

L A K E H E A D U N I V E R S I T Y
D E P A R T M E N T O F P O L I T I C A L S C I E N C E

Political Science 3339 WA (Comparative Health Policy)
Winter Term 2008 - Mondays - 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. - RB 3049

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Course Description and Focus:

During the 20th century, health politics and health policies have made significant impacts on the well-being of citizens all over the world. With a view to introducing students to the politics surrounding global health issues, this lecture and seminar course presents a comparative perspective, examining the development of health policies in advanced industrial and modernizing societies, with emphasis on issues of access, cost and quality of care.

Beginning with the Canadian health care system, the course will explore health trends, determinants of health, policy responses, societal impacts and proposed reforms, using comparative case studies. Special attention will be paid to global trends and the disadvantages associated with Indigenous peoples, age, and gender.

While lectures, required readings and discussions form the core of the course, supplementary information will be given in the form of handouts, videos and presentations. Any materials discussed or presented in class may be covered in the final exam, which will be given in open-book format. The final will give you an opportunity to apply what you have learned about the value of comparative approaches to health policy, the policy development process, and societal and political factors which impact policy outcomes.

Required Readings:

Available through LU Library e-journals or via the Internet (list attached).

Course Evaluation:

Class Presentation	10%
Class Participation	10%
Term Paper Outline (2-3 pages, due Feb. 4th)	10%
Term Paper (12-15 pages, due Apr. 7th)	30%
Final Exam (date to be announced)	40%

COURSE TOPICS and READINGS

All of the required readings, as well as additional information, are available via the Internet, in full-text or pdf formats, free of charge. Journal articles also can be accessed through the [LU Library e-journals](#) or through the [NLM PubMed gateway](#). Other resources, such as fact sheets and summaries from WHO and the OECD, can be accessed using the website addresses provided.

N.B. If you have difficulty accessing any of the material, please contact the instructor immediately.

Week #1 - Jan. 14 - Comparative Policy Analysis - Introduction

- AbouZahr C, Adjei S, Kanchanachitra C. From data to policy: good practices and cautionary tales. [Lancet. 2007 Mar 24;369 \(9566\):1039-46.](#)
- Collins T. Health policy analysis: a simple tool for policy makers. [Public Health. 2005 Mar;119\(3\):192-6.](#)
- Walker N, Bryce J, Black RE. Interpreting health statistics for policymaking: the story behind the headlines. [Lancet. 2007 Mar 17;369\(9565\):956-63.](#)

Wk #2 - Jan. 21 - Policy Development - Canadian Health Care System

- Baxter N. Equal for whom? Addressing disparities in the Canadian medical system must become a national priority. [CMAJ. 2007 Dec 4;177\(12\):1522-3.](#)
- Deber R. Health care reform: lessons from Canada. [Am J Public Health. 2003 Jan;93\(1\):20-4.](#)
- Hutchison B, Abelson J, Lavis J. Primary care in Canada: so much innovation, so little change. [Health Aff \(Millwood\). 2001 May-Jun;20\(3\):116-31.](#)

Wk#3 - Jan. 28 - Policy Approaches - Political Economy and Health

- Dollar D. Is globalization good for your health? [Bull World Health Organ. 2001;79\(9\):827-33.](#)
- Huynen MM, Martens P, Hilderink HB. The health impacts of globalization: a conceptual framework. [Global Health. 2005 Aug 3;1:14.](#)
- Starfield B. and Shi, L. Policy relevant determinants of health: an international perspective. [Health Policy. 2002 Jun;60\(3\):201-18.](#)

Wk#4 - Feb. 4 - Global Health Trends - Understanding Regional Issues

- Marmot M. Achieving health equity: from root causes to fair outcomes: Commission on Social Determinants of Health. [Lancet. 2007 Sep 29;370\(9593\):1153-63.](#)

Reidpath, D. & Allotey, P. Measuring global health inequality. [*Int J Equity in Health*. 2007 Oct. 30; 6;16.](#)

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). *Health Data: Frequently Requested Indicators*. 2007. Available at: http://www.oecd.org/document/16/0,2340,en_2649_37407_2085200_1_1_1_37407,00.htm

World Health Organization. (2007). Global Statistics. Available at: http://ww.who.int/whosis/whostat2007_10highlights.pdf.

Wk# 5 - Feb. 11 - Health and Inequality - Why Policies Matter

Leon DA, Walt G, Gilson L. Recent advances: International perspectives on health inequalities and policy. [*BMJ*. 2001 Mar 10;322\(7286\):591-4.](#)

Ridde V, Guichard A, Houéto D. Social inequalities in health from Ottawa to Vancouver: action for fair equality of opportunity. [*Promot Educ*. 2007;Suppl 2:12-6, 44-7.](#)

Woodward A, Kawachi I. Why reduce health inequalities? [*J Epidemiol Community Health*. 2000 Dec;54\(12\):923-9.](#)

Wk #6 - Feb. 18 - No classes- Study and Reading Week - Spring Break!

