



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

### 6,314: Global Health Governance

ECTS credits: 4

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (30%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (70%)

Examination time: Term time

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[6,314,1.00 Global Health Governance](#) -- English -- [Eckl Julian](#)

#### Course information

#### Course prerequisites

An interest in global health is advisable.

#### Learning objectives

- Students understand the fascinating but often overlooked interconnections between global health and various other global challenges.
- Students display subject-specific competences in the field of global health governance as it presents itself from different perspectives. Students are able to follow discussions among practitioners or exchanges among academics.
- Moreover, students link issues of global health governance to competencies that they have developed in other areas; for example, they identify political, legal, or financial aspects of global health governance.
- Against the background of these competencies, students select and analyse relevant global health problems that have not been discussed in class yet. They skilfully share their insights interactively and in writing. Ultimately, the course enables students to conduct their own practice-related or academic project (e.g. a critical evaluation of existing health policies or research on a neglected aspect of global health).
- Students demonstrate their competencies through active regular participation, a group-work assignment, and a term paper.

#### Course content

In introducing students to global health governance, the seminar familiarizes them with central actors, contemporary issues, and major conflicts that shape this interesting and dynamic field. A particular attention is paid to the World Health Organization (WHO) that was set up "to act as the directing and co-ordinating authority on international health work" (Article 2 of WHO's constitution) and that has a dual role as a forum and as an actor. Moreover, the problems covered in the seminar often speak to more general questions of global governance and international political economy.

Global health governance is characterized by cycles of crisis and neglect. While pandemics dominate headlines, health-related problems quickly fall into oblivion during "normal times". Moreover, just like peace or development, health is one of those issues that receive broad support when they are discussed as general goals of international society but cause heated controversies when specific policies for their achievement are proposed. Actually, the closer one investigates international debates about health, the more lines of conflict emerge. While some of these conflicts appear to be of a more technical-biomedical kind, most of them refer to larger societal, political, legal, and economic questions, which link global health to other global challenges like the future of the world economy.



The conflict over access to medical tools is an illustrative case in point. Some people see very few problems with the contemporary economic arrangements that structure the development, production, distribution, and consumption of medical tools. Others disagree and criticise the overreliance on market mechanisms to identify research areas and to determine prices. From their perspective, this situation leads to flawed research priorities and denies large parts of the world's population access to existing medical tools (e.g. in the fight against Covid-19) while corporations can use their intellectual property rights to make monopoly profits.

But it is not only the conflicts over such biomedical solutions to health problems that cause headaches. Often, there is even disagreement over the issue of what causes ill-health and who is responsible for it. For example, some observers argue that the contemporary obesity epidemic would be the responsibility of the food industry that adds too much fat and sugar to its products while advertising them aggressively and even to children; by contrast, industry representatives point out that people simply do not engage in enough physical activity. While the former tend to call for more public regulation of the food industry, the latter often emphasise that more sports is the answer and that consumers, who know best what is good for them, have a right to buy the kind of food that they like the most. From yet another perspective, both positions are potentially problematic since they display a tendency to stigmatize people who do not conform to a social (weight) norm; this third position also raises the general issue of how and by whom the boundary between health and illness is actually to be defined.

While public health has always been more controversial than one would expect, matters have become even more complex in the last decades when more and more health issues became transnational issues. The classic example for this development are infectious diseases (e.g. Covid-19, swine flu/H1N1) whose potential to affect populations in all corners of the world has greatly been enhanced through globalization. This increasingly transnational character of health problems raises anew the perennial question of what international organizations and actors should be allowed to have a say on health matters. Formally, the WHO would be the obvious candidate but, in reality, a multitude of public and private actors have meanwhile joined the field.

## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

For each session, readings will be announced that students have to prepare before coming to class. Moreover, students will sometimes be requested to conduct practical exercises as a preparation for class. Usually, the exercises will be assigned after class and will have to be completed until the following week. Both the readings and the exercises will be discussed in class. Throughout the semester, students will have to document their learning experience in a learning journal that serves as the basis for the first part of the term paper.

In addition to the weekly assignments on which students work individually, there will be a group-work assignment that runs for several weeks and whose results will be presented in class. Students will be randomly assigned to the groups.

Finally, students will have to write their term papers individually.

## Course literature

The literature will be announced on the digital learning platform during the semester.

## Additional course information

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## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/2)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog



Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	30%
Duration	--

## Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

## Remark

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## Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

Student groups have to work without outside help and according to the known citation standards.

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## 2. Examination sub part (2/2)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	70%
Duration	--

### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

### Remark

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### Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

### Supplementary aids

Students have to work without outside help and according to the known citation standards.



## Examination content

**Presentations:** Students work in groups to which they are randomly assigned. Each group analyses a global health problem. The insights are shared and discussed with the other members of the course. The presentations can be conducted in a classic slides-based or in a more innovative format. While it is not necessary that all group members speak for the same amount of time during the presentation, they are all expected to attend in person. Moreover, all group members have to participate actively in the group work – the preparation of the presentation in particular.

**Term papers:** Students work individually. Term papers have two parts. The first part gives an account of the author's learning experience throughout the semester and builds on a learning journal that is structured around individual sessions but accounts also for activities outside of the classroom – in particular the preparatory work for the individual sessions and the group work. The second part of the term paper builds on the insights gained during the semester and analyses a global health problem that requires action by practitioners and/or further research by academics. The term paper has to be submitted on the digital learning platform.

## Examination relevant literature

The compulsory part of the literature that will be announced on the digital learning platform during the semester will also serve as the minimum reading requirement. All such materials will have been announced by the last session. For the purpose of both the group work and the term paper, students will have to identify and read literature beyond the minimum reading requirement.

### Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).