Western University
School of Health Studies
Health Sciences HS4044A
International Health Systems Comparisons

Instructor: Kathleen Gamble
Office Hours: TBA
Course Date and Time: Tuesdays 1:30 to 2:30 and Thursdays 12:30 to 2:30
Location: WSC240

Prerequisite Checking
Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Information
All developed countries have health and health care systems that are designed to meet their current and future health objectives. This course will review selected international health systems, including Canada’s, and apply standard outcome measures that will indicate the extent to which they are meeting national health objectives. By surveying a selection of health care systems worldwide, students will explore issues related to financing, reimbursement, delivery systems, and the adoption of new technologies. In this course students will examine questions such as: which systems and which public/private sector mixes are better at achieving efficiency and equity? How do these different systems deal with tough choices, such as decisions about new technologies? Health care is a priority and source of concern worldwide. Every country irrespective of its private, public or mixed health care system faces similar challenges with regard to quality, delivery and cost of services. This course examines both global health issues and health systems from a comparative perspective. As well, using the social science approach of lived experience and voice, we will examine multimedia films that focus on the ways in which people experience their health care systems. This visual engagement will examine the impact of global factors and determinants of health as a method of exploring the effectiveness of the selected countries health system.
Learning Outcomes

Participation in this course will enable students to:

- understand how social, economic, cultural, political and historical influences shape national health systems;

- gain tools to assess the relationships between international health system design and population health outcomes;

- ability to compare and contrast the attributes of various national health systems;

- formulate informed opinions about so called best practice models of health care delivery

- anticipate likely changes to the Canadian health system

Readings

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Lecture Notes

Lecture notes and slides will be posted on OWL prior to the class.

Course Format

Classes will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, online participation, guest speakers, multimedia presentations (i.e. films and documentaries) and small group work. Students are responsible for all assigned readings and films and will be expected to discuss them in class and online. Attendance and participation in class is encouraged and expected.

IMPORTANT: This course will be delivered using a combination of lectures and online instruction. Participation in lectures and online is mandatory! We will be meeting as a group every Thursday starting September 4th and starting September 9th, Tuesdays will become online instructional days with the following schedule:
Sept. 9, 16, 23 Online Participation Assignments

Sept. 30 Online Reading Quiz # 1

Oct. 7 Commentary Paper # 1 Due

Oct. 21, 28, and Nov. 4 Online Participation Assignments

Nov. 11 Commentary Paper # 2 Due

Nov. 18 Online Reading Quiz #2

Nov. 25 “And the Band Played On” Film

Dec. 2 HAND IN FINAL ASSIGNMENT IN CLASS!!

On the Tuesdays that have online participation assignments, you will be given a short assignment to complete that will be used to evaluate your understanding of the course material. There are six online mini assignments and they are worth 5 marks each (for a total of 30 marks). More information about these mini assignments can be found on OWL. In November, we be viewing three films to help contextualize our discussions about health systems and you are expected to have watched these films before coming to class these weeks. The material for your weekly participation assignments can be found on OWL under lessons. Please note, your final assignment is an analysis of the film "And the Band Played On".

**Evaluation**

Participation 30% (6 x 5%)

Film Assignment 30%

Reading Quizzes 20% (2 x 10%)

Written Commentaries 20% (2 x 10%)

**Student Code of Conduct**

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf.

**English Proficiency for the Assignment of Grades**

Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic.

An SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm.

Documentation is required for non-medical absences where the course work missed is more than 10% of the overall grade. Students may contact their Faculty Academic Counselling Office for what documentation is needed. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Academic Counselling Office of the student’s Faculty of registration. For BHSc students, you may go to the School of Health Studies Office in HSB room 222.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:


Support Services

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/
2. Student Health -- http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html
3. Registrar’s Office -- http://www.registrar.uwo.ca
Lecture and Reading Schedule (Please Note Assignment Deadlines)

Week One: Introductions and Intersectional Approaches (Sept. 2)

Readings:
1. “Why the Theory and Practice of Intersectionality Matter to Health Research and Policy” (Dhamoon and Hankivsky)

