Programme description for the Mphil in International Community Health

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## Background

The M.phil programme *International Community Health* was established in 1998. The programme is based and taught at the Department of Community Medicine and Global Health at the Institute of Health and Society (Helsam).

## Why chose this program?

This M.Phil. is a research program in international community health. In times, where global responses to health challenges are approached through the Sustainable Development Goals, understanding and researching community health is critical. Our students go on fieldwork around the world or in Norway and they learn how to develop and carry out research projects. All this happens in a multidisciplinary classroom, with students from all over the world.

## Learning outcomes for International Community Health

The aim of the programme is to train students in research knowledge and skills related to the field of international community and global health. To achieve this end, we focus both on providing familiarity with essential knowledge of the global distribution of health, illness and access to health care, research methods and perspectives to analyse international health burdens, policies and initiatives. The programme has a strong focus on low-income countries and how the communities, the health of which we study, are embedded in societies. The programme emphasizes multi-disciplinary approaches. Upon successful completion, students will have acquired and demonstrated the skills necessary to plan and conduct relevant and sound international community health research projects.

**Knowledge**

The M.phil. degree in International Community Health provides you with knowledge of:

* essential concepts of international community health
* the global distribution of health, illness and access to health-care
* major global health challenges, including non-communicable diseases, nutrition, infectious diseases and reproductive, maternal and child health, and their cultural, social, economic and environmental context
* the major actors committed to international and global health work, including government agencies, civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, philanthropic organizations and public-private partnerships
* health systems, including global policy agendas relevant to international community health and national health systems, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Universal Health Coverage (UHC)
* the role, development and research of medicines and drugs in global health
* quantitative and qualitative methodology, and advanced knowledge of one of the methodologies of epidemiology, medical anthropology or medical humanities
* research ethics and ethical challenges to health research in low-income countries

**Skills**

You will learn how to:

* develop, design and complete an independent, scientific and ethically sound research project of international community health
* conduct a literature review and critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of international health research literature
* conduct fieldwork and collect primary data, using either qualitative or quantitative methodologies
* describe general patterns of the global distribution of illness and the determinants of health, including access to health care
* critically evaluate and creatively use important theoretical concepts of international community health and global health
* develop an application to, and gaining approval from, Norwegian and/or international research ethics review committees
* effectively communicate research findings and facilitate dissemination of research in written and in spoken language through professional and popular channels
* complete a master thesis based on one’s own research and original data.

**General competence**

You will be able to:

* actively participate in and contribute to discussions and group work in an international classroom involving students with wide variety of interests, academic and national backgrounds
* critically reflect on and evaluate global health burdens, policies and initiatives
* effectively communicate and present research results and engage with professional and public audiences
* engage critically with your own work and the research of others.
* acquire skills and networks to pursue a professional career in academia, government agencies, civil society organizations and international organizations

## Target group

The program aims to recruit students with either a background in health sciences, social sciences, the humanities or life sciences. Applicants with no background in health sciences are required to document work experience or training relevant to health research.[[1]](#footnote-1)

## Admission

Through UiO’s Office for Admission and Student Exchange (SOT). SOT defines most of this such as when, how to apply and what the general criteria for eligibility are.

Available places:

40

Admission requirements:  
Under discussion with SOT.

Program specifics

Required specialization:

The applicants are required to have a specialization within health science, social science the humanities or life sciences. If the specialization is not within health, we recommend that the applicants have some relevant work experience or other type of experience or training within health.

Documentation:

You have to upload [all required documents](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/admission/master/documentation-requirements/index.html) in UiO's online application portal.

In addition to the required documents, you must upload:

* A Statement of Purpose letter of maximum 1 page. In this motivation letter, the applicant should write about their background and how it fits into this program, and indicate topics or areas of research they would like to get involved in and if there are any countries or regions they are most interested in, as well as other relevant information. The letter must be written in English. Please name the file SOP-INTHE
* CV Maximum 2 pages. Please name the file CV
* Documentation of relevant work experience (if applicable). Please put all documents relevant to one workplace in one file and name the file Work1, Work2 and so on.

Ranking of applicants:

Selection is based on your academic performance in the required subjects for this programme. Admission to this programme is usually highly competitive. Please note that even if you fulfill the minimum grade requirement, you are not guaranteed a admission to the programme.

All applications are evaluated by an admission's committee. Additional points may be given for:

* Statement of purpose (up to 1 point)
* Relevant work experience (up to 0,5 points)

## Programme structure

The Mphil Programme in International Community Health is a full-time two-year programme (four semesters) taught entirely in English, and grants 120 credit points. The programme admits 40 students, both national and international, every August.

The first year consists of compulsory and elective courses. By the end of second semester, students are expected to have written a research protocol and attained ethical clearance for their master thesis project. The second year consists of data collection in the 3rd semester and analysis, thesis writing and oral exam in the 4th semester.

**Table 1: Overview of courses in the programme structure (see also table in attachment 1)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Semester** | **Courses** |
| First semester, autumn | Introduction week  3 days with ICH students, 2 days with other Helsam students |
| First semester, autumn | INTHE 4013: Fundamentals of International Community Health  Credits: 15 |
| First semester, autumn | XXXX: Introduction to Qualitative methods  Credits: 5 |
| First semester, autumn | XXXX Introduction to Quantitative method  Credits: 5 |
| First semester, autumn | XXXX Introduction to Epidemiology  Credits: 5 |
| Second semester, spring | XXXX: Methodology and Project development, part 2  Credits: 10 |
| Second semester, spring | XXXX: Research ethics  Credits: 5 |
| Second semester, spring | A range of elective courses offered from all departments of Helsam (see below for descriptions) |
| Third semester, autumn | INTHE 4012: Master thesis - fieldwork & voluntary workshops  Credits: 30 |
| Forth semester, spring | INTHE 4012: Master thesis - Analysis and writing seminar  Credits 30 |

## Course descriptions, Compulsory Courses

**INTHE 4013: Fundamentals of International Community Health**

The course focuses on defined important topical areas related to international community health. The emphasis is on identifying problems, developing strategies and programs in international community health. The course is divided into five weekly modules and two exam weeks. The modules have the following areas of focus: Human and microbial ecology and infectious disease; Non-communicable diseases and nutrition; Reproductive- and child health; Health systems; Medicines in a global society. Following the course, which employs lectures, seminars and group work, the students will have a good overview over important topical areas in international community health. They will also be sensitized with regards to choosing a field from which to choose their master’s project. The course also includes a project planning element, which – not being included in its exam – prepares and sensitizes students for this subject. Key issues are skills and steps in developing research projects, including some ethical considerations. There is dedicated time for students to discuss research ideas, receive feedback and think about potential supervisors

XXXX: **Introduction to** **qualitative methods**

The course introduces basic concepts and tools in qualitative methodology and aims to familiarize students with the fundamentals of qualitative research as well as the qualitative techniques common in the study of health and health services. Following the course, the students will know for which research questions qualitative research is appropriate, be able to develop and design a qualitative research project and recognise the ethical challenges of qualitative research. Through lectures, seminars and exercises, the course will introduce different techniques to produce and analyse data from in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations and reading of texts. The lectures will be shared with students from *Tverrfaglig helseforskning*, while the seminars and exercises will be taught in the programme.

**XXXX: Introduction to quantitative methods**

The course introduces basic concepts and tools for quantitative research, including methods used in the study of health outcomes and health services. With completion of the course, the students will be familiar with what type of research questions can be answered using quantitative methods and have knowledge of the most common quantitative designs. Lectures, and seminars with applicable exercises, will introduce different designs for collecting quantitative data, including observational studies, surveys, and randomized controlled trials, in addition to the fundamental statistical methods used to analyze, interpret and display data. The students will also learn to recognize ethical challenges particular to quantitative research. The lectures will be shared with students from *Tverrfaglig helseforskning*, while the seminars and exercises will be taught in the programme.