Wk#7 - Feb. 25 - Global Health - Millenium Development Goals

Smith RD, Mackellar L. Global public goods and the global health agenda: problems, priorities and potential. [*Global Health*. 2007 Sep 22;3:9.](#)

World Health Organization. (2007). *The Millenium Development Goals 2015* Available at: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> Also see MDG *Interactive Monitor (Interactive)* Available at <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/>.

Wk#8 - Mar. 3 - Case Studies - Indigenous Peoples' Health

Kunitz SJ. Globalization, states, and the health of indigenous peoples. [*Am J Public Health*. 2000 Oct;90\(10\):1531-9.](#)

Marrone S. Understanding barriers to health care: a review of disparities in health care services among indigenous populations. [*Int J Circumpolar Health*. 2007 Jun;66\(3\):188-98.](#)

Stephens C, Porter J, Nettleton C, Willis R. Disappearing, displaced, and undervalued: a call to action for Indigenous health worldwide. [*Lancet*. 2006 Jun 17;367\(9527\):2019-28.](#)

Wk#9 - Mar. 10 - Case Studies - Age and Health - Children's Health

Brown H. Who cares for baby? [*BMJ*. 2007 Oct 20;335\(7624\):798-800.](#)

Gracey M. Child health in an urbanizing world. [Acta Paediatr. 2002;91\(1\):1-8.](#)
 Shea KM. Global climate change and children's health. [Pediatrics. 2007 Nov;120\(5\):e1359-67.](#)

Wk#10 - Mar. 17 - Case Studies - Gender and Health - Poverty and Behaviour

Baerlocher MO. Differences in healthy life expectancy among men and women. [CMAJ. 2007 Nov 6;177\(10\):1174.](#)
 Sicchia SR, Maclean H. Globalization, poverty and women's health: mapping the connections. [Can J Public Health. 2006 Jan-Feb;97\(1\):69-71.](#)
 Keeton C. Changing men's behaviour can improve women's health. [Bull World Health Organ. 2007 Jul;85\(7\):505-6.](#)

Wk #11 - Mar. 24 - No Class - Easter Holiday

Wk#12 - Mar. 31 - Need for Global Health Policies - Health Surveillance

Calain. Exploring the international arena of global public health surveillance. [Health Policy Plan. 2007 Jan;22\(1\):2-12.](#)
 Leeder S. The scope, mission and method of contemporary public health. [Aust N Z J Public Health. 2007 Dec;31\(6\):505-8.](#)
 Martens P, Huynen M. A future without health? Health dimension in global scenario studies. [Bull World Health Organ. 2003;81\(12\):896-901.](#)
 McFee RB. Global infections--avian influenza and other significant emerging pathogens: an overview. [Dis Mon. 2007 Jul;53\(7\):343-7](#)

Wk #13 - Apr. 7 - Review

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

To get the most from the course, students are expected to attend all classes, do your readings and presentations and participate in class discussions. Participation will be graded by the quality of the contribution made. As a class participant, you should respond to other students' comments in a thoughtful and constructive manner, provide additional information and examples, and share your own questions about the issues being discussed.

STUDENT PRESENTATION

Both the class presentation and term paper are designed to give students the opportunity for in-depth exploration of a health policy issue which is of interest to them. To make best use of your time and research efforts, you can choose related topics for the presentation and the term paper.

N.B. Sign-up sheet for the presentation will be circulated during the 2nd week of classes. Presentations are linked to lectures and readings, so the scheduling cannot be changed. Any change in topic must be confirmed by the instructor.

1. Chose one health issue from the list (attached), and prepare a brief presentation (15-20 minutes) on the topic.
2. Your presentation should briefly describe the health issue, summarize the evidence about the serious effects of the problem, using statistics describing the population, societal groups, and nations that are most affected.
3. Compare and contrast examples of practical policies that Canada and another country (your choice) have developed to address the health issue.
4. The presentation should briefly describe policy goals, the governmental and non-governmental groups supporting or opposing the policy agenda, the problems in developing appropriate policies, policy goals and evidence, if any, that the policy works.
5. The approach which you choose to present the topic is up to you. You should pick an approach which highlights the health issue's interest to the class and the key questions that your policy analysis raises. You can support your presentation with Powerpoint (projector will be available), charts or handouts (your choice).
6. Formulate least two questions for class designed to stimulate discussion of the challenges that Canada and other countries will face in developing new policies to address this issue (5-10 minutes).
7. Your presentation will be graded on content (material covered), clarity (preciseness of your presentation) and conciseness (ability to cover the material effectively in the time allocated). Your presentation grade will come through peer evaluation, from your classmates in attendance, who will fill out a standard evaluation form.

