GE Rationale for Diversity: Global Studies

**SOCIOL 5450 Sociology of Global Health and Illness**

This document specifies how each of the expected learning outcomes identified in the course syllabus will be met across different dimensions of the course. Each outcome is addressed separately.

**Diversity: Global Studies**

**The first expected learning outcome for this course is: “Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.” This outcome will be met through:**

**The course objectives**. The course objectives are to: (1) Become familiar with the social systems and institutional structures that shape global health problems, proposed solutions, and potential consequences in an international context. (2) Identify the health challenges facing the world today; the methods used to measure health and illness; and the local, national, and international institutions working to improve health. (3) Understand how health problems come to be defined as issues of “global health” and how historical and contemporary processes of stratification contribute to these definitions. Because these course objectives situate students’ understanding of health in the political, economic, cultural, and social context of multiple non-U.S. countries examined, it directly addresses the first learning outcome.

**The readings.** This is an intensive reading course and students will be reading between 50-60 pages per week. The readings are made up of a mix of chapters from edited books, case studies research reports and briefs from different policy institutes, and academic articles. Approximately 85% of the readings focus specifically on health of people outside of the United States and draw attention to the cultural, structural, social, economic and political factors that shape global health and health care.

**The topics.** The topics are organized in three general categories: (1) case studies, theoretical models, and empirical evidence on a range of international and global public health concerns that are strongly shaped by culture, politics, economics, and social context: genital cutting, guinea worm disease, ebola, and morbidity and mortality resulting from the Indian Ocean tsunami, (2) A consideration of the role of poverty, international development, NGO’s, pharmaceutical companies, and foundations in shaping global health and responding to global health crises, with particular attention to health in developing nations and (3) in-depth consideration of emerging challenges to global health including obesity, climate change, and new and re-emerging infectious diseases. All topics explicitly consider how political, cultural, and social aspects of a range of non-U.S. countries (as well as their stratification within the global economic hierarchy) shape health care and health outcomes with particular focus on developing countries.

**The written assignment and video assignment.** In-class writing assignments are assigned throughout the semester that focus directly on the topic covered for the day. Approximately half of the writing assignments require students to analyze the material presented in lecture and the reading assigned for the class to identify the most important social, cultural, political and economic factors that shape a particular aspect of global health or more general health in a particular non-U.S. context.

The final video assignment requires students to create a short video create a short video presenting an important public health problem relevant to global health, with particular focus on non-U.S. countries. Students are asked to highlight some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of an important public health problem in a non-U.S. context, thereby directly addressing the first ELO.

**The second expected learning outcomes for this course is, “Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.” This outcome will be met in through:**

**The course objectives.** Global Health is a particularly relevant topic through which to accomplish the second learning outcome. Students have personal familiarity with the health and health care in a U.S. context and this serves as a stark contrast to the health conditions and challenges in less developed nations on which the course heavily focuses. Via the course objectives (which are to understand the social systems and institutional structures that shape global health problems and potential consequences as well as understand the role of historical and contemporary stratification in contributing to some of the most challenging global health problems), students will be able to recognize the role of cultural and social diversity in shaping life outcomes as fundamental as health, mortality and well-being. In doing so, students will come to recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

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**The topics.** The topics are organized in three general categories: (1) case studies, theoretical models, and empirical evidence on a range of international and global public health concerns that are strongly shaped by culture, politics, economics, and social context: genital cutting, guinea worm disease, ebola, and morbidity and mortality resulting from the Indian Ocean tsunami, (2) A consideration of the role of poverty, international development, NGO’s, pharmaceutical companies, and foundations in shaping global health and responding to global health crises, with particular attention to health in developing nations and (3) in-depth consideration of emerging challenges to global health including obesity, climate change, and new and re-emerging infectious diseases. By critically analyzing the role of structural and cultural diversity in shaping both exposure and vulnerability to a range of global health problems and influencing how more developed nations respond to these crises, students will understand how national and international diversity shape their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

**The written assignments.** In-class writing assignments are assigned throughout the semester that focus directly on the topic covered for the day. Many of the writing assignments require students to critically analyze the influence of cultural values and diversity in shaping exposure to international public health problems and in influencing how the global community responds to those crises.

The final video assignment requires students to create a short video presenting an important public health problem relevant to global health, with particular focus on non-U.S. countries. Students are required to consider the role of national and international diversity in shaping how both the U.S., the country affected, and the global community has responded to this public health problem, thereby drawing attention to the “role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.”

**GE Assessment Plan**

**Assessment Plan for Expected Learning Outcome #1: “Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.”**

Direct Method: This learning outcome will be assessed via the final video assignment described above.

Level of Student Achievement Expected: 75% of students achieve the ELO at a “Milestone (2) standard on a scoring rubric for the assignment (equivalent to a grade of C).

Process used to review the data and potentially change the course to improve student learning: For all students who do not meet the ELO at the expected level, the instructor will review the attendance, participation, and initiative of each student in seeking help in office hours and evaluate whether student motivation and initiative was a likely factor in the student not meeting the objectives. If the number of students who do not meet the ELOs is small and largely composed of students with poor attendance and/or participation, no action will be taken. If the number of students who do not meet the ELOS is large and/or largely composed of students with strong participation and attendance, the instructor will review course content, readings, and instruction to determine if alternative pedagogical methods may be warranted to improve student learning.

**Assessment Plan for Expected Learning Outcome #2: “Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.**.”

Direct Method: This learning outcome will be assessed via the final video assignment described above.

Level of Student Achievement Expected: 75% of students achieve the ELO at a “Meets Expectations” standard on a scoring rubric for the assignment (equivalent to a grade of C).

Process used to review the data and potentially change the course to improve student learning: For all students who do not meet the ELO at the expected level, the instructor will review the attendance, participation, and initiative of each student in seeking help in office hours and evaluate whether student motivation and initiative was a likely factor in the student not meeting the objectives. If the number of students who do not meet the ELOs is small and largely composed of students with poor attendance and/or participation, no action will be taken. If the number of students who do not meet the ELOS is large and/or largely composed of students with strong participation and attendance, the instructor will review course content, readings, and instruction to determine if alternative pedagogical methods may be warranted to improve student learning.