**XXXX Introduction to epidemiology**

This is an introduction course in epidemiological principles and use of epidemiological methods in international community health. Students will learn the main principles for planning and carrying out epidemiological research, the most central epidemiological study designs and how to select a study sample. Furthermore, they will learn central concepts regarding measurements and statistical analysis and mechanisms for systematic bias in different research projects. They will also learn to use of directed acyclic graphs to inform statistical analysis. The course teaches students how to define and justify the aim of an epidemiological study, make and justify choices of study design, samples, measures and data analysis methods. Students will attain epidemiological knowledge that renders them a valuable partner for planning and carrying out of epidemiological research and enable them to read and critically evaluate epidemiological literature.

**INTHEXXXX RESEARCH METHODS, PART 2**

**10 credits**

This 10 credits course runs in second semester and provides in-depth understanding of either qualitative or quantitative methods, circling in on the chosen research project. It integrates essential skills such as literature review, academic writing, in-depth training in the methodology which the students wish to employ in their thesis - qualitative and quantitative – with targeted projected development workshops. Both theoretical and practical in approach, the main aim of the course is for the students to deepen their understanding of the important concepts, techniques, and concerns of their chosen method with the ultimate purpose of developing, designing and finalizing a protocol of their project and submitting it to the relevant authorities.

*Literature review*  
The students will learn how to perform a literature review that is relevant to their research topic. Independently of whether students have already decided their research topic for their master's thesis, it is necessary to do a review of existing research in order to identify gaps in the literature, and to justify their own projects. The course topic must be agreed upon by the student and his/her main supervisor early in the literature review process.

The course has two exams: An oral examination, covering literature review and a written home exam where the completed protocol or project proposal of the master thesis project is submitted as an exam paper.

The course runs on two tracks, where the lectures of the qualitative track are shared with the Interdisciplinary Health Science master’s program:

**XXXX Advanced Module in Qualitative Methods**

The course provides in-depth knowledge and skills in the qualitative methodologies used in the study of health and health services and enable the students to develop their master-thesis design and project description. Through lectures and seminars, the course teaches both theoretical and practical aspects of qualitative methods, designs, analyses and presentations, including ethnography, discourse analysis, and historization.

The other, quantitative track, is for students of ICH only:

**XXXX Advanced Module in Quantitative Methods**

The students will get deeper insight about different quantitative study designs, and also how to obtain and use large (internet-based) data sets and register data. Further, the course focuses on critical reading of quantitative studies. In the workshop in protocol writing, the students will work to develop their own study protocol for their master thesis. They will learn to develop a feasible research idea and to formulate a research objective, to calculate the needed sample size and to select the sample in a representative way, to decide on appropriate design and methods for data collection and data handling, and to discuss their chosen methods.

**XXXX Research ethics**

Research ethics is a sub-discipline of bioethics and deals with the normative rules of play of doing research. Its institutionalization in research ethics committees and research governance frameworks impinges on the lives and activities on many researchers and research participants every day. This module provides an introduction into the history and development of medical and health related research ethics, its core normative principles and the application of these principles in quantitative and qualitative research involving human beings (patients, healthy research subjects, informants) and/or the use of personal data stored in biobanks and health registries. In addition, it provides knowledge about relevant national and international ethics guidelines and regulations, and discusses issues pertaining to research integrity and breaches of good research practices (scientific misconduct); fabrication, falsification plagiarism, conflicts of interest, conflicts surrounding authorship etc. Finally, it addresses challenges pertaining to safe storage of sensitive data (TSD), and preparation of Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics (REC) applications and applications to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The course is shared with students from the Interdisciplinary Health Research.

## Course Descriptions, Elective Courses

The students choose from a pool of elective courses both in the second and forth semester. The courses are developed both internally in the programme, in the master programme Interdisciplinary Health Research (Tverrfaglig helseforskning), and in other master programmes in Helsam (see above). Students may also attend courses offered by other faculties and universities but have to gain approval from the program prior to participation, ensuring that such courses are relevant for the learnings outcomes of the ICH Mphil. program. As a rule upon successful completion five ECTS points are awarded per course.

***Courses offered in English:***

**INTHE 4113 Medical anthropology**

The course introduces anthropological perspectives on health, illness and medicine, and explores the interactions between biology, society and culture. It aims to present a contextual and comparative approach in which cultural and social dimensions of health-related issues are emphasized and placed within broader political and historical processes. It will also offer a people-centred approach to understanding global health initiatives and interventions.

**INTHE 4114 Epidemiology in practice**

The course will focus on analyses and interpretations of epidemiological data using data labs in combination with lectures. In class, the students will analyse datasets provided by the lecturers. The aim of the course is to obtain enhanced understanding the field of epidemiology and to develop practical skills in data analyses.

**INTHE 4117 Global epidemics**

This course considers the changing nature of global epidemics of infectious diseases and the global, national and local responses to these, including the role of research and evaluation. It looks into the social, cultural, economic and political factors surrounding epidemic threats such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or the flu, their prevention and control.  We will examine gender relations, poverty, stigma and discrimination, vulnerable populations and community-based prevention and control; as well as global responses to HIV/AIDS, from patient activism to ‘global health’ interventions and issues of biosecurity. Attention will also be given to understanding the role of biosecurity in framing global epidemics and the relation of responses to epidemic to health system development.

**INTHE 4118 Reproductive and sexual health and human rights**

This course explores the many factors that complicate the implementation of reproductive and sexual health rights, and addresses the legal, religious and cultural aspects of central controversies. Central topics are also the serious health consequences of restrictions on reproductive and sexual health rights, including maternal mortality, high STD prevalence, vulnerability to HIV. Emphasizing gender perspectives, the course also focuses on female genital mutilation and early childbearing.

**INTHE 4121 Water and food in a global health perspective**

The course provides basic knowledge on the global challenges related to water, sanitation, food availability and security, as well as waterborne and foodborne infections and intoxications. Through an interdisciplinary approach, combining essential scientific knowledge from fields of anthropology, clinical medicine, history, microbiology, public health and toxicology the course provides appropriate tools to understand and tackle challenges related to water, food and health. Focus will be given to the most vulnerable populations.

**XXXX Migration and health**

This course focuses on migration as a process and its associated health problematic, including infections, violence, mental illness and lack of access to health care. The students will gain insight into current global migratory trends, and challenges of health care provision in situations of temporariness, such a refugee camps and continuous transmigration. Moreover, the students will learn about national and international frameworks that govern migration, as well as access and entitlements to health care. Central to the course is also the different methodological approaches in studies of migration and health.

**XXXX Health literacy**

What is health literacy? How do we understand the concept today and how has it evolved? What are the concept's scientific and ideological underpinnings? What is the relevance of health literacy (micro – macro levels)? How can health literacy be researched? How can health literacy be supported through interventions? How does health literacy connect to knowledge translation? What is the role of health literacy in global health policy and in promoting health equity? The course will focus on these questions based on current research and theories in the field.

**XXXX Medical Humanities: History, Philosophy and Literary Studies**

The course introduces knowledge and methods from the humanities applied to health sciences and medicine. The aim is to familiarize students with the cultural and historical context of medicine. This includes historical knowledge of how healthcare, medicine and being a patient have evolved over time, philosophical considerations on the peculiar nature of medicine as science and practice, literary studies on artistic ways of reflecting on health and disease and how writers depict different kinds of illness narratives in novels and plays. It will also introduce important methods of three fields, which all are based in the interpretation of text – adding to this document research in case of history, systematic considerations of concepts and terms in the case of philosophy, and tools for the analysis of text in the case of literary studies.

