



SYLLABUS

GHANA HEALTH AND SOCIETY

Instructor: Dr. Kodjo Senah

Contact Hours: 45

Language of Instruction: English

ACCRA, GHANA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The enjoyment of good health is a perennial human quest. Human beings often take health for granted until something goes wrong with the body. However, health is not simply a biological or medical issue; it is the end product of several other factors. This course is premised on the belief that the health status of individuals and the society is crucially linked to the interaction between the individual or groups and the social and physical environment. Consequently, this course draws on perspectives from public health, history, sociology/anthropology, economics, political science, geography and other social sciences in discussing health issues. Although most of the examples in this course are drawn from Ghana, they are relevant for other developing countries as well.

Students whose future career aspirations are in the field of community development, social work and health-related occupations as well as those merely interested in studying health-related cultural beliefs and practices of Ghanaians will find this course very insightful.

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.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

This will be based on:

- Participation in class discussions and class attendance (5%);
 - 3 Quizzes (30%). Dates to be communicated to students.
 - 2 Class presentations based on field visits (20%);
 - Mid-semester examination (20%); and
 - Final examination (25%)
- TOTAL: 100%

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One: A brief history of public health in Ghana: from the colonial to present day.

Reading materials:

1. Addai, S. (1996) *Evolution of Modern Medicine in a Developing Country Ghana 1880-1960*. London: Durham (Chaps 1-4).
2. Patterson, D. K. (1981) *Health in Colonial Ghana: Disease, Medicine and Socio-economic Change (1900-1955)*. Waltham, Mass: Crossroads Press.

Week Two: Ghana's Health Care Delivery System

Reading materials:

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

Week Three: Ghana's urban population growth and sanitation challenges.

Reading materials:

1. Mba, C. J. and S.O. Kwanchey (2007) *Population, Health and Development*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Press.
2. Government of Ghana (2012). *2010 Millennium Development Goals Report*. Accra: Government Printer.
3. Anarfi, J.K. and C. Ahiadeke (2006). *Improving the health of children among the urban poor in the city of Accra*. Accra: ISSER.
4. **Ghana Government Environmental Sanitation Policy (2010)**
5. Oteng-Ababio, M. (2010) Solid waste management in Ghana: willingness to pay for improved services. *Ghana Journal of Geography Vol. 2: 85-107*.
6. Oteng-Ababio, M (2013). Solid waste management in Ghana: the past, the present and the future. In: Owusu, G. et al (eds), *Selected Readings in Geography*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.

Week Four: A visit to waste disposal sites in Accra and its environs.

Week Five: Ghana's water supply challenges and the health burden

Reading materials:

1. Students to access www.ghanaweb.com for more information on this topic.
2. Kabila, S. (2010). Domestic water supply, sanitation and health in rural Ghana: perspectives from Nkwanta District. *Ghana Journal of Geography* Vol. 2: 163-188.

Week Six: Ghana's neglected tropical diseases (NTD): there will be a lecture and a documentary on onchocerciasis and dracunculiasis.

Reading materials:

1. Student should access www.moh-ghana.org for more information on these diseases.

Week Seven: Mid-semester examination based on lectures/fieldtrips from Week 1 to 6.

Week Eight: The socio-cultural context of malaria incidence and prevalence and control strategies in Ghana.

Reading materials:

1. C.S. Ahorlu (2009) *Cultural epidemiology for malaria control in Ghana*. Basel: University of Basel. (Chaps. 3, 4, 6 and 7).
2. Ghana Statistical Services (2009). *Ghana Demographic and Health Survey-2008*. (Chap.12).

Week Nine: A visit to Sodom and Gomorrah, a slum for migrants in Accra.

Week Ten: Abortion and adolescent reproductive health in Ghana.

Reading materials:

1. Gyekye, K. (2003) *African Cultural Values*. Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company (Chap. 5)
2. Ghana Statistical Services (2009). *Ghana Demographic and Health Survey-2008*. (Chap.5).
3. Bleek, W. and A. Darko (1986). Illegal abortion in southern Ghana: Methods, motives and consequences: *Human Organization* Vol.45 (4): 333-343.
4. Ampofo, A. A. et al. (2007). Examining the sexual exploitation of children on the streets of Accra. Unpublished paper, University of Ghana.

Week Eleven: The state, the people and mental illness in Ghana.

Reading materials:

1. Twumasi, P. A. (1974) *Medical Systems in Ghana*. Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation
2. Field, M.J. (1960). *Search for Security in Ghana*. London: Crown Agent.
3. Akyeampong, E. (1995). Alcoholism in Ghana: A socio-cultural exploration. *Culture Medicine and Psychiatry*. 19(2):261-80.
4. Avotri, J. Y. and Walters, V. (1999). You just look at our work and see if you have any freedom on earth: Ghanaian women's account of their work and their health. *Soc. Sci. & Med.* 48:1123-33.
5. Students will study and critique Ghana's new Mental Health Law (2012).

Week Twelve: A visit to Accra and Pantan Psychiatric hospitals for practical insight into providing mental health care services in Ghana.

Week Thirteen: The economic and socio-cultural context of child malnutrition in Ghana.

Reading materials:

1. Ghana Statistical Services (2009). **Ghana Demographic and Health Survey-2008. (Chap. 11).**
2. Bataar, C. (2005). **Malnourished infants in Nandom Rehabilitation Centre.** Accra: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana.

Week Fourteen: Revision

Week Fifteen: Final semester examination based on lectures/fieldtrips from Week 8 to 13.