



**Karolinska
Institutet**

Course syllabus for

Health Systems and Policy in Practice, 7.5 credits

Hälsosystem och policy i praktiken, 7.5 hp
This course syllabus is valid from autumn 2025.

Course code	4GB002
Course name	Health Systems and Policy in Practice
Credits	7.5 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:

- Explain the health policy-making process, including the factors influencing it and the role of power differentials among health system actors.
- Analyse challenges to policy implementation and propose strategies to improve policy fidelity.
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis and propose practical strategies to advance health policy agendas.
- Discuss the role of policy briefs in communicating findings to different target populations.
- Apply systems thinking to understand the interactions between health system blocks within various socio-economic contexts.
- Analyse the integration of a gender perspective in policies and health systems.
- Assess the advantages and limitations of different financial and health service delivery models globally, including ethical aspects.
- Assess the governance, health workforce, and equity status of a given health system, and propose actions to improve these areas, taking into account potential ethical implications.

Content

This course examines health systems and policy, focusing on the processes and factors that influence policy-making. Understanding how policies are shaped is crucial in global health, as they determine how healthcare is delivered, who has access to it, and how resources are allocated. Students will use systems thinking, introduced in earlier courses, to explore how different parts of a health system interact in various socio-economic settings. The course also looks at the role of power dynamics between health system actors, such as governments, healthcare providers, and international organisations, and how these relationships impact policy decisions.

The course covers the challenges to health policy implementation, including limited resources and conflicting priorities. Students will analyse these challenges and suggest practical mitigation strategies. Through stakeholder analysis, students will identify key groups involved in health systems and develop approaches to advance policy agendas. They will also learn how to create policy briefs, an essential tool for communicating findings and recommendations to different audiences, such as policymakers or local communities.

Using frameworks like the policy triangle, students will assess the strengths and weaknesses of different financial and service delivery models, with attention to ethical considerations such as equitable access to medical products and technologies. By the end of the course, students will be able to evaluate issues related to governance, health workforce, and equity, and propose informed actions to address challenges, drawing on real-world examples like the rollout of Universal Health Coverage or vaccination programmes.

Teaching methods

Teaching will consist of interactive lectures, group and individual assignments and project work.

Examination

This course is assessed through an individually written course project, as well as oral presentations and written reports for both individual and group work. The course project is marked as fail, pass, or pass with distinction, while the oral and written components of the individual and group work are marked as fail or pass. To pass the course, students must achieve a pass grade on the course project, and on both the oral and written components of the individual and group work. To achieve a pass with distinction in the course, students must earn a pass with distinction on the course project and a pass on the oral and written components of the group work. All compulsory parts of the course must be completed to pass.

Compulsory participation

Participation in individual and group assignments, oral presentation of individual and group assignments and selected lectures is 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 and recommended literature and readings will be available on the learning management system during the course.