Global Health, Why We Should Care

Course Description:

From the Declaration of Alma-Ata to the Millennium Development Goals, there have been 30 years of good will but limited accomplishment in bringing health to all. Health is an essential human right, but much of the world’s poor still do not have access to the most basic public health services. This deficiency is best illustrated in Africa where there is the double burden of poverty and communicable disease. The failure to provide equitable health and the emergence of new infectious diseases with pandemic potential also threaten world security. “Global Health: Why We Should Care” will explore what is meant by global health, how health is measured, and what are the major diseases that particularly affect the poor. It will take a biomedical approach focusing on communicable diseases, e.g., human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, malaria and tuberculosis, but will also look at maternal and child health, the provision of humanitarian aid, and careers in global health. After defining the problems, we will explore strategies in the control of disease and achieving global health.

A variety of formats will be used to study global health issues including the current medical literature, popular writings, and film documentaries. We will look at the science of global health and the story of those most affected by health inequalities. Students are expected to read assigned material outside of class so that they will be prepared to discuss the topics. Short presentations on a focused area will also be expected.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on contributions to class discussions, informal presentations, and a 10-page paper that can analyze a global health issue, be a document defining a public health intervention, or a short story describing the impact of a disease or condition on a person, family, or community.

Contact Hours: 24

1. Theme: Overview of Global Health
   Topics:
   - Overview of Global Health
   - Indicators of health
   - Discussion of student goals for the course
   Reading:
   Resources:

2. Theme: Health determinants; Smallpox: a success story in disease control
   Topics:
   - Social determinants of health
   - Smallpox eradication, a model of disease control
   Readings:
   Resources:
3. Theme: Maternal health
Topics:
- Maternal health: a continuum
- Maternal mortality
Readings:
- Walt V, Death in birth. Time. 15 September 2008:40–44.

4. Theme: Child and neonatal health
Topics:
- Child health: a continuum
- Child mortality
- Childhood nutrition and indicators of health
- An exercise in the integrated management of childhood illness
Readings:
Video:
Resources:

5. Theme: Vaccine-preventable disease
Topics:
- Vaccines and the control of communicable disease
- Examples of global vaccine programs: measles, polio
- Ethical considerations in vaccination programs; issues of personal liberties vs. public good.
Readings:
- Dugger CW, McNeil DG. Rumor, fear and fatigue hinder final push to end polio. NY Times. 20 March 2006.
Video:
Resources:

6. Theme: HIV/AIDS
Topics:
- Overview, epidemiology, clinical features, treatment and prevention
- Stories of persons with HIV
Readings:
- Selected chapters from:
Resources:
7. Theme: Tuberculosis
   Topics:
   - Epidemiology, major clinical syndromes, treatment and prevention
   - Control programs in low income settings
   Readings:
   Video:
   Resources:

8. Theme: Malaria
   Topics:
   - Overview of epidemiology, diagnosis, and treatment
   - Current principles of malaria control; comparison with malaria eradication efforts in the 1950s and 1960s
   Readings:
   Resources:

9. Theme: Emerging infections and pandemic threats
   Topics:
   - Emerging infectious diseases and International Health Regulations (2005)
   - Pandemic threats: Comparison of SARS and pandemic influenza (H1N1)
   Readings:
   Resources:

10. Theme: Humanitarian aid
    Topics:
    - Principles of humanitarian aid
    - The Haitian earthquake
    Readings:
11. Theme: Global health leaders and careers
Topics:
- Discussion of *Strength in What Remains*
- Exploration of career pathways in global health using examples of current global health leaders and workers from multiple disciplines

Readings:
- Selections from:
  - Bono. This generation’s moon shot. Time, November 7, 2005, p. 98.
  - Boseley S. Drug giant GlaxoSmithKline pledges cheap medicine for world’s poor. Available at: guardian.co.uk. February 13, 2009.

Resources:

12. Theme: Global Health: conclusions and presentations
Topics:
- Student presentations
- Discussion and conclusions

Readings:
### Supplemental Table 2

Colleges Surveyed for Global and/or Public Health Offerings, 2009–2010 Academic Year

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