**INTHE 4119 Evidence-based health policy (in collaboration with Heled)**

This course explores health policy making as a process from an analytical point of view and from a normative perspective; how can we understand public policy processes, how can and should research findings be utilised to inform policies? A normative framework for evidence informed health policy will be explored. Its strengths and weaknesses will be examined and related to debates about the role of research, what evidence is and how research and researchers can inform policies. The course will focus on policies related to governance, financial and delivery arrangements within health systems, and implementation of these. The course will, through examples and case-based group work, introduce an approach to making policy briefs based on research evidence.

Note: The course content is under revision currently

**INF5761 Health information technology (in collaboration with Dept of Informatics)**

The course introduces health information systems to both health and informatics students. The course is built on a long-lasting research project with partners from Africa and Asia, and focuses on both the use of information in health management and in running a health information system in national health services.

Note: The course content is under revision currently. Specifically it is evaluated with the intention of being integrated with a the in Digitalization and Innovation in Health Services

### ***Courses available in Norwegian:***

**XXXX Makt og kunnskap i helsetjenesten**

Hvem definerer hva som er verdt å vite om helsa vår? Hvordan brukes makt av hvem for å bestemme hva som er best for andre? Hvilke ideologier bestemmer hvilken kunnskap vi stoler på og hvem vi anser som eksperter? Hvordan innvirker moderne styringsformer (som New Public Management) på kunnskapsutviklingen i helsetjenesten? Hvordan tas vitenskapelig kunnskap til inntekt for politiske beslutninger? Disse og liknende spørsmål vil bli tematisert med utgangspunkt i aktuell forskning og teori på feltet. I tillegg vil du opparbeide deg begreper og tenkemåter til å analysere din egen ekspertkunnskap kritisk.

**XXXX Funksjon og funksjonsevaluering**

Hvordan forstås funksjon i medisin og helsefag? Hvordan kan funksjon og funksjonsevne studeres og evalueres? Hva legges i begrepet nedsatt funksjonsevne og når snakker vi om at det er en funksjonshemming? Hvordan kan sykdom innvirke på pasienters funksjonsevne? Hvordan defineres bra funksjon og er det noe annet enn å fungere bra? Dette er noen av de spørsmålene som belyses og tematiseres gjennom kurset. Vi vil ta utgangspunkt i forskning, men også i kliniske eksempler fra medisin og helsefag. Gjennom kurset tar vi for oss både observert, målt og erfart funksjon, og belyser ulike tilnærminger som observasjon, direkte målinger og bruk av spørreskjema.

**XXXX Kjønnsperspektiver på sykdom og helse**

Emnet gir en integrert innføring i hvordan sykdom og helse kan forstås og utforskes ved hjelp av nyere kritisk kjønnsteori. Nøkkelbegreper som kropp, femininitet og maskulinitet anvendes aktivt i fortolkninger av hvordan sykdom og helse erfares, forstås og behandles i moderne medisin og helsefaglig kunnskapspraksis. Dette betyr gjerne å snu opp-ned på historiske og tilvante kulturelle forestillinger om hvordan kjønn og sykdom henger sammen. Forbindelseslinjene mellom biologiske og sosiale kjønnsforskjeller tas spesielt opp til diskusjon og analyse.

**XXXX Aldring i et livsløpsperspektiv**

Emnet gir deg inngående kunnskap om teoretiske, metodiske og empiriske problemstillinger om temaet livsløp og aldring.

**Hovedtema**

* Sentrale perspektiver, begreper og teorier knyttet til kunnskapsutvikling innen biologisk og psykososial aldring
* Forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling om holdninger til aldring og eldre
* Sentrale metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning innenfor normal aldring.

**XXXX Helsepedagogikk**

Emnet gir deg innsikt og kunnskap om sentrale teoretiske, metodiske og empiriske problemstillinger for å fremme læring, mestring og helse hos brukere og pasienter som har helseutfordringer og deres pårørende.

**Hovedtema**

* Sentrale perspektiver, begreper og teorier om kunnskapsutvikling knyttet til helsepedagogisk arbeid.
* Forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling om pasientlæring og mestring
* Sentrale metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning om pasienters læring og mestring

**XXXX Digitalisering og innovasjon i helsetjenesten**

Emnet gir deg innsikt og kunnskap om teoretiske tilnærminger og metodologiske prinsipper knyttet digitalisering og innovasjon i sentrale arbeidsprosesser i helsetjenesten. Du vil få kjennskap til sentrale føringer som påvirker digitalisering og innovasjon, og vurdere betydningen dette har for å realisere helsetjenester av god kvalitet. Det blir presentert og diskutert empiriske studier der digitalisering og innovasjon har betydning for helsepersonells arbeidsprosesser, muligheter for brukerdeltakelse og hvordan teknologien påvirker samhandlingen mellom helsepersonell og brukere. Emnet setter søkelys på helsedata og helseinformasjon, og hvordan dette brukes i helsetjenesten i forhold til kontinuitet, kvalitet og kompetanse i helsehjelp, og oversikt, utvikling og styring i helsetjenesten.

**XXXX Innføring i medisinsk og helsefaglig etikk – 5 stp.**

Emnet i medisinsk og helsefaglig etikk gir deg ferdigheter i å analysere og diskutere etiske problemer i helsetjenesten. Teoriene og prinsippene du lærer i emnet har et praktisk siktemål: De hjelper deg å argumentere, og å påvise svakheter i andres argumentasjon.

**XXXX Etikk i helsetjenesten – 5 stp**

Emnets faglige innhold er klinisk etikk med særlig vekt på etiske problemstillinger i helsetjenesten.

***Courses to be further developed:***

Implementation research Register research

## Teaching Methods and Expected Work Effort

Teaching methods include lectures, seminars, workshops, different forms of group work, student presentations and self-study. The teaching methods are interactive and involve a high degree of active participation from the students. The program encourages students to form study groups to discuss readings and topics. The international classroom, a closely collaborating group of students from different countries and professional backgrounds, is a central pedagogical principle of the ICH master’s program and it is actively supported by the program leadership and administration.

The following teaching methods are used in the programme for International Community Health:

**Lectures**

In the first semester, up to 16 hours per week are taught through lectures. In the second semester, up 8 hours (approximately, in average) per week will be lectures. The lectures shall serve as:

* To give an introduction to a topic
* To give an overview of an academic field, models and theories
* To give a summary of latest research findings
* To give a summary of group work or seminar discussions

**Group work**

Starting from first semester, and increasing in the following 2nd- 4th semester, group work is an important teaching method in the programme. As the programme brings together students from varied backgrounds, both academically, and by region, group work provides an opportunity to learn from fellow students’ experiences. Included in group work is problem-based learning and case-based learning.

**Seminars**

Guided seminars are used actively for student presentations and discussions, either based in group work, reading of academic articles or observations. Students will often be employed in a planning, training or teaching setting after graduation, and the programme therefore aims to develop communication skills for this purpose.

**Field visits**

In some of the courses, the students visit health facilities, NGOs or other relevant institutions to international community health based in Norway.

**Self-study**

Students are encouraged and supported to expand their knowledge and skills through self-study, starting from supplied reading in the courses. The capacity to pursue targeted self-study is an essential skill in research training.

## Compulsory Teaching

Parts of the programme, especially in the first semester, are compulsory. In methodology teaching, the program combines compulsory teaching in the first semester with targeted tracks of either qualitative or quantitative content in the second semester. Here the students are provided with a choice between to different but compulsory classes. Such classes are offered in the first, second and fourth semester. Elective classes are taught in the second (and alternatively forth) semester.

