

PPHS511: Fundamentals of Global Health



CRN: 21616; Tuesdays (11.30 AM to 2.30 PM)

Room: THEA-1 in the Duff building

Instructor

Professor Madhukar Pai, MD, PhD (he/him)

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Teaching assistants:

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- Ms Joyeuse Senga
- Ms Nadia González

Office hours: TBA

Course objective: To provide a survey of core topics in global health at the introductory level.

Course Description: This interactive 500-level survey course aims to give students the opportunity to broaden their understanding and knowledge of global health issues, including core topics such as the colonial history of global health, [power asymmetries](#) in global health, privilege, racism & allyship, global health governance, global burden of disease, social determinants of health, health inequities, global health ethics, intersectionality, analysis of political power, global health diplomacy and advocacy, climate justice, Indigenous health, refugee/immigrant health, etc. Given the ongoing pandemic and the climate crisis, the course will use pandemics and climate crisis, two existential threats, to illustrate the challenges and opportunities inherent in global health work. Throughout the course, the need to ‘[decolonize global health](#),’ as well as practice authentic [allyship](#) will be highlighted.

Structure of sessions: The course consists of lectures (including guest lectures from experts around the world), discussions and inspiring videos/films or podcasts.

As explained by Dr Pai and several other global health teachers ([BMJ Global Health 2021](#)), the course will attempt to:

- Use COVID-19 as a teachable moment, and use it to focus on equity and human rights as a central theme in global health.
- Cover the importance of understanding racism and white supremacy in global health, and include content on privilege, anti-oppression, anti-racism and allyship.
- Include content on coloniality in global health and the persistent power asymmetries that affect every aspect of global health (e.g. the ongoing [inequity](#) in Covid-19 vaccine access).
- Center the course on Black, Indigenous and people of colour speakers, especially experts from the Global South, Indigenous scholars, and individuals with lived experience.
- Teach students to see and address health inequities wherever they occur, not just in low-income countries.

Content warning:

We live in a highly inequitable world. We are living through several big challenges for humanity (pandemic, climate crisis, racism, etc). As such, any global health course must discuss these challenges with honesty. While this may be dispiriting and demoralizing, it is necessary to have a clear diagnosis of what is wrong, before we can reimagine and repair the world. So, the course will go beyond pointing out problems, and feature inspiring people (change-makers, including youth) who are actively working to change reality and fight for social justice.

Schedule:

Date	Topic	Faculty	Readings/films
Global health – introductory concepts			
Sept 6	Introduction to global health	Madhu Pai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we classify countries and people—and why it matters • Global Health Is Broken, But Young People Plan To Repair It • Young Climate Justice Activists Are Fighting For Our Collective Survival • Disrupting Global Health: From Allyship To Collective Liberation
Sept 13	<p>Global burden of disease</p> <p>Global health politics, governance & financing</p> <p>Addressing coloniality and racism in global health</p>	<p>Madhu Pai</p> <p>Emilie Koum Besson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimagining Global Health Governance in the Age of COVID-19 • The globe’s new public health strategy: Every country for itself • Findings from the Global Burden of Disease Study. 2017. • Introduction to decoloniality and anti-racism in global health: Student Toolkit • Eliminating the White Supremacy Mindset from Global Health Education • Transcending global health dogma: an Indigenous perspective
Sept 20	Analysing power in global health	Veena Sriram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 best resources on power in health policy and systems in low- and middle-income countries

	Health inequities & social determinants	Ananya Tina Banerjee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 and the social determinants of health and health equity
Sept 27	Achieving justice through activism and social movements	Vuyiseka Dubula-Majola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAC: Taking Haart • Our struggle is not over • How to Survive a Plague [video] • AIDS Activism, A Playbook For Global Health Advocacy
	Fighting for health justice: lessons from apartheid to Covid-19 vaccine inequity	Fatima Hassan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine apartheid is racist and wrong
	Global health delivery & Universal Health Coverage	Madhu Pai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Durban to Tomorrow [video] • Universal health coverage - the best investment for a safer, fairer, healthier world [video] • What is primary health care? [video] • Universal health care must be a priority — even amid COVID
Oct 4	Tools and skills to fight inequalities	Ben Phillips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Power, Not Powerful People, Can Help End Inequality
	From outrage to organizing: target-based change-making	Courtney Howard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted change making for a healthy recovery
Oct 14 (instead of Oct 11, because of fall reading break)	Ethical issues in global health	Andrew Pinto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global health ethics for students
	Resisting Everyday Oppressions in Aid	Monica Mukerjee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research as agitation: Generative activism in the age of resistance
Oct 15	Mid-term exam (take home) Due on Oct 19 th before 5 PM EST		

