The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University
Master of Science in Global Health Policy and Management

HS 236a. International Health Systems and Development
Fall 2016

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11.00 AM -1.00 PM, or by appointment

University Notices
1. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person – be it a world-class philosopher or your roommate – without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

Course Requirements
1. Attendance at all sessions; prompt arrival.
2. Preparation of all readings.
3. Participation in class discussions and any small group work.
4. Timely submission/presentation of assignments.
5. Completion of bi-weekly writing assignments (to be assigned).
6. Participation in class discussion.
7. Contribution to requirements and objectives of group work.
8. Being helpful and considerate to other students.
This is a full semester course and is a core requirement of the MS/GHPM program. This course is also open to other PhD students interested in global health issues.

*This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the instructors. When in doubt, please ask the instructors.*

**Course Description**
This class uses several frameworks for health system strengthening to understand health systems and how we can improve health systems to improve overall levels of health and development. There are many definitions and frameworks on health systems. Some define health systems as the collections of institutions, laws, regulations, social objectives and behaviors that are responsible for getting health resources (professional services, drugs, various technologies, etc.) to where they are needed. In recent years many low and middle-income countries have initiated efforts to strengthen their health systems through health reform initiatives, often financed by donors. This course provides a framework within which health systems in low and middle-income countries can be analyzed and better understood. The course examines different health system frameworks, how to use these frameworks to ask health system questions, different aspects of health systems, how national health systems differ, and what measures are being implemented in different countries to improve their health system performance and eventually health outcomes. A few of the lectures take a step back to think about how health systems interact with the broader context including economic policy and development policy.

**Course Objective**
The objective of this course is to provide students with a framework to understand how health systems are organized and to understand what affects their performance. Students also will be able to better describe key features of health systems; how health system performance is measured; and how lessons from other countries can be applied to their own countries. The course will introduce students to several of the main theories and frameworks that help us understand how systems are organized and how this impacts development. Students also will be able to better describe and apply specific theories to country contexts. Students will be required to read, understand, and write about a large body of readings during this course, and will be required to complete a final exam and several group projects.

**Recommended Prerequisites**
Non-MS/GHPM students planning on taking this course should either have taken a course in economics or have experience working in the health sector.

**Readings and Materials**
Determined in each class.

**Other Important Web Based Resources**
[https://www.hfgproject.org/resources/publications/](https://www.hfgproject.org/resources/publications/) USAID’s HFG publications, including Health Systems 20/20 Project Resources
http://www.who.int/topics/health_systems/en/  WHO Health Systems Site  
http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/ihsg/publications.html  Harvard University Health Systems Publications Site  
http://www.euro.who.int/observatory  Site where European Observatory publications are available  
http://www.cgdev.org/section/publications  Site where papers from Center for Global Development are available  
http://search.library.brandeis.edu/  Brandeis University’s OneSearch database for the library. Log in with your Brandeis credentials and access all of the university’s subscriptions.

Other important readings are specified under the various lecture topics. Reading extensively from the professional literature on health system performance is very important for this course. Students are expected to do these readings, and to be able to summarize what they have read when called upon to do so in class.

**Student Evaluation**

Written Assignments/In class presentation/Cases 15%  
Final Research Paper (group/individual) 20%  
Final Exam 20%  

Systems Strengthening Group Cases/Analyses (ea.11% joint fate, 4% peer evaluation):

1. Policy Brief 1 (Individual) 15%  
2. Policy Brief 2 (Individual or Group) 15%  
3. Policy Brief 3 (Individual or Group) 15%
## Course outline Sessions & Assignments

