

HEALTH POLITICS AND POLICY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

IDEV*2600

Fall 2026

University of Guelph

Professor Carmen Jacqueline Ho

The course assessments and due dates may change

The official syllabus will be available on the first day of class

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the impact of politics and policies on health outcomes worldwide. Students explore the ways in which the social determinants of health, as well as national governments and international institutions, affect health disparities between and within countries. In addition, the course highlights how international development priorities and aid architectures can affect the capacity of governments to improve population health. Through the study of key public health challenges – such as the expansion of primary and universal health care, hunger and malnutrition, pandemics, and the global opioid crisis – students will gain insight into how domestic and international political dynamics affect health in an increasingly interconnected world. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of the political forces that shape health disparities, as well as the opportunities for change.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Explain how social determinants shape population health
- Critically assess how the welfare state can reduce (or reproduce) health inequities
- Describe how federal, provincial/state, and local governments deliver healthcare
- Explain how domestic and international politics shape agendas, policy formulation, and policy implementation
- Identify the role of domestic actors in health policy
- Identify the role of global actors in health policy
- Analyze the political dynamics underlying public health challenges

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Assignment	Weight	Submission	Due Date
Test I – short answers	25%	In class	To be announced
Test II – essay	25%	In class	To be announced
Test III – multiple choice	25%	In class	To be announced
Presentation	25%	Courselink Dropbox and Discussion Board	To be announced