Research Master in Sociology and Demography

Social Determinants of Health Inequalities
(31.700)

Course Syllabus

Faculty
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Course Days
September 26; October 3, 10, 17, 20, 31; November 7, 14, 17, 28.*

Meeting Place and Time
Lectures will take place in rooms 13.002, 13.005, and 13.006 (Edifici Ramon Turró) (see schedule)
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

Course Syllabus Outline:

1. Learning Objectives
2. Course Description
3. Modus Operandi
4. Grading Policy
5. Preparation for the Course
6. Abbreviated course schedule
7. Required and recommended readings
8. Other suggested readings

* Note: Students enrolled in the MA in Immigration Management will have to attend a minimum of 18 hours (6 sessions), that are to be discussed with the lecturer at the beginning of the course. Students however may take the whole course at their best convenience.
1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze how social determinants affect health inequities;
- Identify and promote institutional changes and effective policies to reduce health inequities;
- Provide a global description (impact and pathways) between various social determinants and health inequities through key social mechanisms (e.g., social class, gender, age, ethnicity/race, migrant status);
- Identify policies and interventions to reduce inequities in health; and
- Discuss the translation of knowledge into recommendations and implementation of these recommendations.

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Although there is abundant literature on the impact of social determinants on health inequalities, research has less often focused, particularly in middle and poor-income countries, on the key role played by societal factors as important social determinants in shaping health inequities. This course focuses on the linkages between society and health inequalities, presents evidence and examples of new research in this area, and offers a forum to explore the policy application of these perspectives.

A range of selected topics on social determinants, and health inequalities referring to concepts and models, evidence, and action on societal factors explaining health inequalities is provided. Particular emphasis is put on definitions, theoretical models, empirical analyses and policies and interventions to tackle them. Additionally, strengths and limitations of a number of fundamental topics related with the generation of knowledge (e.g. public health and social epidemiology), social determinants (e.g. employment and working conditions), and “social mechanisms” (e.g., social class, territory, ethnicity, migration status, gender) will be discussed. The intersectionality between these factors will be considered along the course. Finally, policies and interventions on health inequalities including examples and entry-points for change as well as priorities for action will also be discussed.

3. MODUS OPERANDI

The course will be delivered over ten days, involving lectures, readings, and discussion among small groups. Readings, group discussions, and presentations will be used to stimulate discussion on the issues raised.
4. **GRADING POLICY**

**Student Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation (including critical/supportive critiques on peer presentations, reflections weekly on key topics)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Continual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations during the course</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>November 17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; and 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay major paper</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>December 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**4.1. Class participation (25%)**

Class participation grades are based on attendance and contribution to small group and general class discussions. Students are expected to read the required readings listed in the course syllabus and the readings specific to your assigned group presentation topic, and be prepared to discuss them in class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class.

**Evaluation criteria:**
- Attends regularly
- Comes prepared, having read the assigned readings.
- Comes with highlighted readings or written responses to the discussion questions
- Contributes relevant comments, or asks questions during class.
- Volunteers to act as spokesperson for small group feedback.

**4.2 Presentation (25%)**

The purpose of the student presentations is to provide students with the opportunity to: a) practice summarizing the proposal of your paper clearly and succinctly; b) gain feedback from peers prior to submitting their paper.

**Evaluation Criteria:**
- Clarity and persuasiveness of presentation
- Appropriate use of concepts and terms
- Time management
- Ability to field questions and suggestions
4.3  Paper (50%)  

By October 14th, students are required to prepare a 1-2 page proposal for the topic of your presentation and final paper. Please note that you are required to meet previously with your instructor(s) to discuss your proposals for the major paper.

The purpose of the assignment is for students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts and principles related to health equity as it relates to an issue of interest to them. Students will write a paper on any of the topics of the course. The paper may focus on an empirical or a review approach. This paper is to be 10 pages, double spaced (12 pt font), not including title page, table of contents, figures, tables, and references.

**Evaluation Criteria:**
- Clarity of writing and appropriate use of concepts and terms
- Integration of theory and evidence related to health equity
- Clearly identifies the audience for the proposal (e.g. health authority, government department)
- Includes rationale for why a) issue is an issue of health equity, and b) why addressing this issue should be a priority for public health
- Includes justification of the paper (e.g. importance, available studies and information), methods (design, data, analysis), and objectives

5.  PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE

Please read the required readings listed in the course syllabus and the readings specific to your assigned policy entry topic, and be prepared to discuss them in class. PDFs of the required readings can be found on the “campus global” website. Note that recommended readings cited in this syllabus are not on the “campus global” website.
### ABBREVIATED COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ROOM</th>
<th>ABSTRACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>September 26th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.005</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Overview of the course Social epidemiology and Public Health: Knowledge, concepts, measurement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>October 3rd, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.005</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Social production of health and disease: Conceptual and methodological approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>October 10th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.005</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Social Determinants of health inequalities: Employment and working conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>October 17th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.005</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Key concepts, measurement and evidence on Health Inequalities</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>October 20th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.002</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Health equity as indicator of monitoring and assessment of fairness and social justice</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>October 31st, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.006</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Social mechanisms of health Inequalities: the intersections by class, gender, migration, and territory</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>November 7th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.006</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Understanding the causes of health Inequalities: from epidemiology to complexity</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>November 14th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.006</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Policies to tackle health inequalities: Interventions, methods, and political processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>November 17th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.002</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Student Presentations with outlines of their essays and discussion (I)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>November 28th, 2016 (9-12h)</td>
<td>13.002</td>
<td>Edifici de Ramon Turró - J Benach</td>
<td>Student Presentations with outlines of their essays and discussion (II)</td>
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7. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS

SESSION 1. September 26th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.005, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Overview of the course.
Social epidemiology and Public Health: Knowledge, concepts, measurement.

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

SESSION 2. October 3rd, 2016 (9-12h)  13.005, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Social production of health and disease: Conceptual and Methodological approaches.

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:
- Navarro V. (2009). What we mean by social determinants of health. Int J Health Serv, 39(3);423-441.
SESSION 3. October 10th, 2016 (9-12h) 13.005, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Social Determinants of health inequalities: Employment and working conditions

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

SESSION 4. October 17th, 2016 (9-12h) 13.005, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Key concepts, measurement and evidence on Health Inequalities

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:
SESSION 5. October 20th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.002, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Health equity as indicator of monitoring and assessment of fairness and social justice

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

SESSION 6. October 31st, 2016 (9-12h)  13.006, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Social mechanisms of health Inequalities: the intersections by class, gender, migration, and territory

Required Reading:

Recommended Readings:
- Navarro V. Neoliberalism as a class ideology; or, the political causes of the growth of inequalities. Int J Health Serv. 2007;37(1):47-62.
SESSION 7. November 7th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.006, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Understanding the causes of health Inequalities: from epidemiology to complexity

Required Readings:
- Macintyre S, McKay L, Ellaway A. Lay concepts of the relative importance of different influences on health; are there major socio-demographic variations? Health Education Research. 2006(21):731–739.

Recommended Readings:

SESSION 8. November 14th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.006, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Policies to tackle health inequalities: Interventions, methods, and political processes

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

SESSION 9. November 17th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.002, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Student Presentations with outlines of their essays
Further readings will be completed at the request of the students.

SESSION 10. November 28th, 2016 (9-12h)  13.002, Edifici de Ramon Turró
Student Presentations with outlines of their essays
Further readings will be completed at the request of the students.
8. OTHER SUGGESTED READINGS

Introductory:


Advanced:

• Navarro V, Muntaner C (eds). Political and Economic Determinants of Population Health and Well-Being: Controversies and Developments

Articles: