



HRVATSKO
KATOLICKO
SVEUCILISTE
ZAGREB
UNIVERSITAS
STUDIORUM
CATHOLICA
CROATICA
ZAGREBIA

Detailed Course Syllabus

Academic year:

2025/2026

Semester:

Winter semester

Study programme:

Sociologija (R) (elective)

Year of study:

1

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Name: A History of Epidemics, Medicine and Society.

Abbreviation: IZBP-162

ECTS: 4

Code: 198067

Prerequisites: No

Total Course Workload

Teaching Mode

Total Hours

Lecture

30

Seminar

15

Class Time and Place: HKS - according to the published schedule

II. TEACHING STAFF

Course Holder

Name and Surname: Puljizević Kristina

Academic Degree:

Professional Title: izvanredni profesor

Contact E-mail:

kristina.puljizevic@unicath.hr

Telephone:

Office Hours: According to the published schedule

Course Assistant

III. DETAILED COURSE INFORMATION

Teaching Language: English

Course Description

This course, following the subject and methods of the social history of medicine, analyses the relationship between communities and diseases epidemics, as well as infectious diseases that, at various points in history, "paralyzed" the collectives, influencing economic trends, demographics, and mentalities. The course is structured both chronologically and thematically. Students will be introduced to the earliest recorded epidemics, emerging with the adoption of settled lifestyles. The course will then explore ancient medicine, which formed the foundation of medical responses to disease challenges up until the modern era. Attention will be given to the medieval phenomenon of leprosy and the particularly devastating impact of bubonic plague epidemics, starting with the Black Death of 1348, and continuing thereafter. The course will investigate the dubious causes behind the disappearance of certain diseases (such as leprosy and plague); the conditions leading to the emergence of new ones (such as syphilis in the 16th century); changes in society's sensitivity toward persistently present diseases (like tuberculosis); and the response to sudden epidemics in the 19th century (such as cholera). The growing role of medicine and the increasing interest of state structures in preventing and treating diseases during the 18th and 19th centuries will also be highlighted. Finally, the course will analyze the first postmodern infectious disease, AIDS, in a time when society had already come to terms with the departure of large-scale and devastating epidemics.

Educational Outcomes

1. Master basic concepts from history of medicine
2. Recognize fundamental processes from the social history of medicine and the history of epidemics
3. Distinguish processes of individual historical periods and the social history of medicine themes according to historiographic approaches and research achievements
4. Recognize the hierarchy of historical factors and explain the causality of historical processes
5. Critically analyze and interpret historical records

Textbooks and Materials

Required

Blažina Tomić, Zlata. Blažina Vesna. *Expelling the Plague: The Health Office and the Implementation of Quarantine in Dubrovnik 1377-1533*. Montreal&Kingston, London, and Ithaca: McGillQueen's University Press, 2015. (selected chapters)

Harrison, Mark. *Disease and the Modern World. 1500 to the present day*. Cambridge: Polity press, 2004. (selected chapters)

Omran, Abdel R. The Epidemiologic Transition: A Theory of the Epidemiology of Population Change. *The Milbank Quarterly* 83(4): 731-757.

Porter, Roy. *The greatest benefit to mankind. A medical history of humanity from antiquity to the present*. London: Fontana Press, 1997. (selected chapters)

Rothenberg, Gunther E. The Austrian Sanitary Cordon and the Control of the Bubonic Plague: 1710-1871. *Journal of the History of Medicine*, 1973.

Snowden Frank M., *Epidemics and Society from the Black Death to the Present*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2019. (selected chapters)

Supplementary

Dugac, Željko. *Kako biti čist i zdrav. Zdravstveno prosvjeđivanje u međuratnoj Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2010.

Grmek, Mirko Dražen. *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

Grmek, Mirko Dražen. *History of AIDS: Emergence and Origin of a Modern Pandemic*. Princeton University Press, 1990.

Spinney, Laura. *Pale Rider. The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World*. London: Vintage, 2017.

Examination and Grading

To Be Passed DA	Exclusively Continuous Assessment NE	Included in Average Grade DA
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Prerequisites to Obtain Signature and Take Final Exam

1. **Regular attendance at classes** - attendance of at least 70 % of classes according to the study program.
2. **Fully completed seminar obligations** - prepared and submitted assignments (critical analysis of selected historical records)
3. **Obtaining a minimum success rate of 35 % during classes within the assigned teaching activities** - achieved cumulatively.

Examination Manner

Grade Scale:

insufficient (1) - 0 to 49.9%

sufficient (2) - 50-64.9%

good (3) - 65-79.9%

very good (4) - 80-89.9%

excellent (5) - 90% and above.

a) Teaching activities:

- a. Seminar obligations - 20 % of the grade
- b. Midterm exam - 50 % of the grade

b) Final exam:

- a. Final exam - oral or written: 30 % of the grade (*to pass, it is necessary to solve at least 50% of the exam*)

Grading Manner

1. **Teaching activities** (continuous knowledge assessment, midterm exams, seminar).
2. **Final exam** (oral or written)

Detailed Overview of Grading within ECTS

ACTIVITY TYPE	ECTS Student Workload Coefficient	GRADE PERCENTAGE (%)
Class Attendance	1,2	0
Seminar Presentation	0,56	20
Midterm Exam	0,70	25
Midterm Exam	0,70	25
Total in Class	3,16	70

Final Exam	0,84	30
TOTAL ECTS (Classes + Final Exam)	4	100

IV. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

[Seminari]

#	Topic
1	Researching the epidemics in the past: historical records and methodology
2	Thucydides' description of the "plague" of Athens
3	Hippocratic oath, Hippocratic aphorisms
4	Tristan and Iseult (the leprosy)
5	Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron (The Black Death)
6	Instructions on plague prevention (19th century)
7	Amatus Lusitanus and Syphilis treatment in 16th century Dubrovnik
8	James Gillray's cartoon on vaccination against smallpox
9	Generale normativum in re sanitatis 1770.
10	School of Public Health – publications on tuberculosis prevention
11	Instructions for cholera control (1849)
12	Causes of death in 19th century – parish records
13	Article on the Spanish flu (1919)
14	Article on the AIDS (1980s)
15	Examples from art, propaganda, and everyday life

[Predavanja]

#	Topic
1	Introductory lecture
2	Diseases in prehistory, the first epidemics
3	Epidemics in antique; Hippocrates and humoral medicine
4	Leprosy; the disease and the social identity of the sick
5	Black death: the bubonic plague of the 14th century
6	Quarantines, lazarettos, sanitary cordons: anti-plague measures until the 19th century
7	"The Columbian exchange": epidemics in the early modern world
8	From variolation to vaccination: the prevention of the smallpox
9	Public health development (18th and 19th century)
10	Tuberculosis and the efforts of the health enlightenment

11	Cholera, the "germ theory" and the bacteriology development
12	Epidemiological transition
13	Spanish influenza
14	AIDS - the first postmodern epidemic
15	Epidemics and society