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 2019

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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.

**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**
http://www.sciencedirect.com/resources.library.brandeis.edu/science/journal/01406736?sdc=1 Lancet
USAID’s HFG publications, including Health Systems 20/20 Project Resources
European Observatory publications are available
WHO Statistical Information System
WHO Global Health Expenditure Database
Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME): Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Data
IHME GBD Data Visualizations
World Bank World Development Indicators

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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignments/Cases (Belize/HRH)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health System Assessment (Individual)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech/OpEd (Individual)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Power Point (Group)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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Final Power Point (20% joint fate, 5% peer evaluation)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 September 2019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductions, Overview of the Class, Overview of Health System Players and Health Systems</td>
<td>No Assignment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 September 2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review of health system frameworks: Health System Game</td>
<td>Health System Writing Assignment due</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Health Systems how to describe them and compare them</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to do a health system assessment?</td>
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<td>23 September 2019</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Measurement of Health Systems (1)</td>
<td>Health Outcome Measure Assignment due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 October 2019</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Measurement of Health Systems (2)</td>
<td>No Assignment Due</td>
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<td>(Brandies Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 October 2019</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Analyzing health systems: what have we learned (review of data and analysis)</td>
<td>Health System Assessment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 October 2019</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Overview of US Health Care System Insurance</td>
<td>No Assignment Due</td>
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<td>(brandeis Monday)</td>
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<td>Market Failures (group exercise)</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 October 2019</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Demand/Supply Side-Financing Incentives</td>
<td>Measurement Exercise due</td>
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<td>4 November 2019</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pay for Performance: Does it work? Belize Case Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 November 2019</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Human Resources for Health: Supply, Demand, Financing and Task Shifting (short financing exercise)</td>
<td>Belize case due</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 November 2019</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>New innovative programs to enhance health systems: Universal Health Coverage and mhealth, cardiovascular disease, mental health</td>
<td>OpEd/Speech on intermediate indicator due</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 November 2019</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Site Visit</td>
<td>HRH Financing Assignment due</td>
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<td>2 December 2019</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Other Organizational Issues Final Exam Review</td>
<td>No Assignment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 December 2019</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>In-class Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 December 2019</td>
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<td>Final Powerpoints Due</td>
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Written Assignments/Cases/Exercise (10%)  
**Two Written Assignments** (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.  
**Two Cases (Belize Case and Health Extension Worker Financing 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.  
**One Measurement Exercise:** Take home exercises on specific health system measurement and calculations.

**Health System Assessment (20%)**  
There will be one policy brief that will take the student through the process of writing up a health system performance assessment. The brief should be 4-5 pages, 12 font, 1.5 spacing.

**Speech/OpEd (20%)**  
There will be one policy brief that will take the student through the process of writing up a health system performance assessment. The brief should be 4-5 pages, 12 font, 1.5 spacing.

**Final Exam (25%)**  
In-class exam that will cover all topics reviewed in this course. You may use your laptops with limited access to the internet for writing your exam. Duration 2.5 hours.

**Final Health System Powerpoint (Group) (25%)**  
The final paper will be a summary of the control knob assessment/plan that you developed with your group for your final presentation combined with an introduction justifying the program that you present and how this will impact both intermediate indicators and population health.

**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)

9 September 2019  
Class 1: Introduction to the class and  
Overview of Health System Players and Health Systems

Class 1, Topic 1: Introductions and Overview  
Objective: To explain the goals of the course, the content that will be covered to achieve the goals and the teaching approaches to be employed. Participants should leave this session fully understanding how the course will work over the succeeding fourteen weeks, especially regarding their responsibilities (including readings and exercises). They should also become acquainted with the professor, TA, and each other during this session and begin to feel comfortable expressing themselves in the classroom.

Class 1, Topic 2: What is a health system? How did we get where we are today: players and key reports/papers  
Objective: To review the main players that work in our health systems. To begin to understand some key terms for talking about health systems and examining data in graphical format.

Required:  

Recommended:  
16 September 2019

Class 2: Review of health system frameworks: Health System game; how to describe and compare health systems; how to do a health system assessment?

Health System Writing assignment (due at the beginning of class on Latte): Research the piece of the health system you were given at the end of class 1? How would you define this part of a health system? How would you measure this part of the health system? Give us an example of this part of the health system using an example from a country of your choice using data if possible.

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?

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

Recommended:

23 September 2019

Class 3: Measurement of Health Systems 1: health status, financial risk protection and user satisfaction; where do we get the data?

Health Outcome Measurement Assignment (due at the beginning of class): In your opinion, what is a good indicator of the overall population health of a country? How is this indicator measured*? Using the frameworks we discussed in class 2, 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: How to assess health system performance: health outcomes (IMR, MMR, death rates, burden of disease, incidence, prevalence, case fatality, DALY, QALY, life
expectancy) and financial risk protection, other measurement tricks (population growth, inflation, rates)

Required:

Recommended:

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

3 October 2019
Class 4: Measurement of Health Systems II: Access, Efficiency, Quality, Equity

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

Required:
Recommended:

Class 4, Topic 2: How to assess health system performance: quality (safety, CQI, checklists) (see access articles above)

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

Recommended:

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

Recommended:

Class 4, Topic 5: Introduction to measurement exercise (Equity, life expectancy, health outcomes)

7 October 2019
Class 5: Regroup and Review: Practicing our health system measures

Assignment: Health System Assessement due performance assessment

Class 5, Topic 1: Review measurement exercise (be able to understand all calculations)

15 October 2019
Class 6: Overview of U.S. Healthcare Systems

Class 6, Topic 1: Health System in the United States and how does insurance work?

Required: Required:
1. Obamacare Facts: Pros and Cons of Obamacare
a. Chapter 4: Overview of the United States Healthcare System
b. Chapter 8: Understanding Health Insurance

Class 6, Topic 2: Why do we need good health systems? Market failures Group Exercise

Required:

28 October 2019
Class 7: Demand/Supply Side-Financing Incentives: Which Work?

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

Class 7, Topic 1: Review of Conditional Cash Transfers, Vouchers

Required:

Recommended:

Class 7, Topic 2: Pay for Performance, Payment Mechanisms

4 November 2019
Class 8: Pay for Performance: Does It Work?

Class 8, Topic 1: Introduction to Health Reforms in Belize

Recommended:
Strengthen Health Prevention Activities and Improve Efficiency: The Case of Belize. USAID.

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

Required: Same readings as previous class

11 November 2019

Class 9: Human Resources for Health: Supply, Demand, Financing and Task Shifting (short financing exercise)

Assignment: Belize Case Due

Required:

Recommended:

18 November 2019

Class 10: New innovative programs to enhance health systems: Universal Health Coverage, cardiovascular disease; Group work

Assignment: Speech/OpEd on Intermediate Indicator

Class 10, Topic 1: How to achieve universal health coverage? Targeting for SDG.

Recommended:

Class 10, Topic 2: Cardiovascular Disease Case: System Strengthening

Class 10, Topic 3: Group Work TBD

25 November 2019
Class 11: Site Visit- TBD

2 December 2019
Class 12: Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Integration

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

Class 12, Topic 1: Organizing Health Service Delivery and Removing Barriers: Decentralization and Integration

Required:

Class 12, Topic 2: In class review

9 December 2019
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.

17 December 2019
Assignment Due: Final Group Powerpoint Due at 2pm