Presentation Topics

Wk#4 - Feb. 4 - Global Health Trends

- Infectious diseases (malaria, tuberculosis, polio, HIV/AIDS)
- Chronic Diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer)
- Life Expectancy (Developing nations, industrialized nations)

Wk#5 - Feb. 11 - Health Inequalities - Why Policies Matter

- Screening programs (cancer, heart disease, diabetes, HIV)
- Quality assurance (new drugs, medical devices, food, water)
- Access to care (universal health care, health insurance, private care)

Wk#7 - Feb. 25 - Global Health - Millennial Development Goals

- Poverty and hunger (malnutrition, food aid, food security)
- Education and health (education, literacy, UNESCO)
- Environmental health (sustainability, disaster preparedness)

Wk#8 - Mar. 3 - Indigenous Peoples' Health

- Disease Patterns (tuberculosis, diabetes, water-borne illness)
- Mental health (suicide, substance abuse, depression, trauma, grief)
- Cultural policies (cultural competency, cultural safety)

Wk#9 - Mar. 10 - Children's Health

- Child hunger (malnutrition, food aid, disaster relief)
- Child mortality (pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles, HIV)
- Maternal mortality (malnutrition, reproductive health)

Wk #10 - Mar. 17 - Gender and Health

- Male and female life expectancy (preventable conditions)
- Marital status and health (morbidity and mortality)
- Gender and substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, tobacco)

Wk#12 - Mar. 31 - Need for Global Health Policies

- Political instability and health (wars, terrorism, aid)
- Environmental degradation and health (global warming)
- Technological neglect (access to drugs, preventive measures)
- Development and health (World Bank, public-private partnerships)

TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

Identify a current global health care issue and related policy which is of interest to you, choosing one of the topics (list attached), and complete the following tasks:

1. Prepare 2-3 page outline of your term paper to be handed into the instructor by February 4th. This should include a description of the topic you have chosen, an outline of why you think the issue is important, a list of some of the references you have located that describe the problem and its policy solutions. The outline, which is worth 10% of your mark for the course, is designed to make sure that you are “ on the right track” with your paper.
2. Once the outline has been approved by the instructor, prepare a research paper on your chosen topic, to be handed in no later than April 7th. It should conform to the following standards: 2.5 cm margins and 12 point font, 12-15 pages (double spaced - 2,500 - 3,000 words) in length, not including, not including appendices or references. Footnotes, endnotes and reference list must be complete and in consistent format (e.g. APA, Chicago, Vancouver style).
3. Looking at the health issue and policy options developed in Canada and another nation, your paper should include the following information (questions are provided as a general guide):
 - a. Description of the health care policy and why it has been developed (what is the nature of the policy? what health care problem is it designed to address? what health issues does the policy focus on? type of disease/ disorder? numbers of people affected by problem? Canadian and global scope of the problem?)
 - b. Case study of a specific health care issue comparing a policy developed in Canada with that developed in another country (how are the policies designed to correct inequities in care? what solutions do they support? which political parties or nongovernmental groups support the policy agendas? what are the goals and costs?)
 - c. Comparing the policy approaches used in Canada and the other country, summarize the policy lessons learned (how successful have the policies been? what has worked or not worked? why or why not? have politicians and nongovernmental organizations achieved their policy goals? what remains to be done? will this policy stay the same, in the next five years, or change in some way? why or why not?)

Topics for Term Papers

Choose only one example from those listed. In order to keep your paper manageable, it is suggested that you try to narrow down your topic even further - look just at one aspect of a policy, or one population group that is affected by it. Remember, however, to keep a global and comparative focus.

1. Is nationalized health insurance the most effective way to deliver health care to citizens?
2. What policies can be put in place to remedy the “medical brain drain” of migrating physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other health professional?
3. What are the most effective policies for reducing the incidence of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, or heart disease?
4. What are the most effective types of policies for preventing the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS or HPV?
5. Which policies are being developed to prevent the spread of pandemic illnesses, such as tuberculosis, influenza?
6. Are clean water, air and pollution control policies an effective means of reducing environmentally induced illness?
7. Are health promotion and prevention policies effective in reducing illnesses associated with alcohol, tobacco other types of substance abuse?
8. What types of policies are most effective in reducing maternal and child mortality?
9. What types of policies are effective in promoting healthy lifestyles among age groups with special needs (such as children, teens, young adults)?
10. What types of policies are effective in promoting better access to health care for ethnic or racial minority populations (such as Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, refugees)?