

Course evaluation template

Course code 4FH081	Course title Public Health Sciences - Concepts and Theories	Credits 7,5 hp
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Semester Fall 25	Period 20250901-20251005
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Course leader Janne Agerholm	Examiner Janne Agerholm
Other participating teachers	Other participating teachers

Number of registered students 57 i Ladok. 56 fick enkäten.	Number who have not completed the course¹	Number passed after regular session²
Methods for student influence other than course survey³		

¹At the time of completed grading and mandatory assignments/revisions.

² After first summative examination.

³ State: how the students were given the opportunity to participate in the preparation and decisions at course level, how the students were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the course and how this forms the basis of the analysis and proposals below, response frequency (for example, concluding survey 70 % response frequency, post-it notes – improvement suggestions after the second course week 90 % response frequency, course council 85 % attendance).

Conclusions from the previous course evaluation

- We would like to get the lecture by Andrea Dunlavy back next year. We could see the difference in the quality of exam answers regarding inequality in health.
- The new climate change module needs some adjustments to make it more interactive. Also, some parts may not be needed as mandatory lectures.
- Ethic lectures must be on campus and not online next year.
- The migration and health module should include aspects of methodological considerations for doing research on migrant populations or sub-populations.
- Update the lecture on gender, sex and health.
- We need to stress that the students should come to the course leaders in case a group work does not work as intended.
- We need to see over the balance between on-campus lectures and online learning activities.

Description of conducted changes since previous course occasion

Several changes were implemented this year in response to last year's evaluation:

- Lecture on health inequalities (Andrea Dunlavy): We reinstated the lecture on inequality in health, to strengthen students' understanding of theories behind social inequalities in health.
- Climate change module: The climate change module was revised to be more interactive. This year Ester Gubi gave the lecture online, instead of having the pre-recorded lectures.

- Ethics teaching on campus: Ethics sessions were scheduled as on-campus activities rather than online, in order to support engagement, discussion and debate.
- Migration and health module: The migration and health content was updated to include more explicit methodological considerations for research with migrant populations and sub-populations (e.g. sampling, measurement, and ethical issues)..
- Support around group work: We tried to be clearer about that students should contact the course leaders early if group work is not functioning as intended, so we could provide timely support and adjustments.
- Balance between on-campus and online activities: We reviewed and adjusted the mix of on-campus and online learning activities, prioritizing on-campus sessions for interactive and discussion-based components, and using online formats primarily for preparatory and consolidating tasks.

Summary of the students' response to the course valuation

The course was very positively received overall. Across items, around 85–95% of students agreed that the course was good, inclusive and supportive, and that it provided equal learning opportunities. Students particularly appreciated the strong introduction to public health, clear structure, engaging teaching style, and professionalism of the instructors. Interactive elements such as group work, discussions, the global health project, ethics debate, quizzes, and review sessions were repeatedly highlighted as especially valuable for learning, critical thinking, and building connections. Core modules (e.g. global health, social determinants of health, ethics, philosophy of science, health inequities) were seen as insightful and foundational. Many students also felt that their oral and written communication skills improved.

At the same time, several areas for improvement were identified. Students frequently commented on a high pace and heavy workload, with many modules, long lecture days and numerous small assignments, which limited time for reflection and exam preparation; this was the lowest-rated area. Some students asked for fewer or better-prioritised readings, more self-study time, and clearer alignment between lectures, readings and examinations. Others requested clearer structure and earlier access to materials on Canvas, a more intuitive Canvas layout, and improved classroom conditions (e.g. ventilation). While group work was valued, some felt there was too much of it, with uneven participation in groups and a wish for more individual assignments and individualised feedback. A few lectures were experienced as difficult to follow, with suggestions to more clearly link them to public health concepts and adjust the delivery.

The course leader's reflections on the implementation and results of the course

In line with last year's conclusions, we re-emphasised core content on health inequalities and related themes in the following way:

- We brought back the lecture on theories on inequality in health (Given by Andrea Dunlavy). Although the students do not use all the theories she brings up in the course, they get a short introduction to different types of theories they can come back to later when they write their master thesis. Andrea also have an introduction to why theory in Public Health is important.
- In the evaluations, the core modules of the course were frequently mentioned as insightful, foundational, and important for developing critical thinking and preparing for later courses. Students also highlighted that the ethics lecture and ethics debate were particularly engaging. This is very appreciated as we had to make some changes to the ethical module and could not get the regular teachers for this module. Instead, the course leader had to lead all the learning activities in this module.