## Rules Regarding Absence from Compulsory Teaching

In all of the compulsory courses, the students have to participate in at least 80 % of the teaching to be allowed to participate in the exam. This is also the case in most elective courses. Attendance in class will be registered.

If the students are not able to attend, due to unexpected illness or other valid reasons, they must notify the course coordinator immediately. If this requirement is not met without a valid reason they will have to retake the course and the exam the following year in order to be able to submit the master thesis. Valid reasons for absence can be:

* Student’s own illness – confirmed by a medical certificate
* Students children’s illness – confirmed by a medical certificate
* Death of close family member
* Other distinct reasons for being absent – approved by the program

For reasons that need approval, the students have to hand in a written application to the coordinator well in advance of the course.

## Internationalisation

Traveling abroad is supported by the program when the students are collecting data for their master projects during their fieldwork and the project suggest such travelling.

**Fieldwork**

All master's students spend a semester doing fieldwork for the master's thesis. Many choose to travel abroad. After completing the coursework in the first two semesters, the students will undertake independent fieldwork of up to six months. This is an opportunity to travel abroad and to choose the destination, based on the topic of the student’s thesis and in cooperation with the supervisor. The data you collect during the fieldwork will form the basis of the master's thesis. Our master's students travel to all parts of the world, from Norwegian towns and villages, to Ghana, Nepal, Brazil, Sudan, Ethiopia, Malawi, Tibet, Canada, the US and India, among some. Norwegian students are encouraged to carry out their research abroad. For international students, field work is usually conducted in their home countries or in a third country.

**Exchange programs**

The program is working actively with getting involved in student exchange on both the receiving and giving end. We have considerable experience in this. The institute and the faculty are involved in several exchange programs that are potentially available for the master students.

**In addition**

The program actively supports the creation of an international classroom, for example through targeted advertising for good applicants. This gives the students insight into cultural varieties even without leaving the country. The program encourages and supports students to give their projects and master’s thesis an international focus. This includes both the choice of research topic and of field sites. It also entails a requirement on the side of the program: To supply teaching that actively highlights the international dimensions of subjects and methods taught. The concept of international community health is more than the program’s thematic subject, it is the programs guiding focus.

## Language of Instruction

All courses offered by the program are taught in English.

## The Master Thesis

(INTHE4012)

**Content:**

The planning of the thesis starts in first semester and intensifies in second semester, leading to the development of a project protocol or proposal. The second year focuses on working on the master thesis; first by producing and collecting data in the third semester, often involving fieldwork, and analysing and writing the thesis in the fourth semester. The master thesis grants 60 credits.

3rd semester

In the third semester the students will collect data for their master's thesis through fieldwork. However, it is possible to write a master thesis based on an analysis of data previously collected by others or a meta-analysis based on literature studies.

For those who are not on fieldwork, the programme offers voluntary seminars on analysis.

4th semester

In this semester students are analysing their data and work on a master’s thesis, which they submit and defend in an oral exam. At the outset of this process the program offers targeted seminars on organizing the work process, working with datasets of both qualitative and quantitative type and finally on how to write academic prose.

Upon completion and successful defence of their thesis, the students will be able to perform skills acquired during the previous two years of study. These include planning and carrying out a research project; how to process a substantial amount of data in pursuit of their project; have command of relevant interdisciplinary theory and research methods; having improved their skills in writing academic prose; carrying out empirical research and having handle well the relationship between research question, theoretical perspective, research design and choice of method; address questions relating to basic social categories such as race, class or gender according to academic standards; they will have acquired the ability to see the relationships between choice of research question, theoretical perspective, research design and choice of method. More specifically on their thesis, the students will analyze a specific topic in a meaningful and original fashion. In doing so they will demonstrate their mastery of relevant theory and of primary or secondary sources. They will have written a scholarly thesis or an equivalent piece of text that encapsulates their approach and the result. They will demonstrate their ability to pose and to deliver a sound answer to a relevant research question in a given amount of time. They will be able to answer to criticism to their approach and defend it in an academic debate.

## Exam, grading system and evaluation

A variety of exam forms are employed in the programme:

* School exam
* Take home exam (essays)
* Oral exams
* Group presentations
* Master thesis

Exams and Grading

As a general rule, exams in mandatory classes are graded as passed/fail, while exams in elective classes are graded on an A-F scale, where A through E are passed and F is fail. The master thesis exam consists of two parts: 1) the student gives a 30 minutes presentation of the thesis, and 2) an approx. 60 minutes oral exam with one external and one internal examiner. The supervisor is present during the exam. The candidate is given one grade, including oral examination and the thesis, using the letter grades A to F.

See explanation on the grade at https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/index.html.

Rules on signing up for, participating, postponing, plagiarism and communication of results in exams are those defined by UiO.

# Appendix 1:

# Emnebeskrivelser, obligatoriske felles emner

## Introduction to qualitative methods 5 credits

Course content

The course introduces basic concepts and tools in qualitative methodology and aims to familiarize students with the fundamentals of qualitative research as well as the qualitative techniques common in the study of health and health services. Following the course, the students will know for which research questions qualitative research is appropriate, be able to develop and design a qualitative research project and recognise the ethical challenges of qualitative research. Through lectures and seminars, the course will introduce different techniques to produce and analyse data from in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations and reading of texts.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

The course will provide you with knowledge of

* the basic fundamentals of qualitative research
* the main methods used in qualitative research
* the quality criteria of qualitative research
* the basic principles of how to analyse qualitative data

**Skills**

You will learn to

* explain the fundamentals of qualitative research
* develop a qualitative research design
* produce qualitative data
* analyse, review and present qualitative data
* identify and reflect upon ethical challenges in qualitative research

**General competence**

You will be able to

* critically evaluate qualitative research within health and health services research
* recognize the pros and cons of qualitative designs
* reflect upon ethical and scientific standards of qualitative research

This course is available only to students enrolled in masters programmes at Institute of Health and Society.

Overlapping courses

INTHE4016 4 credits

HELSEF4200 5 stp.

Teaching

The course runs in a period of three weeks and consists of two lectures and two seminars per week. In the seminars, the students do exercises and assignments. In addition, a group assignment runs parallel with the lectures and seminars. 80% attendance in the seminars is required to be eligible to take the exam. Attendance will be registered.

Examination

Examination consist of three part of which all has to be passed

* oral presentation of the group assignment
* written examination (4 hours)

## Introduction to Quantitative methods – 5 credits

Course content

The course introduces basic concepts and tools for quantitative research, including methods used in the study of health outcomes and health services. With completion of the course, the students will be familiar with what type of research questions can be answered using quantitative methods, and have knowledge of the most common quantitative designs. Lectures, and seminars with applicable exercises, will introduce different designs for collecting quantitative data, including observational studies, surveys, and randomized controlled trials, in addition to the fundamental statistical methods used to analyze, interpret and display data. The students will also learn to recognize ethical challenges particular to quantitative research.

Learning outcomes

**Knowledge**

The course will provide you with knowledge of

* basics of quantitative research and when it should be used
* main methodological approaches used in quantitative research
* data collection in quantitative research
* validity and reliability in quantitative research
* basic principles of data analysis

**Skills**

You will learn to

* explain some fundamentals of quantitative research
* describe quantitative research designs and their applications
* use software for statistical analyses
* use basic statistical analyses, interpret and present results

**General competence**

You will be able to

* critically evaluate research methodology
* reflect upon scientific and ethical standards of quantitative research

This course is available only to students enrolled in Master programmes at Institute of Health and Society.

