



“Health in the Americas” course offered by the Pan American Health Organization and the University of South Florida

The course “Health in the Americas” is a joint project between the Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office of the World Health Organization, and the Department of Global Health of the College of Public Health at the University of South Florida (USF).

Since the inception of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 1902, the governments of the Americas have jointly addressed their concerns regarding health and the environment, committed to collective action, and defined strategies to respond to emerging challenges. Together with USF’s commitment to reducing global health disparities through education, research and practice, a team has come together to develop a unique and comprehensive course to address the public health challenges countries face in their Region.

Course Objectives

Based on the 2007 edition of PAHO’s *Health in the Americas*, this course addresses the issue of health as a human right and examines critical determinants of health and disparities that persist in the Region.

Specifically, this course aims to:

- Evaluate the current health situation and trends in the Americas.
- Discuss the health care systems and programs developed within the Region.
- Provide a systematic approach to the analysis of the health situation in the Americas, while focusing on statistics from within the Region.

Topics

Course topics will include health analysis methods; demography and population trends; health within the context of development; communicable diseases in the Americas; chronic disease; behavioral health risks; sustainable development; environmental health; public policies and health care systems; medicine, health care technologies and research; and world, regional, and subregional initiatives to improve population health.

Course Instructors

The course will be taught by a team of instructors from USF and PAHO guest speakers with expertise in the health-related issues impacting the Americas.

Language Requirements

Participants are expected to have a working knowledge of English. However, bilingual instructors and language assistants will be available to aid students.

General Course Information

Dates of the Course: May 11 - May 29, 2009

Cost: \$3,500, Includes books, course materials, room and board, and use of computers.

Course Pre-Requisites: A degree from a recognized university in a health-related field



Important Dates

Course dates:

May 11- 29 2009

Application deadline:

January 15, 2009

Payment deadline:

March 30, 2009

Finances

Course cost:

\$3,500. (includes books, course materials, room and board, food breaks and use of computers)

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Course Syllabus: Please see below.

Credit: Upon completion, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Deadlines

Application Deadline: January 15, 2009

An application for Health in the Americas can be downloaded at: publications.paho.org

Payment Deadline: Payments are due no later than March 30, 2009

Additional Information

Accommodations:

Room and Board is included in the cost of the course. Participants will stay at [The Edge at 42nd Street](#), Tampa.

The University of South Florida:

For more information on USF, our campus, and the Tampa Bay Area, please visit: www.usf.edu.

Visa: Foreign students will receive a letter from USF showing admittance to the program for visa purposes.

For More Information, please contact:

Latin America and Caribbean students: Dr. Patricia L Ruiz at ruizpatr@paho.org or visit <http://publications.paho.org>

USA and Canadian students: Dr. Jaime Corvin at jcorvin1@health.usf.edu from USF.

Course Instructors

USF instructors:

- Donna Peterson, ScD, MHS, Dean, College of Public Health
- Jaime Corvin, PhD, MSPH, Assistant Professor
- Ricardo Izurieta, MD, DrPH, MPH, Assistant Professor
- Boo Kwa PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Global Health
- Richard Nisbett, PhD, MSPH, Assistant Professor
- Alfonso Ruiz, Coordinator, DVM, MS, PhD, Associate Professor
- Wayne Westhoff, PhD, MPH, Research Assistant Professor
- Matthew Rollie, PhD, MSHP, MPH, Administrator, Department of Global Health

PAHO Guest speakers:

- Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, Area Manager, Health Surveillance and Disease Prevention and Control – HSD
- Dr. Fatima Marinho, Project Coordinator, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA
- Dr. Alejandro Giusti, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA
- Dr. Patricia L. Ruiz, Advisor, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA
- Dr. Oscar Mujica, Advisor, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA
- Dr. Sergio Muñoz, Advisor, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA

- Minister of Health from one Latin American or Caribbean country, The Health Agenda for the Americas



USF Department of Global Health, College of Public Health, University of South Florida Syllabus for the USF/PAHO course “Health in the Americas”

Overview

The course “Health in the Americas” is a joint project of the Department of Global Health of the College of Public Health of the University of South Florida and the Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is the official depository of morbidity and mortality data from all its member countries and territories in the Americas, which are collected every year. In addition, every five years PAHO develops its main publication Health in the Americas to inform the Region about the health trends of its member countries and territories. This is a unique and comprehensive report devoted to tracking and analyzing the Region’s health, in order to recommend policies and strategies needed to improve the health conditions in the Americas. The 2007 edition of Health in the Americas constitutes an important tool for public health graduate students to analyze the main health determinants in the Region.

Dates: May 11–May 29, 2009

Location: University of South Florida College of Public Health, 13201 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, Florida 33612

Duration: Three weeks

Credit Hours (for USF degree-seeking students): 3

Number of class hours: 80-90 (Including 45 lecture hours, and 35-45 hours for group discussion, reading and research for the assignments).

Number of students: 15-40

Prerequisites: A degree from a recognized university in any of the health-related areas. International students need to show a certificate of financial support while taking the course.

