HPAM-GP 1831 INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY  
SYLLABUS (AS OF 9/12/2014)  
SUBJECT TO CHANGE  
FALL 2014

PROFESSOR KAREN GRÉPIN  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
MONDAYS, 4:55-6:35 P.M.  
EMAIL: KAREN.GREPIN@NYU.EDU  
TWITTER: @KARENGREPIN  
WEB: HTTP://WWW.KARENGREPIN.COM

Course Description

Why are some people in some countries so much healthier than others? This course will explore the social and institutional factors that help to explain the unequal distribution of health and disease in the world. The course will begin with an introduction to the language of global health: the burden of disease, epidemiology, cost-effectiveness, health systems, political analysis, global health governance, and health financing. It will then analyze the rationale for and modes of intervention to improve global health by exploring a number of current global health policy issues and the process of reforming health policies. The course will incorporate knowledge and views from multiple academic disciplines (public health, economics, politics, management, sociology, etc.) and does not require any background knowledge. It is open to students in all graduate degree concentrations.

Course Competencies

At the end of this course, students should have mastered the following competencies:

- The ability to assess population and community health needs from a public service perspective.

- The ability to examine social and behavioral determinants of health and understand how health systems can address the needs of vulnerable populations

- The ability to understand how policy and delivery processes work, and to consider the demographic, cultural, political and regulatory factors involved in and influencing health policy decision making at the global level.
Assignments, exams, and class participation in the course will assess progress against these competencies, and no student will receive a B or higher without demonstration of satisfactory progress towards mastery of each competency.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the distribution of health and disability around the world and to understand the individual, social, and institutional factors that affect the burden of disease;
2. Identify and describe the role of key actors in the global health system as well as the historical foundations of these institutions;
3. Describe the key frameworks that influence the global health priority setting process and apply these different concepts to current global health issues;
4. Understand the concept of a health system and describe the factors that influence the productivity of these systems;
5. Describe current methods of health financing in use globally and articulate the strengths and weaknesses of these various modes of financing;
6. Identify key barriers to health service delivery in developing countries and develop policy recommendations to address these challenges;
7. Describe the health reform process and develop an understanding of why some health reforms are more successful than others.

**OFFICE HOURS**

My office is located on the third floor of the Puck Building (295 Lafayette Street, Room 3077). To get to my office, you must enter on the second floor either via the elevator or the stairwell (student ID needed) and then proceed to the third floor. I strongly encourage you to come to my office hours at least once this semester to talk about the course, your assignments, or simply to get to know one another better. My regular "Office Hours" are Monday afternoons 3:00-4:00 p.m., but are subject to change. Regular office hour discussions are 15 minutes in length. Please be on time: if there is someone waiting for the next slot we will have to end at the scheduled time. In addition, I also hold a short 10 minute "Hallway Hours" with one student in the hallway outside of our classroom immediately before class.

I use an online booking system to book both types of appointments [http://bit.ly/oFG602](http://bit.ly/oFG602). Although I will most likely be in my office during my regular office hours, sometimes important engagements come up and I can't always be in my office and I may cancel my office hours if no one has scheduled an appointment. For this reason, I would encourage you to make an appointment at least a day in advance and email me directly if you want to
make a same day appointment. Under normal circumstances, please don’t email to see if I am free, simply use the following link to schedule appointments ([http://bit.ly/oFG6O2](http://bit.ly/oFG6O2)). Please let me know in the comments section of the invitation the topic for the meeting and send me any relevant background reading. If you would rather talk by phone or Skype instead, follow the directions in the sign up form. If you can’t make the times that are available online due to class or work conflicts, please email me and suggest some times that are more convenient to meet.

**Reference letter policy**

I am generally happy to write anyone who takes one of my classes and does well a reference letter for jobs, scholarships, or for other purposes. Bear in mind, however, that in general I tend to report on your written and verbal communication skills, your contributions to the classroom discussions, how well I know you as a person, your demonstrated interest and enthusiasm for the course, and your overall performance in the class. Given these details, it would be best to wait until we are at least half ways into the semester before asking me to write you a letter. Coming to my office hours and speaking up in class are good ways for me to get to know you better and sooner. If you still want me to write this letter, please give me at least 1 week notice, please send me details on the position, your updated CV, a description of the position to which you are applying and some details that you think I might want to mention about your suitability for the position. If I do not think I would be able to provide you with a favorable letter of reference, I will tell you immediately. If you need me to email or mail the letter somewhere please send me those details.

