questions to structure our deliberations. After the overview portion, the seminar will proceed to student-led discussion. I will conclude each class session with a brief review of the authors and readings for the next meeting. Whenever possible, each class will have a break of about 10 minutes.

Classroom discussion will extend to non-class times in this seminar. As part of the regular participation requirement, students must contribute to an ongoing dissemination of ideas on the Moodle conferences set up for particular weeks. The professor will moderate the discussion and be responsible for the structure of each conference. Due to conference travel, I must schedule make-up sessions. These are indicated in the syllabus. If students have a scheduling conflict, they must see me as soon as possible at the beginning of the term.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:
98-100 A+
94-97 A
91-93 A-
88-90 B+
83-87 B
79-82 B-
76-78 C+
72-75 C
68-71 C-
Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see the useful handout on “Avoiding Academic Misconduct.”

Special Needs

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services to begin the process. Carleton faculty are encouraged strongly to wait for official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students.

NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.

PART I: Approaches to and Conceptualizations of Public Health

The Structural Violence and Human Rights Perspective (Monday and Wednesday, April 1 and 3)


Poverty Traps, Policy Networks and Ideas, and the State-led Big Push (Monday, April 8)


Recommended:


Modernization, Institutions, and Health (Wednesday, April 10)


Critiques of “Big Push” Approaches and the Role of Locally Specific/Cultural Factors (Monday, April 15)


The World Health Organization and Global Public Health Governance (Wednesday, April 17)


Recommended:


PART II: Challenges of Public Health Around the World

Neglected Tropical Diseases: Malaria and Other Chronic NTDs (Monday, April 22)

Sonia Shah, The Fever: How Malaria Has Ruled Humankind for 500,000 Years, chs. 2, 4-5, 7, 9-10.


Global Pandemics: Influenza, TB, SARS, and Ebola (Wednesday, April 24)


Paul Farmer, Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor, ch. 4 and 7.

HIV/AIDS (Monday, April 29)


HIV/AIDS, the Global Patent Regime, and National Responses (Wednesday, May 1)


MIDTERM BREAK (Monday, May 6)

Chronic Non-transmittable Disease: Heart Disease, Cancer, and Mental Health (Wednesday, May 8)


PART III: Reforms of Health Care Systems

Reform Across Varieties of Welfare States (Monday, May 13)


The Case of the United States (Wednesday, May 15)

Paul Starr, Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle Over Health Care Reform, all.


Foreign Aid and Reforming Health Care Systems in Developing Countries (Monday, May 20)


PART IV: Global Challenges: Climate Change and Public Health Security (Wednesday, May 22)


**Student Oral Presentations (Monday, May 27; Wednesday, May 29; Monday, June 3; Wednesday, June 5)**