MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
BACHELOR OF HEALTH SCIENCES (HONOURS) PROGRAM

HTH SCI 4ZZ3: GLOBAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

INSTRUCTORS: Jake Hirsch-Allen (jakehirschallen@gmail.com), Vito Buonsante (vabuonsante@gmail.com)
TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA): Shangmou (Samuel) Wu (wus62@mcmaster.ca)
OFFICE HOURS: By appointments
TERM: September to December 2017
SEMINARS: Fridays 11:30AM to 2:20 PM, McMaster Health Forum (MML-417)
TUTORIALS: Tuesdays 8:30 AM to 9:20 AM, McMaster Health Forum (MML-417)
SLACK: hthsci4zz3-1718.slack.com (via invitation from TA)

COURSE SUMMARY

This course aims to foster appreciation for the complexity of today’s most pressing global health challenges and the ways that various actors work to overcome them. It will look at how individuals, organizations and companies lobby national and international government organizations. Global health will not be studied as an altruistic goal, but rather as a complex political domain with an ever-expanding cast of players, divergent interests and hidden agendas. The focus will be on the advocacy tools used by individual champions, civil society organizations, national governments and intergovernmental organizations to drive decision-making about global health issues. Students will be empowered to reflect upon how they can most positively and confidently advocate for global health if they choose to do so in the future.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

• Understand the economic, social and political implications of today’s most pressing global health challenges for both developed and developing countries.
• Identify the critical factors that drive various decision-making processes about global health issues and the key players that influence them.
• Comfortably navigate the academic and grey literature related to global health.
• Understand government relations and lobbying and how they apply to global health.
• Appreciate the utility of a range of advocacy methods currently applied by global health leaders.

SEMINAR FORMAT

Students will explore some of the core issues in global health advocacy through instructor and guest lectures and a series of interactive discussions. Students will consider the unique content of global health, its importance, the type of players involved and the current political environment in which global health advocates operate. Seminar sessions may feature discussions on a particular tool of global health advocacy and/or problem-based learning exercises with role-playing.

Advocacy Discussions: Throughout the course, students will consider a variety of global health advocacy tools, discussing their possible uses and considering their potential effectiveness in different contexts. The focus will be on identifying the various ways in which global health leaders pursue and accomplish their advocacy agendas. The specific tools discussed will range from formal legal instruments to amorphous innovations, and may include: global health diplomacy; activities of professional associations; international human rights litigation; research for health; journal editorials; media coverage; shadow reports; advocacy in humanitarian crises; policy linkage strategies; celebrity hype; conference diplomacy; donor funding; social media; and international treaties, conventions and “soft law” mechanisms.
Problem-Based Learning Exercises: Some seminars will also feature a hypothetical advocacy challenge which students will discuss to determine how they would choose to tackle it. To help consider every angle of the presented problem, students will take on the roles of various players (e.g., heads of relevant governmental, civil society, corporate and UN organizations) that are particularly relevant to the issue.

SEMINAR TOPICS & SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Facilitator(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Friday September 8th</td>
<td>Introduction to 4ZZ3/ Introduction to Global Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Friday September 15th</td>
<td>Environmental Health Advocacy</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Friday September 22nd</td>
<td>Health Advocacy Workshop</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Friday September 29th</td>
<td>Human Rights Advocacy</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Friday October 6th</td>
<td>Economic Factors in Health Advocacy</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Friday October 13th</td>
<td>NO CLASS – MIDTERM RECESS</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Friday October 20th</td>
<td>Midterm presentations</td>
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<td>Indigenous Health Advocacy (in Tutorial)</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Friday October 27th</td>
<td>Global Health Innovation (HIV Vaccine)</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Friday November 3rd</td>
<td>Disease Response and Advocacy</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Friday November 10th</td>
<td>Professional Development Session</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Friday November 17th</td>
<td>Innovative Global Health Financing Professional Development Cont’d.</td>
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<td>Hayley Mundeva</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Friday November 24th</td>
<td>Use of Evidence to Inform Decisions, Policies, and Programs/ Refugee Access to Healthcare in Canada</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Friday December 1st</td>
<td>Final Presentations</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 Health Advocacy Workshop projects (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) for particular weeks. Tutorials will commence on Tuesday September 12, 2017.