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>29 August 2016</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductions and Overview of Health System Players and Health Systems</td>
<td>No Assignment Due</td>
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<td>5 September 2016</td>
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<td>No class: Labor Day</td>
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<td>8 September 2016</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review of health system frameworks: how to describe them and compare them</td>
<td>Lancet/Peru assignment due</td>
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<td>How to do a health system assessment?</td>
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<td>12 September 2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>How to measure the performance of a health system: health status, financial risk protection and user satisfaction; where do we get the data?</td>
<td>Health Outcome Measure assignment due</td>
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<td>19 September 2016</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>How to measure intermediate indicators (Access, Efficiency, Quality, Equity); Guest Speaker on Quality</td>
<td>Policy Brief 1 due: performance assessment</td>
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<td>26 September 2016</td>
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<td>Regroup and Review: Practicing our health system measures</td>
<td>Measurement Exercise due</td>
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<td>3 October 2016</td>
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<td>No class: Rosh Hashanah</td>
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<td>10 October 2016</td>
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<td>Demand/Supply Side-Financing Incentives: which work (Belize case)</td>
<td>Policy Brief 2 due: Intermediate Indicators</td>
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<td>17 October 2016</td>
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<td>No class: Sukkot</td>
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<td>25 October 2016</td>
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<td>Human Resources for Health: Supply, Demand, Financing and Education (short financing exercise)</td>
<td>Belize case due</td>
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<td>31 October 2016</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Human Resources for Health: Supply, Demand, Financing and Education (short financing exercise)</td>
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<td>7 November 2016</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>New innovative programs to enhance health systems: Universal Health Coverage and mhealth, cardiovascular disease, mental health</td>
<td>Policy Brief 3 due: Control Knob Analysis</td>
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<td>14 November 2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Integration, Social Capital</td>
<td>HRH Financing Assignment due</td>
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<td>21 November 2016</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Health, Economic growth and development (or Topic TBD)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28 November 2016</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Taking a step back. What is development? Macroeconomic policy; Washington</td>
<td>Washington Consensus in class debate</td>
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Written Assignments/In class presentation/Cases 15%

Written Assignments
Students will complete several very short writing assignments and post them on LATTE (2-3 pages, 12 font, 1.5 spacing). The topic for these papers is shown on the schedule. The purpose of these papers is to summarize your thoughts on a topic that is central to the assigned readings for that class or the previous class. Students are expected to broaden and deepen their understanding of health systems through the assigned readings. This bi-weekly written assignment is intended to help sharpen student thinking about the assigned readings and the assigned topic and to promote broader class discussion. During the first session we will discuss the expectations for this assignment.

Cases: Belize Case and Human Resource for Health Case
There will be two short cases in the class that will be started in class and then must be finished as homework. Cases can be worked on together as a group in class, but each individual must turn in their own final write up. This is a case on the Belize health care reform and their pay for performance. The case will be introduced in the session on P4P and the case will be carried out in the following session. The case on Human Resources will examine a financing scheme for community health workers. You will need your computers for both sessions.

Presentation: Washington Consensus debate
The details for this case will be discussed during Class 10.

Policy Briefs (45% total; 15% each)
There will be three policy briefs that will take the student through the process of writing up a health system assessment. Each policy brief will be detailed during class. They should be 4-5 pages, 12 font, 1.5 spacing.

Final Health System Assessment (20%)
Using the control knob framework, the final health system assessment will be a synthesis of policy briefs 1, 2 and 3. The final health system assessment will be enhanced with an abstract, an introduction and a discussion.

Final Exam (20%)
In class exam.

You will receive feedback on your performance
At the end of the first month of class I will assess your progress and performance. The TA or myself will contact you if we need to discuss your progress.
Class Schedule and Topics
(Preliminary and subject to change)

29 August 2016
Class 1: Introductions and Overview of Health System Players and Health Systems

Note: these reading and writing assignments are due on the first meeting of the class.

Class 1, Topic 1: What is a health system? How did we get where we are today: players and reports

Required:

Recommended:

8 September 2016 (Note: THURSDAY 2-5pm!!)
Class 2: Review of health system frameworks: how to describe them and compare them; How to do a health system assessment?

Writing assignment (due at the beginning of class on Latte): Read the Lancet article on the new Minister of Health in Peru. List three initiatives that she says she will focus on as minister. Discuss how each of these initiatives will strengthen the Peruvian health system. Do you think they will improve the health of the Peruvian population? If so, how? If not, why not?

Class 2, Topic 1: Review of health system frameworks; how to describe and compare them
Class 2, Topic 2: How do you do a health system assessment?
Class 2, Topic 3: What is a policy brief?

