COURSE SUMMARY

This course surveys contemporary issues and debates in global health governance, law, and politics from an interdisciplinary perspective. Theory will converge with practice as students examine the historical development of global health, relevant actors and institutions (e.g. WTO, WHO, UNEP), regulatory framework (e.g., human rights and ethics, trade law, environmental agreements), principal coordinating mechanisms, and emerging challenges to its effective governance. Canada’s global health statecraft will also be explored. Throughout the course, students will draw on evidence to develop informed insights on the actions that global health leaders can take to address the increasing disorder of the sphere in which they operate. Readings will be drawn from many different disciplines and fields, including economics, ethics, history, international affairs, environmentalism, law, medicine, political science, philosophy and public health. An emphasis on professional development and alternative careers in global health will be interwoven throughout much of the course.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

• Appreciate the complexity of the global health system and its historical development
• Understand the various coordination mechanisms used to govern the global health sphere
• Consider the regulatory framework within which individual governance mechanisms operate
• Identify the catalysts and consequences of change for global health institutions
• Discuss the latest current events, trends and debates in global health governance
• Thoughtfully evaluate existing and proposed models for governing global health efforts
• Comfortably navigate the academic and grey literature related to global health
• Critically reflect upon the influence and importance of various global health institutions and the role of legal, ethical and political frameworks for governing their efforts

SEMINAR FORMAT

This course will be run like a graduate seminar, with emphasis on readings, thoughtful discussion and critical analysis. Students will be expected to prepare for class by completing the
assigned readings and informally crafting their own personal opinions about them. Each seminar discussion will include presentations by students presenting critical analyses of the week’s readings. All seminar participants will then be invited to comment on the presentations, share their thoughts on the assigned readings, and help lead a lively discussion.

SEMINAR TOPICS & SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Facilitator(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Friday January 5th</td>
<td>Introduction to HTH SCI 4LD3 and Global Health Governance, Rights, Obligations, and Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Friday January 12th</td>
<td>Environmental Advocacy and Environmental Agreements</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Friday January 19th</td>
<td>Global Health Actors, Politics and Decision-Making</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Friday January 26th</td>
<td>Historical Development of the Global Health System</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Friday February 2nd</td>
<td>Diplomacy and International Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Friday February 9th</td>
<td>Canada’s Global Health Statecraft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Friday February 16th</td>
<td>Mid-Term Presentations</td>
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<td>Friday February 23rd</td>
<td>Mid-Term Recess</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Friday March 2nd</td>
<td>Global Health Ethics</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Friday March 9th</td>
<td>Global Health Funding Flows</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Friday March 16th</td>
<td>Global Health Innovation</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Friday March 23rd</td>
<td>Global Health Career Development Session</td>
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<td>Friday March 30th</td>
<td>Good Friday – No Classes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Friday April 6th</td>
<td>Final Presentations and Reflections</td>
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Class times and locations may be subject to change depending on factors such as guest lecturer availability. Student conflicts will be taken into consideration as long as advance notice is provided to the instructor(s) and the TA.

TUTORIAL FORMAT

Most tutorials will be run as “workshops” where students will have the chance to work with their group members on their policy briefs (see assignments & evaluation section below). These workshops are an opportunity for students to solicit instant feedback from the TA on early versions of their work. Some tutorials may involve activities such as writing or communications sessions run by guest lecturers. Tutorial time can also be used for activities that cannot be fit into the core lecture time slots (e.g., guest lectures, seminar activities, student presentations, PBL exercises, professional development sessions) for particular weeks. Tutorials will commence on Monday January 8, 2018.

MATERIALS NEEDED

All required readings for the course will be made available to students via Slack.

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

Policy/Issue Brief – Written Product (35%) [Marked by instructors and TA]
Students will work in groups of 2-3 to craft a policy brief on an issue related to global health governance. The brief will be crafted with a target audience of specific key decision-makers, and will be tailored accordingly. A good issue brief will start with a challenge rather than with the research evidence that has been produced on a very specific feature of the challenge or an option for addressing it. Once the challenge and its many features are understood, the focus then turns to mobilizing the full range of research evidence for addressing the problem. This includes a full examination of possible options available to decision-makers and key implementation considerations. A more detailed structure for the assignment can be found in Appendix 1.

