

MPHP49, Climate and Public Health in a Global Perspective, 7.5 credits

Klimat och folkhälsa i ett globalt perspektiv, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Master's Programmes Board on 2025-05-23. The syllabus comes into effect 2025-05-23 and is valid from the autumn semester 2025.

General information

Course within the Master Programme in Public Health.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of study Specialisation

Public Health Science	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
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Learning outcomes

The course provides an introduction as to how climate, from a global perspective, can affect our health. The overall aim of the course is to highlight the health aspects of climate change, in particular those related to global public health challenges. It also provides relevant knowledge on the causes of climate change and how different climate models are used to describe them. The course also aims to highlight how climate change affects societies in different parts of the world from a variety of perspectives, including geographical, economic and social conditions. The course provides a broad basis for further work on climate change and how it affects our health, for example in healthcare, community planning, urban design, labour, food security or development work.

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to:

- explain how and why the climate is changing,

- describe how various changes to the climate produce different health outcomes in different socio-economic and geographical contexts,
- explain the difference between climate mitigation and adaptation measures and their different health implications,
- Describe and explain how different types of societies can adapt to climate change.

Competence and skills

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to:

- discuss how climate change, in a specific geographical context, affects public health, and relate this to both the context's specific conditions for dealing with these new health challenges and to global goals and policy documents,
- relate climate change to new research findings on the prevalence of specific diseases,
- identify and assess health impacts of a changing climate and apply these in relation to different specific conditions.

Judgement and approach

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to:

- using a scientific approach, evaluate the ongoing public debate in different geographical contexts on the health impacts of climate change.

Course content

The course content is divided into four different modules:

Module 1: How and why is the climate changing?

Describes and discusses the basic science behind climate change. This means explaining at a glance what global warming and climate change are and how they manifest around our planet - and how we know that the Earth is getting warmer and the climate is changing.

Module 2: Why is climate change a public health concern?

The module describes and discusses how climate change affects health at the population level. Particular emphasis will be placed on the impact of extreme weather, air pollution, food supply - and by extension diet - on human health. We are also looking at how different climate changes produce different health outcomes in different socio-economic and geographical contexts, but also studying how to link climate change to different public health impacts.

Module 3: Epidemiology of climate change - how does climate change affect specific diseases?

This module describes and discusses how climate change is changing the risk of contracting different types of diseases, ranging from non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease and mental illness to communicable diseases such as water- and vector-borne diseases. We also share new data that in various ways describes the spread of diseases to new locations as a result of climate change.

Module 4: How do we need to adapt our societies and lives to limit the health impacts of climate change?

The module describes and discusses the international efforts being made under the UNFCCC and other initiatives at global, national and local levels, as well as the countervailing forces that seek to delay these efforts. The module focuses on how communities can adapt to ongoing climate change to limit negative health impacts.

Course design

The course is structured around the four modules. Each module includes recorded lectures, course literature consisting of various texts that are then used as a basis for seminars that take place on site where the course participants discuss the course literature, and a test with multiple choice questions.

The seminars are organised in such a way that students need to prepare for each seminar by reading the course literature and completing a small preparatory task. The seminars aim, in part, to discuss and contrast examples of different health challenges and how they manifest themselves differently in different geographical locations, both in terms of climate change and health outcomes.

During the course, students also work on an individual assignment. This aims to discuss how different climate changes in a specific geographical context affect public health and to relate this to both the context's specific conditions for dealing with the new health challenges and to global goals and policy documents. Another important part of this individualised work will therefore be to identify and assess the health impacts of a changing climate and apply them in relation to different specific conditions.

Assessment

The course is examined through three different assessed components:

- Written tests, 3 credits, Pass/Fail/Pass with distinction
- Course portfolio, 1,5 credits, Fail/Pass
- Written assignment, 3 credits, Fail/Pass/Pass with distinction

The first part of the examination consists of four written tests, one for each module. The second is a course portfolio. The third is a written assignment.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction

In order to obtain a grade for the written part of the test, you must obtain a pass mark for the sum of the four parts of the test. After the student has written the four parts of the test, the total score is calculated and on this basis the grades Fail, Pass and Pass with Distinction are given. The re-examination for the test item is carried out item by item.

In order to obtain a pass mark on the course portfolio, the student must have completed preparation and actively participated in all four seminars. Re-examinations will be organised in the first instance in the form of a re-sit, provided that at least three students need to be re-examined in the same seminar. If this condition is not fulfilled, a re-examination will take place with a written assignment.

In order to obtain a pass mark for the written assignment, all the assessment criteria for a pass mark in the assessment matrix that students receive at the start of the course must be met. The assignment is graded according to the grading scale Fail, Pass and Pass with Distinction.

For the grade of pass, all examinations must have been passed. A grade of Pass with Distinction requires a grade of Pass with Distinction on both the written tests and the written assignment.

Entry requirements

Bachelor's degree. English 6.