MATERIALS NEEDED

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

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION
The Health Advocacy Workshop involves experiential learning: senior undergraduate global health students work to address research questions identified as priorities by partner global health organizations. Students will be trained and supervised by Jake Hirsch-Allen and Vito Buonsante, the Co-Directors of the Workshop, with the support of a diverse team of global health experts (guest lecturers) and a Teaching Assistant. Our (Jake’s and Vito’s) hope is that through contributing to the current work of a partner global health organization, students will be exposed to realities of the field, and will develop skillsets that will propel their budding global health careers forward.

Students will work in groups of 4-6, matched to partner organizations based on student interests if possible, or randomly if not. All groups will be required to produce a research memo for their partner organizations, and have the option of working on additional products or public engagement activities (e.g., 1-pagers, videos, podcasts, promotional materials, conceptualization of or participation in campaigns) based on the needs of the partner organization. Research memos will be 2500-3000 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).

The research memo 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.

Subject to research ethics clearance, the research memos must also be informed by 3-5 key informant interviews of leaders, advocates or observers who may have relevant insider knowledge on the agenda-setting, prioritization, decision-making and advocacy processes being studied. The key informants’ contact information, invitation letter and interview guide must be approved by the instructor before potential key informants are contacted. Specific requirements for these items will be discussed in class.

The interviews must be completed by Friday October 27, 2017. The research memo itself should be submitted to the course instructor(s) through Slack on Tuesday November 28, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

Groups will also be responsible for making a final 30 minute presentation (format of their choosing) to the class and to the partner global health organization. This presentation should discuss the group’s research and highlight the key points from the group’s work in a manner that engages their peers, their partner global health organization, and any potential decision-makers. Mark breakdown between the research memo and final presentation will be discussed in class.

The Health Advocacy Workshop’s approach draws inspiration from the University of Ottawa’s Global Health Law Clinic, a proven success where law students conducted research on issues identified by the Canadian Red Cross, Government of Canada, Norwegian Institute of Public Health and World Health Organization.

Group peer review feedback on a different group’s draft research memo (3%) [Marked by TA]

Groups must submit their draft research memos by Tuesday November 7, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. 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 Tuesday November 14, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

Group response to peer review feedback received from a different group (2%) [Marked by TA]
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 Tuesday November 28, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

Health Advocacy Workshop – Mid-Term Presentation (10%) [Marked by instructors]

Each group will deliver a 30 minute presentation on their Health Advocacy Workshop progress to date on Friday October 20, 2017 to the class and to the partner global health organization (in class if the organization representative can attend, or on a mutually agreeable date). Groups will receive feedback from the instructors, TA and their peers at this point in time. Recognizing that this presentation is early in the term, students are not expected to have a comprehensive product ready; rather, groups will present background research and plans for the rest of the term.

Contemporary Issues for Class Discussion (15%) [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 the 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.

Reading Summary Activity (15%) [Marked by TA]

Students will work individually to prepare a problem-based learning (PBL) activity on the week’s readings. The readings assigned to each student will be finalized in discussion with the instructors and TA, as far in advance of the activity date as possible. Each PBL activity should be no longer than 30 minutes, and engage students on the content of the readings. Students should provide their classmates with appropriate context for the PBL activity, which may be done through a written brief on the readings, or another discussed format. As such, any background materials should be maximum 1 page, single-spaced, and should be submitted to the TA and the class folder by the Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. prior to the seminar in which the readings will be discussed. Students should provide their peers with an understanding of what the authors of the readings are arguing and on what basis; they need not be critical. Sign-up dates will be on a first-come-first-serve basis via Slack.

More information about PBL can be found below, students are not expected to know the content of the following documents, they are being given for reference purposes:


Designing a PBL Case: http://cll.mcmaster.ca/resources/pdf/How_do_you_Design_a_Case.pdf

Classroom and Slack Participation (25%) [Marked by instructors and TA with guest lecturer input]
Participation will be evaluated based on general participation and asking good 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 but only under exceptional circumstances. Final work will be submitted to the instructor via email in both MS-Word and PDF format unless otherwise specified (e.g., scanned written feedback from the workshops should be submitted in PDF format). 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. Remember that this is a global health advocacy class – how you convey your message in every assignment is extremely important.

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, slideshows) 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. 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 the course website/Slack daily during the term. Any significant changes will be made in consultation with the BHSc Assistant Dean.

A NOTE ON WRITING

Good writing is an essential skill for advocacy and an important part of this course. In assignments, students should always thoughtfully consider their target audience and the way this should change their 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.