Overlapping courses

INTHE4007 2 credits

HELSEF4200 5 stp.

Teaching

The course runs in a period of three weeks and consists of two and three lectures, and two seminars per week. In the seminars, the students do exercises and assignments. 80% attendance in the seminars is required to be eligible to take the exam. Attendance will be registered.

Examination

Examination consist of a written examination (4 hours)

## Medical and Health Related Research Ethics – mandatory module – 5 credits

Course content

Research ethics is a sub-discipline of bioethics and deals with the normative rules of play of doing research. Its institutionalization in research ethics committees and research governance frameworks impinges on the lives and activities on many researchers and research participants every day. This module provides an introduction into the history and development of medical and health related research ethics, its core normative principles and the application of these principles in quantitative and qualitative research involving human beings (patients, healthy research subjects, informants) and/or the use of personal data stored in biobanks and health registries. In addition, it provides knowledge about relevant national and international ethics guidelines and regulations, and discusses issues pertaining to research integrity and breaches of good research practices (scientific misconduct); fabrication, falsification plagiarism, conflicts of interest, conflicts surrounding authorship etc. Finally, it addresses challenges pertaining to safe storage of sensitive data (TSD), and preparation of REC applications and applications to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

Learning outcomes

**Knowledge**

* good understanding of the history of research ethics.
* know the core ethical principles and norms guiding medical and health related research.
* know the national and main international guidelines and regulations pertaining to medical and health related research.
* know the responsibility of a researcher when involving human subjects.
* know what is needed to gain approval from REC or from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).
* know what safe storage of sensitive data (TSD) entails.

**Skills**

* be able to interpret and apply ethical principles and norms in local research practices.
* understand ways to protect human participants during a study.
* be attentive to how to include vulnerable groups in research.
* know what is correct citation and use of scientific references.

**General Competence**

* familiarity with central events and factors that led to the development of medical and health care research ethics
* familiarity with the function and role of research ethics committees;
* familiarity with the pitfalls of scientific misconduct and ways to avoid such conduct.

Teaching

Five days course, total 30 hours. Topical introductions and group assignments. Work in interdisciplinary groups of 4-5 persons.

Overlapping courses

HELSEF4200 2 stp

INTHE4008 5 stp

Examination

Home exam (writing of a 10 pages essay on a selected topic in research ethics).

Grading: Passed/not passed. 80% attendance is required.

## Advanced module in qualitative methods – 10 credits

Course content

The course provides in-depth knowledge and skills in the qualitative methodologies used in the study of health and health services and enable the students to develop their MA-thesis design and project description. Through lectures and seminars, the course teaches both theoretical and practical aspects of qualitative methods, designs, analyses and presentations.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

The course will provide you with knowledge of

* Central theories and models in qualitative health research
* Ethnographic approaches
* Discourse analyses
* Historization
* Literature review

**Skills**

You will learn to

* Conduct a literature review
* Develop the qualitative research design for your master project
* Record and transcribe qualitative data
* Conduct various types of analyses
* Critically review qualitative research articles
* Produce academic texts from qualitative data

**General competence**

You will be able to

* Develop and conduct a feasible research project for the master programme using qualitative research methodology

Overlapping courses

INTHE4007 5 credits

INTHE4006 3 credits

HELSEF4200 10 credits

Teaching

The course consists of lectures and seminars. In the seminars, the students do exercises and assignments, and work on developing their project and project description. 80% attendance in the seminars is required to be eligible to take the exam. Attendance will be registered.

Examination

Home exam: a project description of the planned master thesis.

# Appendix 2:

# Course descriptions, elective courses

## Makt og kunnskap i helsetjenesten – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Hvem definerer hva som er verdt å vite om helsa vår? Hvordan brukes makt av hvem for å bestemme hva som er best for andre? Hvilke ideologier bestemmer hvilken kunnskap vi stoler på og hvem vi anser som eksperter? Hvordan innvirker moderne styringsformer (som New Public Management) på kunnskapsutviklingen i helsetjenesten? Hvordan tas vitenskapelig kunnskap til inntekt for politiske beslutninger? Disse og liknende spørsmål vil bli tematisert med utgangspunkt i aktuell forskning og teori på feltet. I tillegg vil du opparbeide deg begreper og tenkemåter til å analysere din egen ekspertkunnskap kritisk.

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg

* kjennskap til sentrale teorier om forholdet mellom makt og kunnskap
* forståelse for hvordan makt og kunnskap henger sammen i helsetjenesten
* kunnskap om hvordan forholdet mellom makt og kunnskap kan analyseres

**Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære å

* analysere situasjoner og dokumenter for å identifisere kunnskapsmakt
* legge fram og diskutere egne analyser om makt og kunnskap
* kritisk diskutere og vurdere egen og andres ekspertmakt

**Generell kompetanse**

Du som tar dette emnet vil

* kunne integrere maktperspektiver i din egen forskning
* kunne formidle og diskutere faglige problemstillinger knyttet til kunnskap og makt i helsefaglig praksis og teori

## Funksjon og funksjonsevaluering – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Hvordan forstås funksjon i medisin og helsefag? Hvordan kan funksjon og funksjonsevne studeres og evalueres? Hva legges i begrepet nedsatt funksjonsevne og når snakker vi om at det er en funksjonshemming? Hvordan kan sykdom innvirke på pasienters funksjonsevne? Hvordan defineres bra funksjon og er det noe annet enn å fungere bra? Dette er noen av de spørsmålene som belyses og tematiseres gjennom kurset. Vi vil ta utgangspunkt i forskning, men også i kliniske eksempler fra medisin og helsefag. Gjennom kurset tar vi for oss både observert, målt og erfart funksjon, og belyser ulike tilnærminger som observasjon, direkte målinger og bruk av spørreskjema.

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg

* kunnskap om funksjon, funksjonsevne, -begrensning, og -evaluering sett fra ulike perspektiver innen medisin og helsefag
* grunnleggende kunnskap om forskjellige vitenskapelige metoder som kan benyttes for å studere funksjon på forskjellig nivå
* praktisk erfaring med endret funksjonsevne
* kunnskap om medisin og helsefagenes forskjellig syn på funksjon og ulike måter å vurdere og evaluere funksjon

**Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære

* om ulike synspunkter på funksjon og funksjonsevne fra medisin og helsefag
* ulike metoder for å vurdere og å studere funksjon
* å legge frem og diskutere eget arbeid på en vitenskapelig måte
* å delta i vitenskapelige diskusjoner om andres faglige arbeid

**Generell kompetanse**

Du som tar dette emnet vil

* få kunnskap om hvordan funksjon og funksjonsevne kan studeres og evalueres
* få innsikt i hvilken betydning disse begrepene kan ha i medisin og helsefaglig teori og praksis

## Kjønnsperspektiver på sykdom og helse – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Emnet gir en integrert innføring i hvordan sykdom og helse kan forstås og utforskes ved hjelp av nyere kritisk kjønnsteori. Nøkkelbegreper som kropp, femininitet og maskulinitet anvendes aktivt i fortolkninger av hvordan sykdom og helse erfares, forstås og behandles i moderne medisin og helsefaglig kunnskapspraksis. Dette betyr gjerne å snu opp-ned på historiske og tilvante kulturelle forestillinger om hvordan kjønn og sykdom henger sammen. Forbindelseslinjene mellom biologiske og sosiale kjønnsforskjeller tas spesielt opp til diskusjon og analyse.