Several specific content-related changes from last year's action points also appear to have had positive effects:

- Ethics on campus: Ethics sessions were held on campus to support interaction and debate. Students rated ethics and professional reflection very highly (mean 5.6), and specifically praised the ethics lecture as engaging. Although the ethics module in the last week may still be perceived as competing with exam preparation, the high ratings suggest that students find this component meaningful and relevant.
- Climate change module: The climate change component was revised to be in person (although still online). While it was not singled out in the evaluations, the overall impression is that these efforts contributed to a more interactive learning environment.
- Migration and health: We have worked to better align the migration and health module with course learning outcomes and to include more methodological considerations for research with migrant populations. However,

student comments still indicate that this lecture can be difficult to follow and that the links to broader public health concepts could be made clearer. This area remains a priority for further refinement.

- Gender, sex and health: The lecture on gender, sex and health was unfortunately not updated this year, however, the students did not raise significant concerns about this component in this year's evaluation.

The reorganisation of the Canvas page undertaken last year – with fewer pages, a clearer structure, and more explicit introduction to the platform – seems to have had a positive impact, as students generally managed the online components well and appreciated Canvas quizzes and reading materials.

At the same time, this year's evaluations show that:

- Some students still experienced the Canvas layout as confusing and requested clearer organisation and earlier access to materials.
 - However, we have tried different layouts for canvas and we find that the structure we are using now is very much clearer than the alternatives we have had. The course has many different modules on different themes, so it is quite comprehensive. If we have to change, we will need more qualified help to figure out an alternative structure.
- Late uploading of slides was mentioned as a practical problem.
 - This is a problem that is hard to come around. Some teachers email their presentations late.
- Students continue to want more clarity on what is mandatory versus recommended and how readings and assignments align with lectures and examinations.
 - We have decided to work more on the alignment in the course for the course 2026.

We have also continued to use smaller individual assignments and reading tasks as tools for reflection rather than graded components. As in previous years, students expressed a desire for more feedback on both group and individual assignments. Our intention has been to clarify that many of these tasks are formative and not graded; however, the evaluations suggest we need to be even more explicit from the start about the purpose of these assignments and the level of feedback that can realistically be provided within existing resources. Nevertheless, this year we did try to include more general feedback on selected assignments.

Students continue to value group work, discussions, and peer learning very highly. The global health group project, ethics debate, class activities and review sessions were repeatedly mentioned as the most valuable parts of the course. Most students felt respected and included (89.2%, mean 5.5), and that equal learning opportunities were provided (94.6%, mean 5.7), which is encouraging.

Despite our efforts to stress that students should contact the course leaders early if group work is not functioning, some comments indicate frustration with uneven participation and a wish for more individual assignments and more individualised feedback. This suggests that:

- Our message about seeking help when groups do not function has not fully reached all students, and/or
- Additional structural measures (e.g. clearer role descriptions, peer assessment, or more formal check-ins) may be needed to support fair workload distribution.

The strongest and most consistent concern in this year's evaluation is the pace and workload:

- Many students perceived the course as fast-paced, with long lecture days, numerous small assignments, and a heavy reading load.
- Time for reflection was the lowest-rated aspect (56.7%, mean 4.7), and several students felt rushed, particularly in relation to the number of modules and the time available before examinations.

These comments echo last year's reflections around the last week of the course (previously the global health presentations, now the ethics module) being perceived as interfering with exam preparation. Regardless of which content is placed in the final week, students are likely to experience it as demanding.

Course leader's conclusions and suggestions for improvement

This year's evaluation suggest that we need to review the overall number of tasks and readings, and possibly reduce or prioritize them more clearly. Nevertheless, it was very clear in the examinations that those who had participated in the online assignments and readings did much better in the final exam, which suggests that the assignments and reading are helping the students to understand the material and is very well aligned with the exam.

What we could do is to provide a clearer "roadmap" at the beginning of the course, including key concepts, assessment points, and expectations regarding independent study.

In addition, we need to continue working on alignment between required readings, lectures, and examinations, so that students experience a clearer line from learning objectives to teaching activities and assessment.

In summary, the changes implemented since last year have contributed to a better course with strong ratings for overall quality, active learning, equality, and ethics. Key modules and interactive components clearly support student engagement and understanding. At the same time, the evaluation highlights that the course remains intensive, and that workload, time for reflection, and aspects of structure, feedback, and certain lectures (particularly migration and health) require further attention. These will be the main areas of focus in the planning for next year's iteration of the course.

Other comments