



**Karolinska  
Institutet**

Course syllabus for

# **Public Health Response in Health Crisis and Disasters, 15 credits**

Hälsoinsatser vid hälsokriser och katastrofer, 15 hp

This course syllabus is valid from autumn 2024.

Course code	5HD004
Course name	Public Health Response in Health Crisis and Disasters
Credits	15 credits
Form of Education	Higher Education, study regulation 2007
Main field of study	Public Health in Disasters
Level	AV - Second cycle
Grading scale	Excellent, Very good, Good, Satisfactory, Sufficient, Fail, Fail
Department	Department of Global Public Health
Decided by	Education Committee GPH
Decision date	2024-01-21
Course syllabus valid from	Autumn 2024

## **Specific entry requirements**

A Bachelor's degree or a professional degree of at least 180 credits in Health, Management and Administration or Social or Technical sciences. Applicants must have a good command in English. Applicants must prove a C1 English level Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), IELTS minimum score of 6.0 with at least 5.0 point in each section; TOEFL (paper based) at least 575 points with 4.0 in the writing section; TOEFL (IBT) 79 points with at least 17 points in every section).

## **Objectives**

The aim of the course is to provide competencies to prioritise optimally, plan, implement and monitor health interventions in health crises and disasters based on needs and risks.

On completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- describe the role of the health systems in health crises and in disasters  
\*analyse disrupted health systems,
- relate to disaster response systems, their potentials and weaknesses,
- explain which role Governments, the main international organisations (UN, WHO et al) and non-governmental organisations play in handling health crises and disasters,
- describe and plan for health interventions in different types of disasters,

- explain the principles for, and handling of mass-casualty situations,
- plan for epidemiological surveillance in disaster situations,
- prioritise among different strategies intended to meet vital public health needs in disasters,
- argue for the most important components for prevention and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious diseases

## Content

- Assessment and analysis of vulnerability, severity and needs at disasters
- Assessment of food insecurity and malnutrition at disasters
- Analysis of disrupted health systems
- International systems for disaster response
- Standards and accountability in disasters
- Strategies for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and shelter in disasters
- Logistics and supply chains in disasters
- Planning and implementation of health response in different types of disasters and health crises
  - \*health care at different levels
  - \*minimum standard for sexual reproductive health and rights
  - \*mother- and children's health
  - \*surgery and rehabilitation
  - \*non-communicable diseases and mental health
- Epidemiological surveillance and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious diseases, including mass vaccination strategies
- Principles of and handling of mass-casualty situations
- Strategies to handle food insecurity and malnutrition
- Project planning and project management of health projects (planning, implementation and supervision)
- Mental health and psychosocial support at disasters
- Staff health and moral stress

## Teaching methods

Interactive lectures. Web-based assignments in groups and individual, simulation exercises and discussion seminars. The students will practice and demonstrate ability to collect in and analyse information in disasters and thereafter plan and prioritise necessary health efforts. The project work is carried out in groups with written submissions, presentations and discussions in seminars, where the students give an account of and discuss the project plans.

## Examination

The course is examined in a written examination. The course also includes compulsory parts, where active participation is required.

The compulsory parts include simulation exercises and a group project. For the student to pass the course, it is required that the student has fulfilled established criteria for all compulsory parts.

The student receives a final grade A - F. To pass the course, the student must obtain at least grade E on examination, and have fulfilled the established criteria for all compulsory parts.

### Compulsory participation

The examiner assesses if, and in that case how, absence can be compensated. Before the student has participated in all compulsory parts or compensated absence in accordance with the examiner's instructions, the student's results for respective part will not be registered. Absence from a compulsory activity may result in that the student cannot compensate the absence 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. The number of times that the student has participated in one and the same examination is regarded as an examination session. Submission of blank exam is regarded as an examination session. An examination for which the student registered but not participated 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 is offered in English.

Course evaluation will be carried out according to the guidelines that are established by the Committee for education of basic and second cycle.

## Literature and other teaching aids

### **A Guidance document for medical teams responding to health emergencies in armed conflicts and other insecure environments**

World Health Organization. Geneva, 2021

URL: [Länk](#)

*Beck, Tony*

### **Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria An ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies**

ALNAP, Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance, 2006

*Chan, Emily Ying Yang*

### **Public health humanitarian responses to natural disasters**

Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon : Routledge, 2017 - 259 pages

ISBN:9781138953680 LIBRIS-ID:20113522

[Library search](#)

*Checchi, Gayer, Freeman Grais and Mills*

### **Public health in crisis- affected populations A practical guide for decision-makers**

Humanitarian Practice Network at ODI , HPN, 2007

### **Classification and minimum standards for foreign medical teams in sudden onset disasters**

World Health Organization: Geneva, 2021

URL: [Länk](#)

*Connolly, M. A.*

**Communicable disease control in emergencies : a field manual**

Geneva : World Health Organization, c2005. - vii, 295 p.

ISBN:92-4-154616-6 LIBRIS-ID:10160940

[Library search](#)

*Cuesta, Gil*

**Improving the evidence base of health interventions in humanitarian crises**

University of Antwerp, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, 2020

*Eriksson, Anneli*

**Estimating needs in disasters**

University of Bergen, 2020

**Handbook for emergencies, 4th edition**

UNHCR© United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva,, 2015

**Health in Humanitarian Emergencies : Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners**

*Townes, David*

Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2018 - 1 online resource (504 pages)

ISBN:9781107477261 LIBRIS-ID:nxptc9rxl8xz7jq8

URL: [Table of contents / Abstracts](#)

[Library search](#)

*Howard, Natasha; Sondorp, Egbert; Veen, Annemarie ter*

**Conflict and health**

Maidenhead, Berkshire, England : McGraw Hill/Open University Press, 2012. - xvii, 197 pages

ISBN:9780335243792 (pbk.) LIBRIS-ID:18062121

[Library search](#)

**Humanitarian needs assessment : the good enough guide**

Rugby : Practical Action Publishing, [2014] - xi, 108 pages

ISBN:9781853398636 LIBRIS-ID:18060371

[Library search](#)

**The Sphere handbook, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response**

The Sphere project, 2018

URL: [Länk](#)

**Recommended literature**

**WHO child growth standards and the identification of severe acute malnutrition in infants and children**

WHO/Unicef, Geneva, 2009