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg

* innsikt i ulike analytiske tilnærminger til kjønn i helsefaglig forskning
* kjennskap til sentrale kjønnsteoretiske begreper og tradisjoner
* en integrert forståelse av hva et kjønnskritisk perspektiv på sykdom og helse innebærer
* kunnskap om betydninger av kjønn i helsefaglige profesjoner

**Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære å

* identifisere, analysere og dekonstruere relasjoner og mønstre som har med ulike betydninger av kjønn å gjøre i medisinsk og helsefaglig teori og praksis
* anvende sentrale begreper fra kjønnsforskningsfeltet på helsefaglige problemstillinger
* integrere et kjønnsperspektiv i egen forskning
* legge fram og diskutere eget vitenskapelig arbeid
* delta i en vitenskapelig diskusjon om andres faglige arbeid

**Generell kompetanse**

Du som tar dette emnet vil

* ha kunnskap om hva et kjønnsperspektiv er og hvilken betydning kjønn kan ha i helsefaglig teori og praksis
* kunne integrere kunnskap om kjønn i egne selvstendige arbeider
* kunne diskutere faglige problemstillinger knyttet til kjønn, sykdom og helse

## Aldring i et livsløpsperspektiv – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Emnet gir deg inngående kunnskap om teoretiske, metodiske og empiriske problemstillinger om temaet livsløp og aldring.

**Hovedtema**

* Sentrale perspektiver, begreper og teorier knyttet til kunnskapsutvikling innen biologisk og psykososial aldring
* Forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling om holdninger til aldring og eldre
* Sentrale metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning innenfor normal aldring.

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg

* Inngående kunnskap om sentrale teoretiske perspektiver som belyser biologiske og psykososiale aldringsprosesser og aldring i et livsløpsperspektiv
* Innsikt i sentrale metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning om holdninger til aldring og eldre
* Kunnskap om empiriske studier som belyser normal aldring

**Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære å

* Analysere forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling innen temaene eldre og samfunn, samt vurdere livshistoriens betydning i alderdommen
* Gjøre rede for hvordan fysiske og psykososiale aldringsprosesser kan påvirke eldres helse og hverdagsliv
* Gjennomføre et livshistorieintervju og reflektere over livshistoriens betydning for eldres helsemessige situasjon

**Generell kompetanse**

Du vil

* kritisk vurdere kunnskapsstatus om normal aldring og analysere implikasjoner for helsetjenesten
* gjengi ulike perspektiver på vesentlige problemstillinger og vitenskapelige metodevalg knyttet til normal aldring
* bidra til faglig, kritisk og konstruktiv debatt om aldring, eldres rolle og posisjon i samfunnet
* anvende prinsipper for å gjennomføre et livshistorieintervju og reflektere over livshistoriens betydning for eldres helsemessige situasjon.

## Helsepedagogikk – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Emnet gir deg innsikt og kunnskap om sentrale teoretiske, metodiske og empiriske problemstillinger for å fremme læring, mestring og helse hos brukere og pasienter som har helseutfordringer og deres pårørende.

**Hovedtema**

* Sentrale perspektiver, begreper og teorier om kunnskapsutvikling knyttet til helsepedagogisk arbeid.
* Forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling om pasientlæring og mestring
* Sentrale metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning om pasienters læring og mestring

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg

* kunnskap om sentrale teoretiske perspektiver som belyser aktuelle problemstillinger om pasienters læring og mestring av sykdom/helseproblemer
* innsikt i sentrale, metodologiske overveielser knyttet til forskning om pasientundervisning, læring og mestring
* kunnskap om empiriske studier som belyser helsepedagogiske utfordringer og muligheter

**Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære å

* analysere forskningsmessige temaer og forskningsprosjekter for systematisk kunnskapsutvikling som har betydning for helsepedagogikk

**Generell kompetanse**

Du vil

* kritisk kunne vurdere kunnskapsstatus om helsefremmende arbeid og analysere implikasjoner for pasienter og helsetjenesten
* kunne gjengi ulike perspektiver på vesentlige problemstillinger og vitenskapelig metodevalg knyttet til helsefremmende arbeid
* kunne bidra faglig, kritisk og konstruktivt i utvikling av pasientpedagogiske tilnærminger i helsetjenesten

## Innføring i medisinsk og helsefaglig etikk – 5 stp.

Kort om emnet

Emnet i medisinsk og helsefaglig etikk gir deg ferdigheter i å analysere og diskutere etiske problemer i helsetjenesten. Teoriene og prinsippene du lærer i emnet har et praktisk siktemål: De hjelper deg å argumentere, og å påvise svakheter i andres argumentasjon.

Hva lærer du?

Etter gjennomført emne skal du kunne analysere og diskutere aktuelle etiske dilemmaer i medisinsk etikk på samfunnsnivå og på klinisk nivå. Du skal kunne analysere og vurdere ulike argumenter med bakgrunn i medisinsk-etiske teorier og prinsipper. Du skal kunne anvende slik etikkunnskap for å belyse etiske problemstillinger i helsetjenesten.

**Kunnskaper**

Ved fullført emne skal du kunne

* gjøre rede for aktuelle argumenter og syn i forhold til noen aktuelle etiske problemstillinger i helsetjenesten og i yrkesutøvelsen

**Ferdigheter**

Ved fullført emne skal du kunne

* analysere og vurdere argumentasjon i medisinsk-etiske spørsmål med henblikk på relevans og holdbarhet
* argumentere for løsninger på etiske spørsmål ved hjelp av relevante teorier og prinsipper i den medisinske etikken

**Generell kompetanse**

Ved fullført emne skal du kunne

* reflektere over medisinen og helsefagenes verdigrunnlag og grenser
* reflektere over skillet mellom etikk, fag og jus i medisin og helsefag

## Etikk i helsetjenesten – 5 stp

Kort om emnet

Emnets faglige innhold er klinisk etikk med særlig vekt på etiske problemstillinger i helsetjenesten.

Hva lærer du?

**Kunnskap**

Etter fullført emne skal du

* ha innsikt i et utvalg klinisk-etiske dilemmaer og de etiske argumentene som brukes, særlig knyttet til: kliniske prioriteringer, pasienters selvbestemmelse, beslutningskompetanse, bruk av tvang og beslutninger om livsforlengende behandling
* kunne redegjøre for bestemmelser i helselovgivningen som er sentrale for klinisk-etiske dilemmaer
* ha kunnskap om hvordan vurdere pasienters beslutningskompetanse

**Ferdigheter**

Etter fullført emne skal du kunne

* identifisere etiske dilemmaer i helsetjenesten
* anvende fire sentrale helseetiske prinsipper (respekt for autonomi, velgjørenhet, ikke skade samt rettferdighet) i drøfting av klinisk-etiske spørsmål
* drøfte klinisk-etiske spørsmål ved hjelp av en strukturert sekstrinns drøftingsmetode

**Generell kompetanse**

Etter fullført emne skal du kunne

* reflektere kritisk over forholdet mellom etikk, fag og helselovgivning

## Health Literacy – 5 credits

Course content

What is health literacy? How do we understand the concept today and how has it evolved? Wat are the concept's scientific and ideological underpinnings? What is the relevance of health literacy (micro – macro levels)? How can health literacy be researched? How can health literacy be supported through interventions? How does health literacy connect to knowledge translation? What is the role of health literacy in global health policy and in promoting health equity? The course will focus on these questions based on current research and theory in the field.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

You will:

* understand and critically reflect on health literacy as a concept and its relevance for health services in a broader perspective and in different contexts
* understand and critically reflect on how health literacy can be researched and practiced in a health services perspective

**Skills**

You will be able to:

* critically analyze and discuss the concept of health literacy and its relevance.
* describe and discuss how health literacy can be researched
* give examples and discuss possible interventions to promote and support health literacy in different contexts and on different health services levels

