Health & Human Rights: Concepts & Methods for Public Health

Harvard School of Public Health
PIH 218 (01)
September 2006 – October 2006

Course syllabus and requirements

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Health & Human Rights:
Concepts & Methods for Public Health
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Class Materials
3. Course reading packet.
4. Case Materials: to be distributed in class.

Reading packet can be purchased from the Department of Population and International Health, HSPH, Building 1, Room 1104. Books can be purchased from the Harvard Medical Coop (333 Longwood Avenue).

At the end of the course the student will be able to:
• Analyze rights related to health in international and national human rights documents and application of these rights to work of public health
• Evaluate different approaches to institution's promotion, monitoring, and implementation of human rights norms and analyze the value for health policies and programs
• Apply human rights concepts and a human rights methodology to the analysis of health policies and programs
• Conceptualize and apply a vulnerability and human rights analysis to health
• Apply human rights concepts and a human rights approach to public health work

Class Format
Classes will consist of a background lecture, discussion of assigned readings, and case studies. Class meets on Wednesdays from 1:30 - 4:20 p.m. in Kresge 201. We will usually take a 10-minute break midway through the class.

Work Required
1. Weekly reading
2. Take-home assignments
3. Outline for final paper
4. Presentation of paper in class
5. Final paper (15-20 pages)

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<th>Assignments</th>
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<td>#1 One-page reflection paper</td>
<td>Wednesday, Sept. 13 (in class)</td>
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<td>#2 Take-home questions</td>
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<td>#3 Paper outline</td>
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<td>#4 Final paper</td>
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<td>#5 Paper Presentation</td>
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Grading
1. Class participation and preparation, including readings and discussion (25 %)
2. Paper outline (0 %)
3. Take-home assignments (20%)
4. Final paper (15-20 pages) (50%)
5. Paper presentation (5%)

**Course Evaluations**
Completion of the evaluation is a requirement for each course. Your grade will not be available until you submit the evaluation. In addition, registration for future terms will be blocked until you have completed evaluations for courses in prior terms.
Class 1 (September 6)

Part 1: Introduction To The Course
The objectives, structure, readings, and assignments of the course will be presented. The underlying propositions and conceptual framework for the course will be discussed. The basic trends and developments in health and human rights will be briefly reviewed.

Part 2: Human Rights Instruments And Core Principles
The core principles of modern human rights thinking and practice will be discussed. Emphasis will be placed on the instruments comprising the International Bill of Human Rights.

Assignment 1: One-page reflection paper due in class on September 13.

Readings for Class 1:


Suggested Readings for Class 1:


Documents And Other Materials For Class 1:


Class 1 Handout: Status of Ratifications of International Covenants and Conventions

Class 2 (September 13)

Part 1: Human Rights Institutions, Monitoring And Enforcement
An introduction to the institutions relevant to the promotion, monitoring, implementation, and enforcement of human rights norms, including the United Nations and United Nations-related institutions and the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Part 2: Case Study (Prisons)

Assignment 2: Take-home questions will be distributed in class and are due in class on September 20.

Readings For Class 2:


Suggested Readings for Class 2:


**Prisons Readings (Please Review For Class Case Study)**


**Class 3 (September 20)**

**The Impact Of Public Health Policies And Programs On Human Rights**

Discussion and case study of how public health policies, programs, and practices can burden or promote human rights and how an optimal balance can be negotiated between public health goals and human rights norms. Application of human rights concepts and a human rights methodology to the analysis of health policies, programs and research.

**Readings For Class 3:**


**Suggested Readings for Class 3:**


**Documents And Other Materials For Class 3:**


**Class 4 (September 27)**

**Reproductive and Sexual Rights And The Health Effects Of Human Rights Violations: The Right To Information**

Emphasis will be placed on the emerging concepts of reproductive rights and sexual rights. The impact of human rights violations on health will be explored, using the example of reproductive health, with a focus on the right to information.

**Assignment 3:** Paper outline due in class on October 4.

**Readings for Class 4:**


**Suggested Readings for Class 4:**


**Documents And Other Materials For Class 4:**


Class 5 (October 4)

From Vulnerability To Human Rights: The Case Of HIV/AIDS
Development of the concept of risk and vulnerability and its relationship to health issues and human rights will be explored. Through discussion and a case study, the skills to conceptualize and apply a vulnerability and human rights analysis to HIV/AIDS will be provided.

Readings For Class 5:


Suggested Readings for Class 5:


Documents And Other Materials For Class 5:

1. Framework for Global Leadership on HIV/AIDS, November 2 2000, UNAIDS/PCB(10)00.3.

Class 6 (October 11)
Applying a Rights-Based Approach to Public Health Programming
Discussion of the content, means and methods of what is often called a rights-based approach to public health. Case studies will be used to provide experience in application of key components of rights-based approaches to tough questions in public health programming.

Readings For Class 6:


Suggested Readings For Class 6:

Documents And Other Materials For Class 6:

Class 7 (October 18)
Health And Human Rights: From Analysis To Action
Four case studies will be used to illustrate how bringing together concepts and methods in health and human rights can support practical and effective action.

Assignment 4: Final Paper due in class on October 25.
Assignment 5: Prepare for Presentations to be held in class on October 25.

Readings For Class 7:
Case 1: HIV/AIDS


Case 2: Abortion


Case 3: Maternal Mortality


Case 4: Tobacco

2. World Health Assembly Resolution 56.1, WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Updated Status of the Signatories (as of June 2004) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.


All Groups

Class 8 (October 25)

Next Steps: Incorporating Human Rights In Public Health Practice
Paper presentations and next steps.

Readings For Class 8:


