



**Karolinska
Institutet**

Course syllabus for

An Introduction to Global Health, 6 credits

En introduktion till global hälsa, 6 hp

This course syllabus is valid from autumn 2025.

Course code	4GB000
Course name	An Introduction to Global Health
Credits	6 credits
Form of Education	Higher Education, study regulation 2007
Main field of study	Global Health
Level	AV - Second cycle
Grading scale	Pass with distinction, Pass, Fail
Department	Department of Global Public Health
Decided by	Education Committee GPH
Decision date	2024-10-11
Course syllabus valid from	Autumn 2025

Specific entry requirements

A Bachelor's degree or a professional degree equivalent to a Swedish Bachelor's degree of at least 180 credits. And proficiency in English equivalent to English B/English 6.

Objectives

After the course, the student should be able to:

- Discuss the history and theories of global health, including decolonialising perspectives, and their links to key concepts including public health, systems thinking, human rights, gender and intersectionality.
- Explain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how they link to critical global health strategies, interventions, and organisations.
- Explain epidemiological transitions and the burden of disease across different economic contexts using global health indicators.
- Discuss fundamental concepts of equality, equity, and social determinants of health from a global health perspective.
- Discuss the role of intercultural competence in global health.
- Discuss ethical considerations in global health research and practice

Content

This course provides an introduction to the key concepts and history of global health, as a foundation for more in-depth study within the Master's programme. The course introduces perspectives that challenge traditional approaches, particularly from the perspective of decolonialisation. It explores the connection between global health and public health, and introduces the role of systems-thinking, human rights, and gender. The course also introduces the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Students will examine how health issues evolve as countries develop, often referred to as epidemiological transitions, and why the burden of disease can differ significantly between low- and high-income regions. For example, infectious diseases such as malaria remain a critical concern in many low-resource settings while non-communicable diseases such as diabetes are more prevalent in high-resource settings. The course also considers issues of equality and equity, as well as the social factors that shape health outcomes, such as income, education, and environment.

Additionally, the course highlights the importance of intercultural competence in global health. For instance, understanding local cultural practices is key when designing health interventions, such as ensuring community acceptance of vaccines or maternal health programmes. The course also discusses ethical challenges, such as when clinical trials in low-income regions may lead to unequal access to treatments after the research ends. These discussions help students critically engage with foundational concepts of global health.

Teaching methods

Teaching methods include interactive key-note lectures, seminars, practical exercises and peer-learning through group work.

Examination

This course is assessed by group assignments, which are marked as fail or pass, and an individual written examination, which is marked as fail, pass or pass with distinction. To pass the course, students must achieve a pass grade in the group assignments and the written examination. To achieve a pass with distinction on the course, students must achieve a pass on the group assignments and a pass with distinction on the written examination. In addition, all compulsory parts of the course must be completed to pass.

Compulsory participation

Participation in seminars, practical exercises, group work and the final examination are compulsory.

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

The course language is English.

Course evaluation is carried out according to the guidelines that are established by the Committee for Higher Education.

Literature and other teaching aids

Mandatory literature

Jacobsen

Introduction to Global Health

Jones and Bartlett Learning, 2018

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