Week Two: There’s No Place like Home! Understanding Canada’s Healthcare System (Sept. 9)

Readings:
1. “Beyond Borders and Boundaries: Addressing Indigenous Health Inequities in Canada Through Theories of Social Determinants of Health and Intersectionality” (de Leeuw and Greenwood)
2. “Aboriginal Health Systems in Canada: Nine Case Studies” (Lemchuk-Favel and Jock)
3. “Canada: Variations on a Common Theme” (Deber, Gamble and Mah)

FIRST PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE SEPTEMBER 9TH

Week Three: Getting to know our Neighbours: Healthcare systems in the United States and Mexico (Sept. 16)

Readings:
1. “Addressing Inequity in Health and Health Care in Mexico” (Barraza-Llorens, Bertozzi, Gonzalez-Pier, and Gutierrez)
2. “Comprehensive Reform to Improve Health System Performance in Mexico” (Frenk and al.)
4. “Money, Sex and Religion—The Supreme Court’s ACA Sequel”

SECOND PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE SEPTEMBER 16TH
Week Four: A Hop, Skip and Jump across the Pond: The United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Sept. 23)

Readings
1. “Overview of Healthcare in the UK”
2. “Health Systems in Transition: United Kingdom” pgs. 21 to 26 and 71 to 83

THIRD PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE SEPTEMBER 23rd

Week Five: From Russia (and China), with love: Communism and Health care (Sept. 30)

Readings
1. “Privatization and Its Discontents—The Evolving Chinese Health Care System”
2. “Will China’s Nutrition Transition Overwhelm Its Health Care System and Slow Economic Growth?”
3. “Reforming the Russian health-care System”
4. “Health Systems Factors Impacting on the delivery of Mental Health Services in Russia”
5. “The Intersection of Life Expectancy and Gender in a Transitional State: The Case of Russia”
6. “Early Appraisal of China’s Huge and Complex Health-Care Reforms”

READING QUIZ # 1 SEPTEMBER 30th

Week Six: Health Systems in Japan and India (Oct. 7)

Readings:
1. “Health and health-care Systems in Southeast Asia: Diversity and Transitions”
2. “Chronic Diseases and Injuries in India”
3. “What has made the Population of Japan Healthy?”
5. “Health care and Equity in India”

COMMENTARY PAPER # 1 DUE OCTOBER 7TH
Week Seven: Health care systems in Sub-Saharan Africa (Oct. 14)

Readings:
1. “Factors Associated with Patient and Health Care System Delay in Diagnosis and Treatment for TB in Sub-Saharan African Countries with High Burdens of TB and HIV”
2. “Access to Emergency and Surgical Care in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Infrastructure Gap

Week Eight: Natural Disasters (Oct. 21)

Readings
1. “Health Care in New Orleans Before and After Hurricane Katrina”
2. “Developing A Health System Approach to Disaster Management”
4. “Working Through Disaster: Re-establishing Mental Health Care After Hurricane Katrina”
5. “Japan Medical Association’s Disaster Preparedness: Lessons from the Great East Earthquake and Tsunami”

FOURTH PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE OCTOBER 21TH

Week Nine: Health Human Resources (Oct. 28)

Readings
1. “Human Resources for Health: Overcoming the Crisis”
3. “Human Resources and National Health Systems”

FIFTH PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE OCTOBER 28TH

Week Ten: Reading Break
Week Eleven: Health Activism (Nov. 4)

Readings

2. “Intersectional Feminist Frameworks in Practice”
3. “Intersectionality, Justice and Influencing Policy”

SIXTH PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT DUE November 4th

Week Twelve: Film “And the Band Played On” (Nov. 11)

COMMENTARY PAPER # 2 DUE NOVEMBER 11TH

Week Thirteen: “And the Band Played On” (Nov. 18)

READING QUIZ # 2 NOVEMBER 18TH

Week Fourteen: Conclusions (Nov. 25)

Week Fifteen: FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS ON DECEMBER 2ND