



## **SYLLABUS**

**GHANA HEALTH AND SOCIETY**  
**Instructor: Prof. Kodjo Senah (PhD)**  
**Language of Instruction: English**  
**Contact Hours: 45**

**ACCRA, GHANA**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This six-week program is intended to enhance students' understanding of health issues within the context of the developing world, with Ghana as a focus. Consequently, the nexus between the health status of the people and their socio-political habitus will be discussed. In this regard, students will be introduced to a wide range of macro issues such as the impact of colonialism, globalization and political economy on the health of Ghanaians. Other issues such as the social and cultural beliefs and practices that impact on the health-seeking behavior of the people will also be examined.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The holistic objective of this course is to introduce students to the political, economic, historical, geographical and cultural factors that influence public health strategies and measures in the context of a developing country such as Ghana.

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Acquire some insight into the forces that have given a peculiar orientation to the health infrastructure of Ghana;
- Be able to identify the diseases of public health importance and to critically assess the effectiveness of measures for their control;
- Be able to critically assess policies and programmes for enhancing urban sanitation;
- Gain some insight into the cultural beliefs and practices of Ghanaians regarding sanitation and diseases/conditions of public health importance including mental health.
- Appreciate the spatial distribution of the population and the health implications of this.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**

Since this course is meant to expose students to public health problems of Ghana, instructional methodology will comprise mixed approaches:

- Lectures;
- Field visits;
- Students' class discussion/presentations on assigned topics; and
- Showing of documentaries/films on topics of public health interest.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the course, students are expected to have:

- Acquired a wider understanding of the multiple factors that shape the character of health issues in a developing country such as Ghana;
- Appreciated the rationale for the existence of plural medical systems in Ghana;
- Acquired a deeper appreciation of some aspects of Ghanaian social and cultural life that impact positively and negatively on the health and well-being of the people.
- Appreciate the role and impact of the pharmaceutical industry on health care delivery in Ghana.

## **METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)**

A student's final grade (100%) will be computed from the following:

- a. Class attendance and active participation in class (15%);
- b. Assessment from mid-semester examination (20%)
- c. A critical paper based on observations on ONE field trip (25%); and
- d. Assessment from end of semester examination (40%).

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **WEEK ONE**

#### **Lecture One**

**Topic: An overview of global and local influences on Ghana's health care delivery system.**

#### **Reading:**

- Addai, S. (1996) Evolution of Modern Medicine in a Developing Country Ghana (1880-1960). London Durham (Chaps 1-4).

#### **Lecture Two:**

**Topic: Ghanaian Cultural practices and their health implications.**

#### **Reading:**

- **M.J. Assimeng (1999 ): Social Structure of Ghana: Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.**
- **G.K. Nukunya (2001). Tradition and Change in Ghana. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.**

## **WEEK TWO**

### **Lecture One**

**Topic: Ghana's urbanization and human settlement patterns and policies and their health implications.**

#### **Reading:**

- **G.K. Nukunya (2001). Tradition and Change in Ghana.**
- **Ghana's environmental health policy document (to be provided).**

### **Lecture Two**

**Topic: Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and other health challenges in rural communities in Ghana.**

**There will be a documentary on onchocerciasis (river blindness) and dracunculiasis (guinea worm).**

#### **Reading:**

**Students must read more on this from the internet.**

## **WEEK THREE**

**FIELD VISIT: A transect field visit to Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, fecal dump site ('Lavender Hill') and traditional settlement in Accra ( eg Bukom and James Town). (Essay Topic: Critically examine the relationship between Ghana's urban settlement patterns and the health of the people).**

### **Lecture Two:**

**Mid-term examination based on topics/issues discussed so far (1-2 pm).**

**Lecture Topic: The ecological and socio-cultural epidemiology of Malaria in Ghana (2-5 pm).**

#### **Reading:**

- **C.S. Ahorlu (2009) Cultural epidemiology for malaria control in Ghana. Basel: University of Basel. (Chaps. 3, 4, 6 and 7).**
- **Adjepong, Irene (1992) Malaria: ethnomedical perceptions and practice. Social Science and Medicine Vol. 35 (2): 131-137.**

## **WEEK FOUR**

### **Lecture One**

**Topic: The socio-cultural context of maternal mortality in Ghana (Lecture and documentary).**

#### **Reading:**

- **K. A. Senah (2003) *Maternal mortality: the other side*. African Studies Research Review NS 19: 47-55.**
- **Ghana Statistical Service 2009. Ghana Maternal Health Survey (2007).**

### **Lecture Two**

**Topic: Pharmaceuticals/medicines in the health care delivery of Ghana: medical cost and medical carey.**

#### **Reading:**

- **K. A. Senah (1994) Blofo Tshofa. Local perception of medicines in a Ghanaian coastal community. In: M.L. Tan and Nina Etkin (eds) Medicines: Meanings and Contexts. Quezon City: Health Action International.**

- Najmi K et al. (1992) *Drugs Policy in Developing Countries*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Igun, U. A. Why we seek treatment here: retail pharmacy and clinical practice in Maiduguri, Nigeria. *Social Science and Medicine* Vol.24 (8):689-695

## **WEEK FIVE**

### **Lecture One**

**Topic: Mental Health Care in Ghana.**

#### **Reading:**

- Ghana International Journal of Mental Health (2011)
- Ama de-Graft-Aikins; S. Agyei-Mensah; C. Agyemang (2013) Chronic Non-communicable Diseases in Ghana. Social Science Series (Vol.1) RIPS.

### **Lecture Two.**

#### **FIELD TRIP TO PANTANG MENTAL HOSPITAL**

**(Essay topic: CRITICALLY DISCUSS THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN GHANA AND OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS WHERE NECESSARY).**

## **WEEK SIX**

### **Lecture One**

**Topic: The dynamics of Traditional Medicine and its utilization in Ghana .**

#### **Reading**

- P.A. Twumasi (1974) *Medical Systems in Ghana*
- K.A. Senah et al. (2001) *A Baseline Study into Traditional Medicine Practice in Ghana*.

**(a) SUBMISSION OF REFLECTION PAPER.**

**(b) FINAL TERM EXAMINATION**

**NB: IN ADDITION TO READING MATERIALS CITED, STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE EXTENSIVE USE OF THE INTERNET FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED.**

## **COURSE READINGS**

*\*Please include page numbers of chapters*

This should include texts that students are required to engage with as part of the course. Suggested readings should be listed separately. If current articles are frequently added or subtracted, there should be a mention that students will also be provided additional texts, and generally, what the topic is and the source (newspapers, online, film, etc.)

**Standard citation needs to include: APA**