Delivery Format: Initially a classroom seminar. After one year, the course will be offered in two formats: face-to-face classroom and online, in partnership with other universities of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Required materials: PAHO’s 2007 publication Health in the Americas—provided to students.

Course Content and Delivery Course Description

The course will analyze accomplishments in health within the context of the universal commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of reducing poverty, promoting gender equity in education, preventing and controlling diseases, managing and furthering cooperation among countries and creating and strengthening regional and intersectoral partnerships between governments and civil society.

The two volumes of Health in the Americas will be deeply analyzed and discussed establishing the different health situations among the countries and subregions and characterizing the most relevant health determinants, either physical, economical, social, or cultural.

Course Objectives

Based on the 2007 edition of PAHO’s Health in the Americas, this course addresses the issue of health as a human right and examines critical determinants of health and disparities that persist in the Region.

Specifically, this course aims to:

- Evaluate the current health situation and trends in the Americas.
- Discuss the health care systems and programs developed within the Region.
- Provide a systematic approach to the analysis of the health situation in the Americas, while focusing on statistics from within the Region.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- Use a health analysis method and apply environmental, health, and other indicators and data for use in policy and decision making;
- Describe the entire health situation in the Americas, including communicable and noncommunicable diseases and those behavioral risks that lead to diverse health issues;
- Identify and discuss the main health determinants in the Region of the Americas, subregions, countries and particular regions within the countries;
- Recognize the phenomena of demographic dynamics and their effect on population health and well-being;
- Describe the advancement of the countries of the Americas to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
- Make sound analysis of health issues of the Region of the Americas within the framework of sustainable development;
- Discuss public health policies and health care systems and services of the countries of the Americas, including the Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2017;
- Discuss the pharmaceutical policies and market and the situation of health research and scientific productivity in the Americas.

Instructional strategies

A systematic method for health situation analysis will be provided to the students as a tool to adequately use diverse indicators and data in order to understand the health situation of a particular geographic region, recognize health disparities and propose health policies and strategies to approach the problems.

Assigned readings from the publication Health in the Americas on specific health and/or environmental issues (either physical, social, cultural or economic) will be the basis for analysis and group discussion for each session of the course.

Selected guest speakers will be invited (PAHO officers, Ministers of Health, Country health officers) for particular sessions to give a talk on a current health issue as a core matter for discussion.

Selected videos from high level meetings, expert conferences and interviews of health officers in the Americas will also be used to provoke group discussion and prospective health analysis on specific health and health policy issues.

Faculty and Technical Assistance

Instructor and Coordinator:

Alfonso Ruiz, DVM, MS, PhD.

Associate Professor

University of South Florida

College of Public Health

Department of Global Health

13201 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.

Tampa, Florida 33612

E-mail: aruiz@hsc.usf.edu; ruizalfo@hotmail.com

Other instructors:

USF instructors:

- Donna Peterson, ScD, MHS, Dean, College of Public Health
- Jaime Corvin, PhD, MSPH, Assistant Professor
- Ricardo Izurieta, MD, DrPH, MPH, Assistant Professor
- Boo Kwa PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Global Health
- Richard Nisbett, PhD, MSPH, Assistant Professor
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 - Dr. Oscar Mujica, Advisor, Health Information and Analysis, HSD/HA
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- Minister of Health from one Latin American or Caribbean country, The Health Agenda for the Americas

Grading/Assessment/Criteria

Grading system

The final grade will be determined by the following:

- 5% class attendance and general participation
- 80% written assignments for class discussions
- 15% oral presentations on the assignments

Grading scale

Grading will follow the official used by the University:

90–100	A
80–89	B
70–79	C
60–69	D
Below 60	F

Grading policy

As it was mentioned before, grading of the course will include group assignments for class discussion. These assignments involve reading PAHO's publication Health in the Americas and/or other material indicated by the instructors, the preparation of an essay paper, and a formal presentation in class about the assigned topic.

Copies of the essay papers should be delivered to the instructor and the whole class at least 24 hours before the scheduled group presentation. A handout copy of the group presentation should be distributed to the class the same day of the presentation. This will facilitate questions and discussion in class. A late submission of the essay will be penalized in the grading for the whole group.

Although grading of the assignments will be subjective, the instructor will take into consideration the value of the comments, scientific evidence citations and quality of supporting data included in the analysis. Presentations and discussion on the topics will receive 30% of the total grade of the assignments. Considering that assignments will involve group work, grading may be different among the members of the group when the instructor notices that contributions of some individuals were over or below the average of the whole group, by questioning every individual during the presentation and discussion.

Types of assessments

Written assignments will be topics of class discussions. Assignments for analysis will consist of topics related to health issues and/or statistical health data from a country, group of countries and subregions. According to the number of registered students, several groups will be formed for the assignments. These group assignments will be distributed the first day of class. It is expected that each group will prepare an essay paper and a presentation on the assigned topic.

Grading will be based on the complexity and quality of the essay and presentation.

Assessment schedule: Please see course schedule below.

Instructor Policies

Attendance

This course meets everyday for three weeks. Class sessions will last at least four hours each. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in discussions.