**Grading**

Your final grade in this course will be composed of the following elements:

- 3 policy memos (10% each for a total of 30% of final grade)
- 2 blog posting (5% each for a total of 10% of final grade)
- 1 Obituary assignment (10% of final grade)
- Term paper (5% for outline, 30% for written assignment and 5% for in class presentation for a total of 40% of final grade)
- Class participation (10% of final grade)

**Late Submission of Assignments**

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments must be uploaded on the classroom website before the start of class (4:55 p.m.). Late assignments will be penalized 10 percentage points for every 24 hour period that it is late. If unforeseen circumstances arise and you are unable to hand in your assignment on time, please let me know as soon as possible to discuss an alternative arrangement. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Please do
not wait until the last minute to write to me to ask for an extension. If assignments have been scheduled on a religious or cultural holiday, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can also find an alternative arrangement for you. For more information on NYU’s policy on religious holidays, please see the following link (http://bit.ly/1xqX4Qh). I see this policy as a minimum standard for this course so if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

ASSIGNMENTS

Your résumé or CV. Your first assignment, which is ungraded, is to upload a copy of your most recent résumé or CV. The purpose of this exercise is for you to learn about how to use the classroom website and it will also allow me to learn more about who you are and your interests. In addition, it is always a good idea to have a recent copy of your résumé or CV on hand, just in case that perfect job opportunity presents itself.

Memos. An important skill for anyone interested in working in global health policy is the ability to summarize complex issues and to articulate concise arguments. During the semester you will be asked to write three - 2 page (max!) policy memos (minimum 11 point font, minimum 1.5 spaced, reasonable margins). Memo assignments will be posted online 1-2 weeks before they are due at the start of the assigned class. More details on the expectations from these memos will be distributed online, including some example memos. Please use these memos as a guide in terms of length and content. Memos should be uploaded online before class on the day that they are due. Points may be deducted if I feel your memo does not conform to the above mentioned format. Each policy memo is worth 10% of your final grade.

Blog postings. All of the students in this class will participate with a group classroom blog. You are all encouraged to subscribe to this blog to read what other students are also posting on the blog. At the beginning of the term, I will circulate a list of the classes and topics for each class. Students will sign up in advance for two sessions. During your assigned week, by midnight the night before class you must upload one blog posting broadly related to the week’s theme. Each post should be 300-500 words. You could explore one of the readings, talk about recent developments in this area, or express a viewpoint. Once the blog post is posted, make sure you tweet it (using #HPAM1831 and/or #globalhealth). Your grade will depend on how useful, informative, or well articulated the posting. A one page overview of how to post will also be circulated at the beginning of class and will be available on course website. Students must each post at least twice for full grades but there is no maximum number of postings. However, I will only grade the posts that you signed up for in advance. Each blog post is worth 5% of your final grade.
Obituary assignment. By the second week of class, I will distribute more information on the obituary assignment. Every week the Lancet publishes obituaries of important figures in global health that have recently passed away. Read the biography or auto-biography of a key player in global health policy and management (living or dead, you can decide, but I will suggest some good options) and describe why they were a key player in global health policy and management, describe what challenges they had to overcome, factors contributed to their success, and the impact of their work. Obituaries must be a maximum of 2 pages (minimum 11 point font, minimum 1.5 spaced, reasonable margins). This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.

Class participation. I reserve 10% of your grade to reflect the general effort you put into the course, including your participation in class, case discussions, your participation on the blog, your demonstrated enthusiasm for the subject matter, discussions outside of the classroom (e.g. office hours) and attendance. I realize that you are all busy adults and sometimes things prevent you from attending class, but I hope you can try to minimize such events, and generally appreciate an explanation for your absence. I expect everyone to speak up at least once during each case discussion: if not, be prepared for me to cold call on you in class.

