Community and Global Health

Professor and Director: Alison A. Geist, M.P.H.

The Community and Global Health (CGHL) interdisciplinary concentration enables students to explore the determinants and consequences of individual and community health, critically examine relevant global, national, and local policies and programs, and learn theories and methodologies important to the study of public health and the modern plagues. The concentration requires students to complete an experiential component, such as approved community-based courses and/or projects, internships, study abroad opportunities, or research, through which they gain and apply practical skills. Students use social determinants of health and social justice frameworks to analyze the structures and systems that shape health, disease, and disability, and the disparities and inequities that characterize their disproportionate distribution between and among people, communities, and nations. Emphasizing our collective and individual responsibility to advance health equity, the concentration prepares students, as educated and engaged members of their communities, to identify, investigate, and articulate the broad spectrum of contemporary global health issues, and to exercise intellectual and practical skills in response. The concentration also prepares students interested in careers in public health or human, dental, or veterinary medicine and the allied health professions for graduate and professional school.

The CGHL Concentration

Required core:

- CGHL 210 Contemporary Issues in Public Health: An Introduction
- CGHL 220 Epidemiology
- Four additional electives, at least one chosen from each of the following three categories below.

Please note that while we make every attempt to compile a list that is comprehensive and accurate, not every course is offered every year, and new courses may be added from time to time without enough notice to be included here. Students should check with the Registrar, individual departments, and their advisor as they plan to complete the concentration.

Natural sciences and quantitative reasoning

ANSO 212 Quantitative Analysis
BIOL 322 General and Medical Microbiology
BIOL 360 Immunology and Human Health
MATH 105 Quantitative Reasoning & Statistical Analysis
MATH 260 or 261 Applied Statistics or Biostatistics (preferred)
MATH 360 Applied Statistics II
SEMN 207 Global Health and Social Justice

Social and cultural determinants of health

ANSO 210 Medicine and Society
ANSO 225 Sex and Sexualities
ANSO 232 Nature and Society: Introduction to Political Ecology
ANSO 236 Race and Racism
ANSO 245 Qualitative Methods
ANSO/SEMN 255 You Are What You Eat
ANSO 310 Social Research for Social Change
ANSO 322 Prisoners and Detainees
ANSO 325 States, Bodies, and Epidemics
ANSO 350 Political History of Western Environmental Thought
*These courses are more broadly about environmental health, and about nature as an historical, intellectual and social construct. Students wishing to make them more relevant to community and global health may speak with the professor to craft paper topics that explore these issues within the course's theoretical frameworks.

Public policy

ECON 225 Economics of Development and Growth
ECON 235 Environmental and Resource Economics
ECON 265 Issues in Urban Economics
ECON 290 Health Economics
POLS/WGS 265 Feminist Political Theories (cannot count towards both social/cultural determinants & public policy elective)
POLS 270 The European Union: Institutions, Actors, Aliens, and Outcomes
POLS 310 Women, States, and NGO’s
POLS 330 Politics of the Holocaust
POLS 380 Drugs, Democracy, and Human Rights

Courses at Kalamazoo College study abroad sites may also serve as electives, with permission from a CGHL co-Director.

Experiential requirement

CGHL requires students to incorporate at least one immersive public health experience into their concentration. When CGHL 210 is offered as a service-learning seminar, it fulfills this requirement. Otherwise, students must seek community-based learning experiences, approved in advance by the director/s that will count towards this requirement. Examples that may be approved include health-related service-learning courses, ICRPs abroad, SIPS, internships and community-based research with an explicit public health focus, employment within a public health field; and/or certain Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) programs at K. Clinical experiences –e.g. working in a doctor's office or hospital -- may or may not count, depending on context. The CCE has built many health-related community partnerships in Kalamazoo, and offers a limited number of paid, six-week summer Community Building Internships with local organizations, many of them in health fields.

To fulfill this requirement, students are required to write a 3 – 5 page reflection/essay that combines their experience and a scholarly literature review to explicitly demonstrate connections to and learning about community and global health, in particular the social determinants of health.

Community and Global Health courses

CGHL 210 Contemporary Issues in Public Health
This discussion-based introductory survey explores contemporary issues, theories, and methods in public health. We use the social determinants of health framework to examine critically how race, gender, age, environment, class, and access to culturally appropriate health services have historically and dynamically shaped the health of communities and persons, as well as their influence on the "the modern plagues." Student work emphasizes and will further develop skills in collaboration, critical thinking and reasoning, cultural humility, the application of theory to practice, and written and oral communication in diverse media.

CGHL 220 Epidemiology
This course provides students with the fundamental concepts, skills and perspectives of epidemiology and epidemiological thought and introduces some of the major issues and challenges in global and community health today. Students will learn and apply epidemiological methods.

CGHL 295 Maternal, Child & Teen Health
In this course, we will use the frameworks of health equity and racial justice, social determinants of health, and life course theory to explore selected topics in maternal, child and adolescent health. Our course will largely focus on the United States, but will include some content with a global health emphasis. Students will read scientific literature, news articles, white papers and other content to explore health topics, and will complete individual and group assignments to deepen their knowledge around specific topics and improve their communication skills.

Prerequisite: Must have taken CGHL-210 or CGHL-220.

CGHL 295/ECON 290 Health Economics
This health economics course is designed to introduce students to economic tools used in analyzing health care outcomes and challenges. Topics of this course will include basic economic concepts important for the study in health economics, aspects of the US health care market, why health is different from other goods, health externalities, health insurance, information asymmetries, healthcare reform, and disparities in access to health care. Students should be able to think critically about health-related policy issues by the end of the class. This course can count for the Economics Major. Prerequisite: ECON-101

Prerequisite: Must have taken ECON-101.

CGHL/Biol 495 Topics in Biology: SARS-CoV-2 & COVID19
2020 has been defined by a global pandemic caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. This course examines the biology, origin, and spread of SARS-CoV-2 and epidemiology and public health responses to COVID19. In this course, students will use both peer-reviewed scientific publications and more general literature (e.g. news articles, non-profit publications, statistical websites) to better understand the biology of SARS-CoV-2 and its effects on individuals and populations. Students will be responsible for demonstrating their learning with an exam, oral presentations to the class, and a multi- week, multi-part, written assignment.

Prerequisite: BIOL-224 and BIOL-246. All course prerequisites must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

CGHL 593 Senior Integrated Project
A small number of students may do SIPs in the concentration each year, but are encouraged to work with faculty advisors in their major.

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