Research briefs will be 3000-3500 words in length (including abstract and key messages, but excluding references and appendices), with a preference for concise writing that achieves a word count in the lower part of the range. Students will also prepare:

- 3-5 key messages for decision-makers (one sentence maximum for each).
- Provenance statement outlining the individual contributions of each team member (in appendix).
- Structured abstract of no more than 200 words with sub-headings (i.e., challenge, options, implementation considerations), which is perhaps the most important part of the paper
- Paragraph summarizing the research methodology followed (include in appendix).

The policy brief must be informed by extensive research that is cited appropriately. The Vancouver citation style adopted by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors will be used for referencing source material, except that in-text reference numbers should be superscript, without brackets, and placed immediately following punctuation. Each group must meet with the TA at least once before the course’s half-way point to discuss progress on their papers. Draft papers are due Monday March 5, 2018 and final papers due Friday March 30, 2018. The paper should be submitted to the course instructor(s) via Slack.

Group peer review feedback on a different group’s draft policy brief (participation grade)

Each group of students will be collectively responsible for providing formal anonymous written feedback to another group on their draft paper. The TA will discretely assign papers for review to groups and act as an intermediary between writers and reviewers. Peer review feedback on a different group’s draft paper is due on Monday March 19, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.

Group response to peer review feedback received from a different group (participation grade)

Upon receipt of peer review feedback, each group will make changes to their paper and submit a formal reply to the course instructor that addresses the peer review feedback. A good reply will divide the reviewers’ feedback into discrete actionable comments and explain whether, how and why (or why not) each comment was incorporated into the final paper. It is particularly important to justify any decisions by the group to not incorporate the peer reviewers’ feedback.

- The goal of the reply is to convince the course instructor that the group’s approach is correct in that all constructive feedback was either incorporated into the paper or otherwise considered. As such, the reply should be extremely diplomatic and courteous, respecting the time and care taken by those reviewers who offered the feedback.
- Responses to peer review feedback are due on Friday April 6, 2018 at 11:59 p.m.
Policy Brief – Mid-Term Presentation (7.5%) [Marked by instructors and TA]

Each group will deliver a 20 minute presentation on their policy brief progress to date on **Friday February 16, 2018** to the class. Groups will receive feedback from the instructors, TA and their peers at this point in time.

Policy Brief – Final Presentation (7.5%) [Marked by instructors and TA]

Each group will deliver a 20 minute presentation on their policy brief on **Friday April 6, 2018** to the class.

Contemporary Issues for Class Discussion (12.5%) [Marked by TA]

Students will work individually to write an analysis based on a contemporary issue in global health (maximum 1 page, single-spaced), to be submitted to the TA by Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. prior to the week’s seminar. Students must also submit a reading addressing the issue chosen and post it in the assignments folder along with the 1 page report by the Tuesday deadline. The assignment will include a summary of the issue, a description of its context in the global health system and literature, and a description of its relevance to this class in particular. Topics will either be provided by the instructor/TA or chosen by the student. Sign-up dates will be on a first-come-first-serve basis via Slack. Each student is also responsible for presenting the contemporary issue in class and must incorporate at least one audio-visual component. Each presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes. Note that the focus of this assignment is on the presentation – the analysis is to be used as a summary by the class.

Reading Critical Analysis (12.5%) [Marked by TA]

Each student will work individually to write a thoughtful critical analysis of a week’s readings in 750 words max, to be posted on Slack by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. prior to the week they are signed up for. The critique should question the author’s assumptions, arguments and conclusions; students should not allocate any of the limited 750 words to summary. Students are responsible for presenting their analysis in class, incorporating at least one audio-visual component. Each presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes. Sign-up for presentations will take place at the beginning of term via Slack.

Career development paper (5%) [Marked by TA]

Each student will work individually to craft a paper in 750 words max that outlines three potential career tracks (explicit connection to global health is optional) focusing on 3, 5 and 10-year goals and a role model for each track. This paper should detail the skills required for each career path and potential avenues to gain these skills (e.g., further education or specific types of job opportunities). Papers will be evaluated not on the style or quality of writing, but rather on the thought and reflection put into crafting potential career paths. Career development papers are due **Sunday February 25, 2018**.

Classroom and Online Participation (20%) [Marked by instructors and TA with guest lecturer input]

Participation will be evaluated based on general participation and asking thoughtful questions of guest presenters. This course has been designed to maximize interaction, engagement and
peer-to-peer learning such that seminar participation is a basic requirement. Students are particularly expected to engage with guest lecturers by asking them thoughtful questions that demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Slack discussion participation will be considered, though in-class participation will be prioritized.