**General Competence:**

* With this course, you will be able to integrate health literacy in research, and impart and discuss academic issues related to health literacy in practice and research

## Medical Humanities: History, Philosophy and Literary Studies – 5 stp.

Course content

The course introduces knowledge and methods from the humanities applied to health sciences and medicine. The aim is to familiarize students with the cultural and historical context of medicine. This includes historical knowledge of how healthcare, medicine and being a patient have evolved over time, philosophical considerations on the peculiar nature of medicine as science and practice, literary studies on artistic ways of reflecting on health and disease and how writers depict different kinds of illness narratives in novels and plays. It will also introduce important methods of three fields, which all are based in the interpretation of text – adding to this document research in case of history, systematic considerations of concepts and terms in the case of philosophy, and tools for the analysis of text in the case of literary studies. Such skills, in their entirety, serve to train empathy and analytical reflection, both being important dimensions of being a health professional.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

You will learn about

* the development of healthcare professions since about 1800
* the history of production of medical knowledge
* information sources in medical humanities
* central discussion and concept in the philosophy of science and medicine
* the use of literary illness narratives

**Skills**

You will learn to

* historize medical professions, institutions and knowledge
* interpret and discuss different text in medical humanities
* do document research and consult secondary sources
* discuss central concepts related health and disease

**General competence**

You will be able to be

* familiarity with the field of medical humanities
* reflect upon historical, philosophical and literary text regarding disease and health
* write an academic essay

Teaching

Five days course, total 30 hours, spring. Topical introductions and group assignments (lectures, seminars and class room exercises). 80% attendance is required.

The course can be taught in Norwegian or English, depending on the attendants’ command of languages.

Examination

Home exam (writing of a 10 pages essay on a selected topic in medical humanities).

Grading: Passed/not passed?

Access requirement

Open to all students in the Medical faculty’s master’s program and in the medical education program.

## Water and food in a global perspective – 5 credits

Course content

The course provides basic knowledge on the global challenges related to water, sanitation, food availability and security, as well as waterborne and foodborne infections and intoxications. Through an interdisciplinary approach, combining essential scientific knowledge from fields of anthropology, clinical medicine, history, microbiology, public health and toxicology the course provides appropriate tools to understand and tackle challenges related to water, food and health. Focus will be given to the most vulnerable populations.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

You will get to know

* The risk of infectious diseases associated with water and food
* The diseases associated with chemicals in food and water (toxicology)
* The association between climate changes and risk for food production and malnutrition
* The effect of diet changes on human development and health
* How multiple disciplines bring unique perspectives to questions regarding health and society

**Skills**

You will learn how

* Water-and foodborne diseases are diagnosed and managed
* Outbreaks of water-and foodborne diseases are investigated
* These diseases can be controlled and prevented

**General competence**

You will attain

* An understanding of methods used in the field environmental epidemiology
* An understanding of the societal forces driving health risks associated to food and water

## Medical anthropology – 5 credits

Course content

This course introduces anthropological perspectives on health, illness and medicine, and explores the interactions between biology, society and culture. It aims to present a contextual and comparative approach in which cultural and social dimensions of health-related issues are emphasized, and placed within broader political and historical processes. It will also offer a people-centered approach to understanding global health policies and interventions.

Through lectures and group work we will make extensive use of examples from mainly Africa, Asia and Norway. Four themes will be central to the course:

* cultural and social constructions of health, disease, illness and the body, and the role of medical pluralism
* the significance of power relations and inequality in the global distribution of health and illness
* the globalization of biomedical technologies,
* the social, cultural and political implications of global health policies

The course is taught over five days, through lectures and extensive use of seminars.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

You will learn about anthropological perspectives and approaches to topics  such as

* Social and cultural aspects in analysis of health, illness and medicine.
* Illness narratives and explanatory models of illness
* Medical pluralism
* Medicines and pharmaceuticals
* Global health policies and practices
* Clinical trials and interventions
* Birth, death and dying

**Skills**

You will learn

* to think critically about the relations between culture, health and illness
* to discuss the body in cultural perspective
* to explain biomedicine as a social and cultural system
* to explain how power relations and inequality are relevant to health and healing
* to critically analyse the relationship between global health policies and practices and local perspectives
* to explore the potential of socio-cultural perspectives within their own *projects*

**General competence**

You will be able to

* engage with debates about health, illness and medicine in a cross-cultural perspective, in both oral and written forms

## Epidemiology in practice – 5 credits

Course content

This course will focus on analyses and interpretation of epidemiological data using data labs in combination with lectures. You will analyze datasets provided by the coordinator as a part of the course. The aim of the course is to obtain enhanced understanding of basic concepts in the field of epidemiology and practical skills in data analyses.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

You will learn the following by attending the course

* elaborate on how data can be analyzed with the use of epidemiological/statistical methods
* elaborate on how research findings can be presented

**Skills**

You will learn to

* formulate specific research questions
* make an analyses plan
* analyze data
* present results in an appropriate format
* summarize results in an abstract and in a presentation
* use acquired skills to interpret and evaluate epidemiologic studies

**General competence**

You will be able to

* evaluate epidemiological findings with respect to chosen aim, analyses, and presentation of results

## Migration and health – 5 credits

Course content

You will learn about global migration patterns, health challenges and responses, focusing particularly on mental health, violence, dependency as well as infectious diseases and responses. Moreover, the course focuses on ways to provide health services to people in a process of migration, including to transmigrants and in people in refugee camps.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge:**

You will have knowledge of:

* the ways in which migration can function as a social determinant of health
* how structural and historical factors influence health and illness
* current and historical migratory trends and concomitant health problematic
* main challenges of cross-cultural health service development.

**Skills:**

You will learn to:

* engage critically with risk behavior-oriented analyses and understandings of health and illness

**General competence:**

You will be able to:

* to start to investigate migration and health challenges and services in particular settings

## Reproductive and sexual health and human rights – 5 credits

Course content

Reproductive health is a well defined and not too controversial concept. Reproductive rights may not be, as it implies abortion rights, which for some is very complicated. Sexual health is probably easy as long as it only applies to sexually transmitted diseases, but sexual rights, again, may incorporate sexual behaviours that in some cultures are seen as very deviant. The course explores why reproductive and sexual health rights are so complicated to implement, and addresses the legal, religious and cultural aspects of the controversies as well as the very serious health consequences of these restrictions, like maternal mortality, high STD prevalence, vulnerability to HIV, knowledge of risks, and cultural practices like FGM and early childbearing. A gender perspective is the overriding principle for the analysis.

### **Content**

* Gender, definition and concepts, mainstreaming
* Social determinants of health and illness, inequities in health, gender and social dimensions.
* Human rights framework, and health rights, to reproductive and sexual health and rights.
* Health Policy, policy analysis, informing policy, policy, implementation and strategy.
* Health systems. Macro context, financing, delivery of care, service planning, a tool for change, evaluation of quality of care.

### **Case studies**

* Abortion rights and sex selection
* Violence against women and reproductive health rights
* Access to care and maternal survival
* HIV, sexuality and stigma
* Unmet needs – contraceptives and other needs
* Integration of services, including HIV & STD in maternal health care

Learning outcomes:

You will be able to:

* identify human rights issues that can be subject to research for policy change (evidence based policy)
* develop an analytical framework and a methodological, interdisciplinary approach to understanding the gender, legal and health dimensions in human rights

## Global epidemics – 5 credits

Course content

This course considers the changing nature of the global epidemics; global, national and local responses to epidemics; and the role of research and evaluation. It takes HIV/Aids as a starting point and focuses on the social, cultural, economic and political factors surrounding HIV/AIDS and its prevention and control. We will examine gender relations; poverty; stigma and discrimination; vulnerable populations; and community-based prevention and control; as well as global responses to epidemics, from patient activism to ‘global health’ interventions.