Since attendance will be part of the grading, punctuality and participation are expected in all classes. Instructor will take note of student participation in discussions and cooperation with other students.

In the event that any student misses a class and the absence corresponds with an in-class assignment or examination, the student will have two working days to make-up the missed assignment unless negotiated otherwise, in advance, with the instructor.

Readings and assigned materials should be done before coming to class.

Schedule changes

Since the course will include guest speakers, schedule changes are expected. Students will be notified of these changes at least 24 hours before next lecture.

Field trips

Field trips may be scheduled and the students will be notified through the course program and instructions for the trip will be given 48 hours before.

Use of University computers

Students may use University computers for preparation of their essays and presentations without any restriction.

Student assistance

Keeping in mind that this is an international course, it is expected that foreign students might need language assistance during lectures or for the preparation of the assignments. The Department of Global Health will provide bilingual instructors (English and Spanish) and language assistants to help students during lectures and after class hours.

In addition, the instructor and USF faculty will be available to support students in any case they need explanation of the course components, clarification of concepts, further details from lectures and conferences, and interpretation of statistical data and analysis methods.

Permission to use lecture materials

Most of the lectures will be based on PAHO's publication Health in the Americas which has a copyright. It can be used by USF for teaching purposes under the agreement of PAHO with USF and they will be available for student learning purposes. However, any duplication of these materials for other use not related to the course requires permission from PAHO.

In the same way, the reproduction of lectures and audiovisual material used in class will be restricted. Students are encouraged to take notes and may tape instructors' lectures, but may not sell these items.

Institutional Policy Conduct

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct and behavior during his/her stay at the University of South Florida. Please read the USF Student Handbook on Academic Policies and review student grievance procedures at: http://www.sa.usf.edu/handbook/USF_Student_Handbook.pdf

<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfgc/ogc%20web/currentregs/USF3-0015.htm>

<http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0708/arcsagp.htm>

Special accommodations

Any student with a disability requesting accommodations should schedule a private meeting with the instructor within the first week of class. Please see the following information: <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/index.htm>.

Holidays and religious observances

Any student anticipating an absence for a religious observance or other known conflicts with the course schedule should inform the instructor in advance as soon as possible in writing or via e-mail.

See USF Attendance Policy for the Observance of Religious Days at:

http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfgc/gc_pp/acadaf/gc10-045.htm.

Technology Requirements and Tools

The course will be face-to-face using audiovisual support equipment, with the use of PowerPoint slides and videos for all classes.

Course Schedule

All the course material will be covered in fifteen sessions over a three week period. Each session will last at least four hours covering lectures, student presentations and group discussion. The course has been designed to cover an array of health issues and initiatives within 11 blocks. The break down of Block topics is listed below:

Block 1: Health Analysis Method

- Introduction to Health in the Americas.
- The use of indicators (PAHO's core data initiative).
- Health situation analysis (Methodology).
- Distribution of group assignments for essays and presentations.

Block 2: Demography and population trends

- Population growth and trends in the Americas.
- Fertility and mortality.
- Population dynamics: migration, displacements.
- Urbanization and urban growth impacts.
- Health consequences of the demographic transition and dynamics.

Block 3: Health in the Americas within the context of development

- Life expectancy, economic growth and inequalities, poverty, unemployment, inequities in health (gender, ethnicity, age).
- Food and nutritional security (hunger and malnourishment) Food safety.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 4: Situation of communicable diseases

- Vaccine-preventable diseases; vector-borne diseases; chronic communicable diseases (tuberculosis, leprosy).
- Zoonosis.
- Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.
- Efforts for disease elimination and eradication (lessons learned).
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 5: Chronic noncommunicable diseases and their main risk factors

- Cardiovascular diseases; malignant neoplasms; diabetes; hypertension; chronic respiratory diseases.
- Mental health.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 6: Behavioral health risks

- The ecology of social health determinants.
- Tobacco use and exposure.
- Alcohol and substance abuse.
- Violence. Road traffic accidents.
- HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 7: Sustainable development and environmental health

- Access to drinkable water.
- Sanitation and waste disposal.
- Industrialization and environmental and health impacts.
- Deforestation and land degradation.
- Chemical contaminants.
- Air pollution.
- Regional climatic changes.
- Disasters vulnerability and preparedness.
- Workers' health.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 8: Public policies and health care systems

- Organization, coverage and performance of health systems: current situation and trends. Functions of health care systems and trends.
- Health legislation.
- Human resources and their development in the Americas.
- Primary health care.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 9: Medicines, health care technologies and research

- The pharmaceutical policies and market.
- Trade and health.
- Vaccines: regulation, technologies and massive vaccination programs.
- Imaging and radiotherapy services.
- Blood services.
- Health research development and access and utilization of scientific information in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- GROUP PRESENTATION.

Block 10: World, regional and subregional initiatives to improve population health

- The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Healthy spaces; Health- promoting schools; Healthy municipalities; Children's environmental health; Integration processes and technical cooperation among countries.
- Border initiatives: the US-Mexico border as a model.
- The Health Agenda for the Americas.

Block 11: Final discussion. Course Evaluation