Health System and Public Health: an International Perspective

Language of instruction: English.

Coordination: Dr. Jordi Alonso and Gabriela Barbaglia.

Total workload course: 45 lecture/contact hours.

Recommended credits: 3 US credits-6 ECTS credits.

Course prerequisites: Undergraduate students from different areas, who want to undergo postgraduate studies in health-related sciences.

Course focus and approach: The aim of this course is to provide a broad perspective of what health systems are with a particular focus on public health services. Important public health topics will be approached.

Teaching methodology: The course will include lectures, seminars and on-site practical assignments. The students will have to attend to two site visits to the Agency of Health Quality and Assessment of Catalonia and to the Public Health Agency of Barcelona.

Assessment criteria:

It will be based on the following components:

A minimum of 30 hours of attendance is required to obtain a qualification.

Qualifications will be based on the following criteria:

a- Class participation (20%)

b- Assignments (30%)

c- Two brief reports (max 500 words) (20%)

d- Final exam (30%)
## Course outline: (TBC) - Course schedule: 45 hours

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Dates (TBC)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Professor</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} week (05/26-05/30)</td>
<td>The Global Burden of Disease: Concepts, Data, Discussions (2h)</td>
<td>Gabi Barbaglia</td>
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<td>Assignment (4h)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} week (06/02-06/06)</td>
<td>An Analytical Model for Health Systems: Objectives &amp; Organization (2h)</td>
<td>Jordi Alonso</td>
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<td>Assignment (4h)</td>
<td>Gabi Barbaglia</td>
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<td>Visit to the Agency of Health Quality and Assessment of Catalonia (6h)</td>
<td>Anna Kotzeva</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} week (06/09-06/13)</td>
<td>Public Health Functions: An International Perspective (2h)</td>
<td>Antoni Plasència</td>
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<td>Assignment (4h)</td>
<td>Gabi Barbaglia</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th} week (06/16-06/20)</td>
<td>Public Health Topics: I. Tobacco Control (2h)</td>
<td>Joan R. Villalbí</td>
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<td>Assignment (4h)</td>
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<td>Visit to the Public Health Agency of Barcelona (6h)</td>
<td>Carme Borrell</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5\textsuperscript{th} week (06/23-06/27)</td>
<td>Public Health Topics: II. Inequalities in Health (2h)</td>
<td>Lucía Artazcoz</td>
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<td>Assignment (4h)</td>
<td>Gabi Barbaglia</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6\textsuperscript{th} week (06/30)</td>
<td>Final exam (3h)</td>
<td>Gabi Barbaglia</td>
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General course content and reading assignments

Session 1: Global Burden of Disease: Concepts, Data, Discussions

A consistent and comparative description of the burden of diseases and injuries and the risk factors that cause them is an important input to health decision-making and planning processes. This session will introduce the students how diseases, injuries and risk factors that cause premature death, loss of health and disability in different populations can be compared.

Required readings:

Additional resources:

Session 2: An Analytical Model for Health Systems: Objectives and Organization

This session will introduce the students to health systems by identifying their major objectives, functions, elements and organizational issues. It will review international health systems organization and transformation. The evidence about the contribution of health systems to the improvement of population’s health will be discussed.
Required readings:

Additional reading and resources:

OECD Health Data 2011:  
http://www.oecd.org/document/16/0,3746,en_2649_37407_2085200_1_1_1_37407,00.html

World Health Organization (WHO). Health in Transition Series (HiTS):  
http://www.euro.who.int/observatory/HitS/TopPage

Session 3: Public Health Functions: an International Perspective

Public Health is the science of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention. This session will provide an introduction to public health. Definitions, approaches and essential functions of public health will be discussed. Special focus on global public health: institutions, organization and challenges.

Required readings:

Additional reading:

Session 4: Public Health Topics: I. Tobacco Control Perspective

Smoking has become a major global risk factor for premature mortality and disability in the world. In high-income countries its prevalence and health burden are huge but decreasing, while in middle and lower income countries they are rising fast. Over the years, there has been an increasing realization that many of the most effective actions to reduce smoking in a population both by favoring quitting and preventing smoking onset are public policies (taxation, regulation of publicity, mandatory smoke-free workplaces...). The tobacco industry has resisted the adoption and implementation of such actions. This session will review effective interventions to curb smoking, the role of Framework Convention, difficulties in adopting and implementing effective policies, the current situation of the epidemic, and emerging challenges such as e-cigs.

Required readings:


Recommended bibliography:
Session 5: Public Health Topics: II. Inequalities in Health

Most health problems are attributable to the conditions of life and work. These conditions include social determinants such as poor housing and overcrowding, inadequate working conditions and social exclusion. However health policies remain dominated by disease-focused solutions that ignore the social and physical environment. This session will provide knowledge on the definition and assessment of social inequalities in health. It will address the major axes of inequality, which are social class, gender, ethnicity, or country of origin.

Required readings:

Recommended bibliography:
www.who.int/social_determinants/final_report/csdh_finalreport