INTERNATIONAL HEALTH POLICY AND PROSPECTS

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INTERNATIONAL HEALTH POLICY AND PROSPECTS

Course Overview

The Wagner School Summer Institute brings together faculty and students from the United States and other parts of the world for an on-site exploration of international health policy and prospects in Geneva, Switzerland. The site was chosen because it is the seat of major international organizations of the United Nations such as World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); major NGOs such as the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and the World Council of Churches; and other intergovernmental bodies such as World Trade Organization (WTO), that have a direct bearing on international health.

Trade policy, global communications, major economic and political reforms, violence and wars and the threat of bioterrorism have had enormous effects on health status and well being. Concern for the spread of infectious diseases, increasing rates of chronic diseases and the effectiveness of health systems to provide quality care are among the daunting challenges to health leaders today. The aim of the International Health Policy and Prospects course is to provide students with a variety of opportunities to understand the trends in world health, the architecture of global health governance, and the effects of globalization on global and national health policy making in countries. Study visits with the staff of key international health organizations based in Geneva will provide the opportunity to hear first hand the challenges they face and explore their thinking on strategy and implementation of key programs to improve health worldwide.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students will be expected to complete assigned readings, conduct internet research on the organizations being visited to develop lines of inquiry for the visit, and keep current with newspaper and journal articles of relevance to the content of the course.
Before coming to the course, students are asked to select a contemporary problem/question in international health of particular interest to them from current press reports, publications, or their own experience. Students will use the experiences of the week in Geneva to develop options for addressing the problem, and these will be the focus of a policy paper (8-10 pages). The outline for the paper must be submitted at the end of the week and students will be expected to present the highlights of the paper to the class on the final day. Final papers are due no later than Monday, July 13, 2009. Copies should be submitted electronically to Professor Alderslade (richard.alderslade@softhome.net).

Course grades will be based 70% on the policy paper and presentation and 30% on preparation for and participation in classroom and site visit discussions.

The Faculty

Classes will be taught by Dr. Richard Alderslade and international experts drawn from Geneva-based international organizations and non-governmental organizations and agencies.

Guest lecturers from Geneva based agencies will be confirmed and a final schedule will be provided on the first day of class. The sample list agencies to be visited, or speakers who will present to the class, are:

- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- The World Health Organization (WHO)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Program Design

This program is designed along three main themes: Health, Health Status and Development: A Global Perspective; the Impact of Globalization on Health; the Architecture and Dynamics of Global Health Governance, including case studies in global health governance.
Depending on the topic under consideration, debates, panel discussions and experts in the area under study who bring with them extensive international experience will be invited to interact with the students. A variety of participatory methods will be used in teaching the Program including the case method, round tables with health leaders, academic experts and policy makers, and site visits to key intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based in Geneva.

**Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, students will understand:

1. the various definitions of health, including the interpretation of health as a human right, which is reflected in international instruments;

2. the effects, both positive and negative, of globalization on health at country level;

3. the role of international organizations and their relationships to governments, NGOs and the business sectors;

4. the role of donors and the debates on their effect on health at global and country level;

5. the current mechanisms for global health governance and their impact at country level;

6. the dynamics of interaction between countries and global bodies working for health and the potential steps required to render this interaction more effective.

**Program Schedule (found on Blackboard)**

The course will be organized as follows:

The beginning of the Program is devoted to creating the learning environment including introductions, orientation and discussion of student expectations and the topic each student wishes to pursue for the course paper. The first two days will be dedicated to classroom work on course themes and preparation for study
visits. Day 3 will contain reading time including the opportunity for 1:1 consultation with faculty on paper topics. The remainder of the time will be devoted to study visits, related discussions with some additional time for researching and working on presentations and papers.

The final day will be for student presentations and discussion and evaluation of the program. The schedule will be distributed in late May and subject to slight change. Any additional changes will be posted on a revised version of the schedule, or provided on the first day of class.

Web Sites for Agency Visits/Discussions:

Prior to site visits or sessions with representatives from agencies in the course, please go to the organizational website and review basic organizational documents (eg., constitution, charter, etc.); governance structure; and priority activities.

www.WHO.int
www.theglobalfund.org/en/
www.WIPO.int
www.ICRC.org
www.icmh.ch/
www.UNAIDS.org
www.wfp.org

Readings

THEME #1 Health, Health Status and Development: A Global Perspective


7. For most recent progress on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): www.un.org and click on Millennium Development Goals


THEME #2 The Impact of Globalization on Health


**THEME #3 – The Architecture and Dynamics of Global Health Governance**


**Case Studies in Global Health Governance**

*I. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco*


*2. The Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria*


*3. Global Regulation of the Pharmaceutical Industry: the TRIPS agreement on essential medicines*


* Priority readings