**Required:**
2. Getting Health Reform Right, Chapter 7. From Diagnosis to Health-Sector Reform

**Recommended:**
1. Shakarishvili, George, Rifat Atun, Peter Berman, William Hsiao, Craig Burgess and Mary Anne Lansang “Converging Health System Frameworks: Towards a Concepts-to-Actions Roadmap for Health Systems Strengthening in Low and Middle Income Countries” in Global Health Convergence, Volume III, No. 2 (Spring 2010).://www.ted.cer_seen.html countries

**12 September 2016**

**Class 3: How to measure the performance of a health system: health status, financial risk protection and user satisfaction; where do we get the data?**

**Writing assignment** (due at the beginning of class): In your opinion, what is a good health outcome indicator of the overall population health of a country? How is this indicator measured*? Using the frameworks we discussed in class, describe one aspect of a health system that can improve this indicator. Describe one aspect of a health system that can contribute to the worsening of this health indicator.

*Note: Look through the WHO and World Bank databases to understand how data for your indicator is collected and how they are calculated. (i.e. What do the numbers mean?)

**Class 3, Topic 1: Why do we need good health systems? Market failures**

**Required:**

**Class 3, Topic 2: How to assess health system performance: health outcomes (DALY, life expectancy, IMR, MMR, death rates, Burden of Disease) and financial risk protection, other measurement tricks (population growth, inflation)**

**Recommended:**
Class 3, Topic 2: The Global Burden of Disease and Health Metrics: Generating Evidence, Data Visualization and Guiding Policy

Recommended:

19 September 2016

Class 4: How to measure intermediate indicators (Access, Efficiency, Quality, Equity);
Guest Speaker on Quality (Lindsay Martin, IHI)

Assignment: Policy Brief 1 Due (due at the beginning of class)

Class 4, Topic 1: How to assess health system performance: access

Required:

Recommended:

Class 4, Topic 2: How to assess health system performance: quality; lessons from the field

Invited speaker

Class 4, Topic 3: How to assess health system performance: efficiency

Recommended:

Class 4, Topic 3: How to assess health system performance: equity across all

Recommended:

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Class 4, Topic 3: Introduction to measurement exercise (Equity, life expectancy, health outcomes)

26 September 2016
Class 5: Regroup and Review: Practicing our health system measures

Assignment: Measurement Exercise Due (due at the beginning of class)

Class 5, Topic 1: Review to measurement exercise (Equity, life expectancy, health outcomes)

Class 5, Topic 2: Health System Assessment: Time to work on Policy Brief 2

10 October 2016
Class 6: Demand/Supply Side-Financing Incentives: which work

Assignment: Policy Brief 2 Due (due at the beginning of class)

Class 6, Topic 1: Review of Conditional Cash Transfers, Vouchers

Required:

Recommended:

Class 6, Topic 2: Pay for Performance and Introduction of Belize Case

Recommended:

Class 6, Topic 3: Belize Case

25 October 2016 (Note: TUESDAY 2-5pm!!)
Class 7: Human Resources for Health: Introduction, Financing and Education (short financing exercise)

Assignment: Belize Case Due (due at the beginning of class)

Required:

Recommended:

31 October 2016
Class 8: Human Resources for Health: Introduction, Financing and Education (short financing exercise)

Assignment: No assignment due

Required: Same readings as previous class

7 November 2016
Class 9: New innovative programs to enhance health systems: Universal Health Coverage, mental health, cardiovascular disease and mhealth
Assignment: Policy Brief 3 Due (due at the beginning of class)

Class 9, Topic 1: mHealth and eTreatment in a Framework of EBM

Required:

Recommended:

Class 9, Topic 2: How to achieve universal health coverage? Targeting for SDG.

Recommended:

Class 9, Topic 3: CVD and mental health

14 November 2016

Class 10: Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Integration, Social Capital

Assignment: HRH Financing Exercise (due at the beginning of class)

Class 10, Topic 1: Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Integration

Recommended:
Class 10, Topic 2: Social Capital

Recommended:

Class 11, Topic 1: Why invest in health? In this session we will try to understand the link between health and development and the rationale for investing in health from the market perspective

Required:

Recommended:

Class 11, Topic 2: Gap Minder

Class 11, Topic 3: Assignment of Washington Consensus Readings

You will be assigned one of these readings for the next class:

28 November 2016

Assignment: In class Washington Consensus Debate


Recommended(most likely will need to read one to prepare for your presentations):

5 December 2016
In class exam that will cover all topics reviewed in this course. You may be using your laptops with limited access to the internet for writing your exam. Duration 2.5 hours.