Learning outcomes

**Knowledge**

You will develop your knowledge about:

* The impact of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and the flu in different countries and communities
* Gender, poverty, and stigma dimensions of epidemics
* The links between HIV and TB regarding vulnerable population, prevention and treatment issues.
* Current and future patterns of epidemic prevention, treatment, care, and intervention
* The architecture of response: programmes and interventions – including global, national and community-level responses, biosecurity
* Epidemic prevention and social public health
* Drugs, pharmaceutical companies and global activism
* HIV/AIDS, clinical trials and ethical issues surrounding access to treatment
* Epidemic responses and ‘global health’; the impact of global funding on the control of epidemic threats
* The contribution of social scientific research to understanding epidemics, including emerging areas of research

## **Skills**

**You will learn:**

* to explore the impact of epidemics, as well as prevention and treatment policies in particular countries, regions and communities
* to think critically about the relations between the epidemics, gender relations, stigma and poverty
* to explain the role and impact of global, national and local responses to epidemics
* to critically analyze issues surrounding access to treatment such as the role of the pharmaceutical industry and of global activism
* to discuss the ethical issues surrounding clinical drug trials in resource-poor communities.
* to explore how the issues raised by epidemics, prevention and treatment may be relevant to your own research projects.

## **General competence**

* You will gain an overview of the key issues surrounding the epidemics in relation to public health, global health and community-based prevention and treatment.
* You will be able to develop arguments and engage in discussion in both oral and written forms.
* Critical thinking will be encouraged through an understanding of the history and present of epidemics and responses to them.

## INTHE 4119 Evidence-based health policy (in collaboration with Heled), 10 credits

This course explores health policy making as a process from an analytical point of view and from a normative perspective; how can we understand public policy processes, how can and should research findings be utilised to inform policies? A normative framework for evidence informed health policy will be explored. Its strengths and weaknesses will be examined and related to debates about the role of research, what evidence is and how research and researchers can inform policies. The course will focus on policies related to governance, financial and delivery arrangements within health systems, and implementation of these. The course will, through examples and case-based group work, introduce an approach to making policy briefs based on research evidence.

**Knowledge**

You will:

* understand and critically reflect on framework for public policy making and evidence informed health policy
* understand and discuss evaluation methods and methods for analyzing the effectiveness and impact of interventions

**Skills**

You will be able to:

* systematically search for, identify and assess systematic reviews of the effectiveness of health system interventions
* critically analyze systematic reviews and policy briefs that address strategies to improve health systems
* analyze and describe options for addressing a health policy relevant issue
* develop policy briefs where a health policy problem and options for addressing it are informed by evidence from research

**General Competence**

* You will be able to reflect on and critically assess how health policies and reform are developed and informed by research findings and reflect on the ethical implications of how interests and stakeholders are involved

Note: The course content is under revision currently

# Digitalisering og innovasjon i helsetjenesten – 5 stp.

## Kort om emnet

Emnet gir deg innsikt og kunnskap om teoretiske tilnærminger og metodologiske prinsipper knyttet digitalisering og innovasjon i sentrale arbeidsprosesser i helsetjenesten. Du vil få kjennskap til sentrale føringer som påvirker digitalisering og innovasjon, og vurdere betydningen dette har for å realisere helsetjenester av god kvalitet. Det blir presentert og diskutert empiriske studier der digitalisering og innovasjon har betydning for helsepersonells arbeidsprosesser, muligheter for brukerdeltakelse og hvordan teknologien påvirker samhandlingen mellom helsepersonell og brukere. Emnet setter søkelys på helsedata og helseinformasjon, og hvordan dette brukes i helsetjenesten i forhold til kontinuitet, kvalitet og kompetanse i helsehjelp, og oversikt, utvikling og styring i helsetjenesten.

## **Hovedtema**

* Sentrale perspektiver, begreper og teorier om kunnskapsutvikling ved digitalisering og innovasjon og metodologiske overveielser i forskning om samhandling og velferdsteknologi
* Drøfting av systematisk utvikling av arbeidsprosesser basert på enkel og sikker tilgang til pasientopplysninger i digital form, brukerinvolvering og digitale innbyggertjenester, og beslutningstaking og forskningbasert pågjenbruk, deling og aggregering av helsedata og helseinformasjon til styring, utvikling av helsetjenestene og brukermedvirkning
* Muligheter for samarbeid og tverrfaglige team med digital støtte; med nye modeller, roller og former for samarbeid mellom pasient, pårørende og helsepersonell
* Innovasjon som verktøy eller mål, metoder for behovsdrevet innovasjon i helsetjenesten, premisser for implementering og evaluering av innovasjoner

## Hva lærer du?

### **Kunnskap**

Emnet gir deg kunnskap om

* Digitalisering og innovasjon i arbeidsprosesser, spesielt i forhold til kontinuitet, kvalitet og kompetanse.
* Hva som er kvaliteter ved helsedata og helseinformasjon, og mulighetene dette gir for videre bearbeiding og analyser
* Pasient- og helsepersonellperspektiver i utvikling, implementering og evaluering av teknologi for digitalisering og innovasjon

### **Ferdigheter**

Du vil lære å

* Analysere og kritisk vurdere betydning og effekter (positive og negative) av digitalisering og innovasjon i helsetjenesten, dvs. «hva er mulig», «hva er nyttig», og «hva er trygt»
* Kritisk reflektere over digitalisering og innovasjoners etiske implikasjoner
* Anvende teoretisk og empirisk kunnskap for utvikling av egen praksis
* Reflektere over behov for innovative helsetjenester i forskjellige situasjoner/kontekster,
* Argumentere for brukersentrert, teoribasert (evidence based) og behovsdrevet innovasjon og anvende relevante modeller for utvikling, implementering og evaluering av digitaliserings- og innovasjonsprosjekter

### **Generell kompetanse**

Du vil kunne

* kritisk vurdere kunnskapsstatus knyttet til sentrale føringer for digitalisering og innovasjon, og analysere implikasjoner for helsetjenesten
* gjengi ulike perspektiver på vesentlige problemstillinger og vitenskapelig metodevalg knyttet til digitalisering og innovasjon i helsetjenesten
* bidra faglig, kritisk og konstruktivt i utvikling av tverrfaglig praksis

## INF5761 Health information technology (in collaboration with Dept of Informatics)

The course introduces health information systems to both health and informatics students. The course is built on a long-lasting research project with partners from Africa and Asia, and focuses on both the use of information in health management and in running a health information system in national health services.

Note: The course content is under revision currently. Specifically it is evaluated with the intention of being integrated with a the in Digitalization and Innovation in Health Services

**Topics:**

* The principles of an action-led, district based information system
* Calculation of target populations for a given catchment population
* Audits of existing information systems at district level
* Development of goals, targets and indicators for district level programmes
* Calculation of different types of indicators using local data
* Presentation of information in the form of tables and draw graphs
* Analyse indicators for trends over time and compare different facilities and districts
* Provision of feedback to data collectors and community structures
* Using the computer to enter data and getting basic feedback
* Current debates on topics of health management

**Learning outcome**

Participants will learn about health information, be able to use it in health management and become skilled in using tools for analyzing it.

## Implementation research

Tverrfaglige grupper fra flere avdelinger bør utvikle dette

## Register research

Tverrfaglige grupper fra flere avdelinger bør utvikle dette

1. There is an ongoing discussion with study admin related to this matter. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)