



**Karolinska  
Institutet**

Course syllabus for

# **Public Health Sciences - Concepts and Theories, 7.5 credits**

Folkhälsovetenskap - begrepp och teorier, 7.5 hp

This course syllabus is valid from autumn 2024.

Please note that the course syllabus is available in the following versions:

Autumn2019 , Autumn2020 , Autumn2022 , Autumn2023 , Autumn2024

Course code	4FH081
Course name	Public Health Sciences - Concepts and Theories
Credits	7.5 credits
Form of Education	Higher Education, study regulation 2007
Main field of study	Public Health Sciences
Level	AV - Second cycle
Grading scale	Fail (U), pass (G) or pass with distinction (VG)
Department	Department of Global Public Health
Decided by	Utbildningsnämnden PHS
Decision date	2018-10-09
Revised by	Education Committee GPH
Last revision	2024-03-07
Course syllabus valid from	Autumn 2024

## **Specific entry requirements**

A Bachelor's degree or a professional degree equivalent to a Swedish Bachelor's degree of at least 180 credits in public health science, healthcare or other relevant social sciences subject area. And proficiency in English equivalent to English B/English 6.

## **Objectives**

After completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain basic concepts from theory of science and describe their relevance in public health science.
- Compare and contrast population health in different contexts over time from a global health perspective using data on health status, burden of disease and social determinants. Relate the

changes in health and social determinants to the SDGs.

- Explain key public health concepts and theories used in public health science and discuss how they can be applied in public health work and research.
- Reflect upon the importance of the social determinants of health in relation to equity in health.
- Explain major theories pertaining to normative ethics and apply normative principles to ethical dilemmas in public health research and practice.

## Content

Throughout this course the main concepts and theories used in public health research and practice will be introduced in relation to the following domains:

1. Foundations of public health science, concepts used in public health science, major public health problems and the social determinants of health.
2. Public health perspectives on theory of science.
3. Public health perspectives on ethics.

The topics introduced under the domains will include:

- Basic concepts within the field of public health science.
- Use of theory in public health research.
- Introduction to basic health measures.
- Introduction to the social determinants of health.
- Introduction to basic concepts from theory of science and ethics relevant for public health work and research.
- Generic scientific and academic skills.

## Teaching methods

Teaching methods includes keynote lectures within the above-mentioned domains, article, seminars, practical exercises, individual reflections, and peer-learning. The seminars aim to develop knowledge and skills in the field of public health as well as critical thinking. The course include several types of interactive student-driven activities; eg. group work and student presentations.

## Examination

Students will be assessed via a written individual exam which is given at the end of the course and is graded as: pass with distinction, pass, or fail.

### *Compulsory participation*

Additionally, throughout the course there are compulsory activities such as lectures, peer-reviewing, student presentations, canvas assignments, and group assignments. These activities as well as the final individual exam are compulsory for passing this course. In the scenario, of an absence, the course examiner will assess case-by-case if, and how the absence can be compensated.

The examiner assesses if, and in that case how, absence from compulsory educational elements can be compensated for. Before the student has participated in the compulsory educational elements or compensated the absence in accordance with the examiner's instructions, the final course results will not be reported. Absence from a compulsory educational component may imply that the student cannot compensate for the missed compulsory educational element until the next time the course is given.

### *Limitation of number of occasions to write the exam*

Students who have not passed the regular examination are entitled to participate in five more examinations. If the student has not passed the exam after four participations, he/she is encouraged to visit the study advisor. If the student has failed six examinations/tests, no additional examination or new admission is provided.

The number of times that the student has participated in one and the same examination is regarded as an

examination session. Submission of a blank examination is also regarded as an examination. An examination for which the student registered but did not participate in will not be counted as an examination.

If there are special grounds, or a need for adaptation for a student with a disability, the examiner may decide to deviate from the syllabus's regulations on the examination form, the number of examination opportunities, the possibility of supplementation or exemptions from the compulsory section/s of the course etc. Content and learning outcomes as well as the level of expected skills, knowledge and abilities may not be changed, removed or reduced.

## Transitional provisions

Examination will be provided during a time of two years after a possible cancellation of the course. Examination can take place according to an earlier literature list during a time of one year after the date when a major renewal of the literature list has been made.

## Other directives

Course evaluation will be carried out in accordance with the guidelines established by the Committee for Higher Education.

The course language is English.

## Literature and other teaching aids

### *Mandatory literature*

*Graham, Hilary.*

**Unequal Lives [electronic resource] : Health and Socioeconomic Inequalities**

LIBRIS-ID:21107146

*Coughlin, Steven S.*

**Case Studies in Public Health Ethics [electronic resource].**

LIBRIS-ID:21097765

Further mandatory literature will be available on the learning management system during the course along with further reading.

Extra material will be specified during the course.