Term paper project. By the second week of class, I will distribute more information on the class term paper. During the course of the semester, you will be required to prepare a 10-page (approximately) report on “What health issue should be included in the post-2015 MDG agenda”. The paper itself is worth 40% of your final grade. About a month before the term paper is due, you will be asked to submit a short 1-2 page outline of your term paper in order for me to give you feedback on your progress. This outline is worth 5% of your final grade. Finally, on the last day of class, you will be asked to give a short 3-minute pitch to the class about why your issue should make the cut.

Textbooks

The textbook for this course is called the “Textbook of International Health: Global Health in a Dynamic World, 3rd Edition” by Anne-Emanuelle Birn, Yogan Pillay, and Timothy H. Holtz. It is available for purchase at the NYU bookstore and through online retailers. There are also copies available at Bobst on reserve. You can also rent a copy of the book through Amazon. I am also recommending ”Global Health Governance” by Youde as a good additional, although not required, reading.

Cases

We will be conducting three cases this term in this class. All of these cases will require you to set up an account at the Harvard Business School Publishing [https://cb.hbsp.](https://cb.hbsp.)
Please do it as soon as it is possible. Two of the cases will be free and there will be a small charge to download the third.

**Readings**

For every class, I have assigned a set of readings that I expect you will have read before coming to class. These readings take time, so please allocate sufficient time before the start of class to read these materials. If you do not get a chance to read the whole article, at least skim the material to get a sense of what is in those readings. I have selected these readings in order to give you more background and more context to frame classroom discussions. I believe that they are all important readings. If you do not manage to cover them before class, I think you should go back and read them at some point this semester. I will also post on the class website a document to help guide your readings. We will discuss many of these readings in class each week so please come prepared to be called on to comment on the reading. You have paid a lot of money to take this course, and I see these readings as an important component of what you will get out of this class, so make sure you get your money’s worth from this course!

**Academic Integrity**

The Wagner School values both open inquiry and academic integrity and students are asked to sign a pledge of academic integrity at the start of the program. Students are expected to follow standards of excellence set forth by New York University. Such standards include respect, honesty and responsibility. The program does not tolerate violations to academic integrity including:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating on an exam
- Submitting your own work toward requirements in more than one course without prior approval from the instructor
- Collaborating with other students for work expected to be completed individually
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his/her own
- Purchasing or using papers or work online or from a commercial firm and presenting it as your own work

Students are expected to familiarize themselves University’s policy on academic integrity as they will be expected to adhere to such policies at all times as a student and an alumni of New York University.
## Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8-Sep</td>
<td>An Introduction to global health policy and course specifics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15-Sep</td>
<td>How healthy is the world? How do we know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22-Sep</td>
<td>Why are some people so much healthier than others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>29-Sep</td>
<td>Global Health and Foreign Policy (Gershman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-Oct</td>
<td>Priority and agenda setting: how should we allocate limited resources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>13-Oct</td>
<td>Fall break - no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20-Oct</td>
<td>Comparative health systems: BRICS Countries (Rodwin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>27-Oct</td>
<td>Global health governance and the political economy of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3-Nov</td>
<td>Case discussion 1: Tobacco control in South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10-Nov</td>
<td>Health systems and health reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>17-Nov</td>
<td>Health system financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>24-Nov</td>
<td>Case discussion 2: Polio elimination in Uttar Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-Dec</td>
<td>Legal considerations in global health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>8-Dec</td>
<td>Case discussion 3: Oral rehydration therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>10-Dec</td>
<td>Class presentations (note: Wednesday class)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Assignment Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upload your CV</td>
<td>9/12/13</td>
<td>Due by noon on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 1</td>
<td>9/22/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 2</td>
<td>10/6/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 3</td>
<td>10/20/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary</td>
<td>11/17/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper outline</td>
<td>11/3/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>12/8/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>12/10/13</td>
<td>Due by 5 p.m. on class website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog Posting 1</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Tweet by midnight before class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog Posting 2</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Tweet by midnight before class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guests (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29-Sep</td>
<td>John Gershman</td>
<td>Clinical Associate Professor of Public Service, NYU-Wagner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Oct</td>
<td>Yesim Tozan</td>
<td>Research Assistant Professor, NYU-Steinhardt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-Oct</td>
<td>Victor Rodwin</td>
<td>Professor of Health Policy and Management, NYU-Wagner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-Oct</td>
<td>Anita Kishore</td>
<td>NYU-Alumni, now Clinton Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Nov</td>
<td>Robert Marten</td>
<td>Senior Program Associate, Rockefeller Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-Nov</td>
<td>Angela Coral</td>
<td>NYU-Wagner and Rabin Marten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Dec</td>
<td>Mary Robbins</td>
<td>NYU-Alumni, now Global Health Strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1) An Introduction to Global Health Policy and Course Specifics