**Additional Information**

Grades may be adjusted by 5% at the discretion of the instructor(s) but only under exceptional circumstances. Final work will be submitted to the instructor(s) and TA via Slack in both MS-Word and PDF format unless otherwise specified. Students are expected to adhere to the principles of McMaster University’s Academic Integrity Policy for all elements of this course (see Appendix). Late assignments will not be accepted and will result in a grade of zero - unless there are extenuating circumstances supported by appropriate documentation. Assignments that are to be delivered on a certain day (e.g., presentations) must be delivered on the assigned date unless a prior arrangement has been made with the instructor(s). It is expected that any assignments involving group work have an equal distribution of responsibilities between group members. Extensions negotiated in advance and emergency situations will be considered.
ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS

For all assignments, conveying information in a logically organized and clear manner should be prioritized.

Written pieces will be evaluated based on the following expectations:
- Sufficient coverage of topic
- Sufficient depth of analysis and substance
- Logical structure and organization
- Presentation and design
- Clear and concise writing style
- Use of evidence and sources
- Correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Appropriate use of given space

Presentations/Activities will be evaluated based on the following expectations:
- Sufficient coverage of topic
- Sufficient depth of analysis and substance
- Engaging presentation style
- Use of evidence and sources
- Appropriate use of aids (e.g., visuals, slide shows) to enhance presentation
- Facilitation of engaging and balanced discussion
- Appropriate use of given time
APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials students earn are rooted in principles of honesty and integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is each student’s responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained
2. Improper collaboration in group work
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

SLACK

In this course we will be using Slack (https://hthsci4LD3-1718.slack.com/) to communicate online. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor(s).

COURSE MODIFICATIONS

The instructor(s), program and the university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If modifications become necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given. Students will be provided with an explanation and an opportunity to comment. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and Slack weekly during term. Any significant changes will be made in consultation with the BHSc Assistant Dean.

A NOTE ON WRITING

Clear and concise writing is an essential skill for any global health professional and an important component of this course. In assignments, students should always thoughtfully consider their target audience, which should inform writing style. For decision-makers who are always pressed for time, shorter is better. Simple, jargon-free language and point-first writing is preferred over fancy words and long suspenseful prose. Writers should examine every sentence to ensure it actually adds value to their work; if not, it should be cut. Setting the right tone at the beginning is
important, as is concluding with actionable messages. The summary is the most important section because it is usually the only part of a paper that is actually read.

PROFESSIONALISM

Students are expected to display professional integrity and behaviour towards the professionals and organizations with whom they interact through this course. If any questions or clarification about professional behavior are needed, please discuss this with the course instructor(s).

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext 28652 or email sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.
APPENDIX 1: STRUCTURE FOR ISSUE BRIEF ASSIGNMENT

For this course, each group’s issue brief will have the same seven sections:

1) ABSTRACT (of no more than 200 words and structured with the sub-headings “Challenge”, “Options”, and “Implementation”)

2) THE CHALLENGE (including an illustrative diagram titled “Summary of the Challenge”)

3) OPTIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE (including a table titled “Summary of Options for Addressing the Challenge and Evidence about Them”)

4) IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS (including a table titled “Potential Barriers to Implementing the Options”)

5) KEY MESSAGES FOR DECISION-MAKERS (of which there should be three to five, each one a single sentence that is written concisely in an actionable manner)

6) REFERENCES (following the Vancouver citation style adopted by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, except that in-text reference numbers should be superscript, without brackets, and placed following punctuation)

7) APPENDICES (including at least one appendix summarizing the research methodology followed, a second appendix with a provenance statement outlining the contributions of each team member, and a third appendix with notes taken when speaking to mentors or key informants including their name, contact information and date of the meeting)

Examples of issue briefs written in this style can be found on the McMaster Health Forum’s website. A good starting point may be the issue brief written on addressing global health challenges:


The key is to muster all available research evidence to inform the analysis presented in the issue brief. This is not an opinion-writing assignment; this assignment is about gathering all available research evidence and summarizing it in a way that is helpful for decision-makers and stakeholders who may be able and willing to act upon it. This is evidence-informed problem-solving, not advocacy.