Oct 18	<p>Power, privilege, anti-oppression and allyship</p> <p>Intersectionality & global health</p>	<p>Stephanie Nixon</p> <p>Anuj Kapilashrami</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coin model of privilege and critical allyship: implications for health • Intersectionality and why it matters to global health
Oct 25	<p>The unfinished agenda of infectious diseases & pandemics</p> <p>The emerging agenda of non-communicable diseases</p>	<p>Madhu Pai</p> <p>Christine Ngaruiya</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lucky Specials [video] Password: TLS • A Doctor’s Dream [video] • The Pandemic Is Following a Very Predictable and Depressing Pattern • Chronic diseases—the social justice issue of our time • Noncommunicable Diseases Kill Slowly in Normal Times and Quickly in COVID-19 Times
Nov 1	<p>Access to medicines & technologies</p>	<p>Melissa Barber</p> <p>Priti Krishtel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy that gives half of the world a discount on COVID-19 antivirals, but keeps a firm grip on power • Why are drug prices so high? Investigating the outdated US patent system [video]
Nov 8	<p>Indigenous health</p> <p>Confronting Medical Colonialism against Indigenous Children in Canada</p> <p>Indigenous nations and white settler colonialism</p>	<p>Pam Roach</p> <p>Samir Shaheen-Hussain</p> <p>Victor Lopez-Carmen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Challenge of Our Time [video] • COVID-19 and the decolonization of Indigenous public health • Confronting Medical Colonialism • The “Elephants in the Room” in U.S. global health: Indigenous

			nations and white settler colonialism
Nov 15	Global mental health Immigrant and refugee health	Srividya Iyer Yasir Essar Nhial Deng	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hear Our Voices [video] • The role of communities in advancing the goals of the Movement for Global Mental Health • Burnout: a silent crisis in global health • Refugee and migrant health
Nov 22	Climate crisis and climate justice	Claudél Pétrin-Desrosiers Salma Tihani Anpotowin Jensen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Climate Justice Activists Are Fighting For Our Collective Survival • Call for emergency action to limit global temperature increases, restore biodiversity, and protect health • COVID-19 and climate change: Crises of structural racism
Nov 29	Who is a global health expert? How do you become a global health expert? Careers in global health Final Exam (1.30 to 2.30 PM), in class	Madhu Pai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How (not) to write about global health • How not to become a global health expert • 10 Fixes for Global Health Consulting Malpractice • Short Term Experiences in Global Health: The mistakes we made, the lessons we learned and how we are moving forward
Dec 1	Creative participation assignment due before 11:59 PM		

Assigned readings: No required book. Pertinent readings and videos will be assigned for each class, and made available via MyCourses. Students are expected to have completed all required readings & watched videos, prior to class so as to be prepared to be active participants in discussions.

Course Pre-requisites: None

Grading: Letter

Evaluation:

Mid-term and final exam (in class):	80%
Creative participation assignment*:	20%

*Creative participation assignment will focus on any issue in global health where you think young people can make a positive change. You may choose to write poetry, draw/paint/photograph, create a short video (TikTok, TED talk variety, vlog or other), write a blog post or op-ed, design an infographic, or any other medium you can think of to describe a Global Health related topic that you are passionate about. More details will be shared separately.

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In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.). Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

Office for students with disabilities (OSD):

To discuss and access any accommodations you may require during your participation in this course, please contact the office for students with disabilities to help you make the relevant arrangements to support your learning : <https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>