Topics covered:

- What are the key themes in this course?
- Why should the world care about improving global health?
- Course expectations, grading, outline of lecture
- History of international health system

Readings:

- Review: Example policy memos (on classroom website under resources).

(2) How healthy is the world? How do we know?

Topics covered:

- How do we measure population health at the global level?
- Where does global health population data come from? How are estimates generated?
- What are the implications for policy and management on relying on such imperfect data?

Readings:


· Grepin, KA. (2010) ”Are my made up numbers better than your made up numbers?” (blog post) Available online at: http://karengrepin.com/2010/04/are-my-made-up-numbers-better-than-your.html.

(3) Why are some people so much healthier than others?

Topics covered:

· How is it that people in some countries live twice as long as in others?

· What are the social determinants of population health?

· What is the relationship between income and health?

· Why is health different?

Readings:


(4) Global Health and Foreign Policy (Gershman)

Readings to be announced at a later date.

(5) Priority and agenda setting: how should we allocate limited resources?

Topics covered:

· How are global health policy agendas set?
· What is cost-effectiveness and how can it be used to define priorities?
· What other frameworks have influenced global health priorities?

Readings:


· Smith SL. (2014) “Political contexts and maternal health policy: Insights from a comparison of south Indian states,” Social Science and Medicine, 100:46-53.


(6) Comparative health systems: BRICS Countries (Rodwin)

Readings to be announced at a later date.

(7) Global health governance and the political economy of development

Topics covered:

· What role do international actors play in health service delivery in developing countries?
· How are national priorities influenced by international priorities?
· How has development assistance for health evolved?
What is the role of non-governmental actors (both international and domestic) in health service delivery?

Readings:


(8) Case Discussion 1: Tobacco control in South Africa

Guiding questions (think about these when you are reading the case, come prepared to discuss in class):

- Why did Zuma and the ANC focus on tobacco control? Was this a good choice?
- What political, social, and economic factors impacted tobacco control in South Africa?
- Are the tobacco control strategies used and the lessons learned in South Africa transferable to other developing countries? Why or why not?

Readings:

- HBS Case GHD-012: Tobacco Control in South Africa. Click here to download [https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/28262351].

(9) Health systems and health reform

Topics covered:

- What is a health system?
· How do we measure health system performance? What are limits of this approach?
· Why do some health systems perform so much better than others?
· What does it mean to strengthen a health system?
· Human resources for health

Readings:


· Reich MR. (2002) “Reshaping the state from above, from within, from below: implications for public health.” Social Science and Medicine. 54(11):1669-75.


(10) Health system financing

Topics covered:
· What are the main modes of financing health services in developing countries?
· What are the main kinds of health financing systems?
· What incentives are created from the various health system financing options?
· Corruption and health

Readings:


· Additional readings may be added at a later date.

(11) Case Discussion 2: Polio elimination in Uttar Pradesh

Guiding questions (think about these when you are reading the case, come prepared to discuss in class):

· How did the different members of GPEI work together to implement polio elimination programs?

· How do successful programs interrupt the transmission of poliovirus?

· What was Banerjee and Andrus’ strategy for scaling up polio elimination efforts in India?

· How would you improve the strategy to eliminate polio in India?

Readings:

· HBS Case GHD-005: Polio elimination in Uttar Pradesh Click here to download (https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/28262351).

(12) Legal considerations in global health

Topics covered:

· The international legal system

Readings:


Case discussion 3: Oral rehydration therapy

Guiding questions (think about these when you are reading the case, come prepared to discuss in class):

- To be updated

Readings:

- HBS Case: Oral Rehydration Therapy Click here to download [https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/28262351](https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/28262351).