

# INTL 4615: The Politics of Disease Control

University of Georgia

Spring 2018, MWF 11:15am-12:05pm

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## Welcome!

This is a class about how governments solve (or fail to solve) a core problem facing any society - how to limit the damaging effects of disease. Recent global epidemics like Ebola and Zika have demonstrated that disease can threaten social order and prosperity. What may be harder to perceive is the crucial and complex role that governments play in preventing and controlling disease. Our purpose will be to better understand the link between political institutions and disease outcomes. We begin by asking why disease is such a difficult social problem. We then use contemporary and historical examples of successful and failed attempts at disease control to understand how governments respond in the face of this challenge.

## How will you be graded?

I will use two exams, **midterm** and **final**, to evaluate your understanding of course concepts. In general terms, good performance on the exam requires engagement with all of the course materials, including readings, lectures and class discussion. Details on the exams will be provided as they approach. I will drop the lower of your two exam grades (midterm or final) so that your higher score will count for 50% of your final grade.

Table 1: Assignments

Assignments	Prop. of grade
Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Writing assignment	35%
Response papers (5)	15%

Aside from the exams, you will also have a **writing assignment**. This assignment will be carried out as a series of components assigned and evaluated over the course of the semester, followed by a final draft. Early in the semester, I will give you detailed instructions for each component, as well as requirements for the final draft.

Finally, you will be required to submit five **response papers**, one for each section of the course. These take the place of a participation grade, and will be graded only as complete or incomplete. The response papers are intended to get you thinking about the material covered in class. The first response paper will be due January 19. I will post instructions to elc, including method of submission. The due dates for each subsequent response paper will be announced after we begin the corresponding section of the course.

**Make-up policy:** It is your responsibility to attend all scheduled class meetings, including the times when exams are offered. I will offer make-up exams only in extreme cases

## Ground rules

You are responsible for being self-motivated, self-directed, active learners. I expect you to comply with university policy and use common sense. You should complete all of the course assignments and participate fully in all of our activities. A complete list of the course policies is posted on my website.

## Goals and teaching philosophy

When this course is finished, you should:

- Understand how social choice concepts apply to disease control
- Be familiar with a wide range of examples of disease control, focusing on the role of governance
- Improve your ability to write convincingly about these topics

As your professor, it is my responsibility to create an environment that fosters your learning. This includes keeping materials up to date on the course etc, and otherwise providing a well-organized course. You are responsible for taking advantage of that environment. If any aspect of the course is impeding your learning, please communicate that to me in whatever way you feel most comfortable.<sup>1</sup>

## Course Schedule

Most readings will be available via UGA's electronic course reserves system (password: disease). Please let me know if you have trouble locating the readings.

### Weeks 1-2: Foundations

Topics:

- Expectations for the course
- Foundations of social science
  - Stylization
  - Hypotheticals
- Public goods and collective action problems

Required reading:

- Selection from [Krugman \(1995\)](#)\*
- [Troesken \(2015, Preface\)](#) \*

\*These readings will be distributed in class

**First response paper due Jan. 19. See instructions on etc.**

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### Weeks 3-5: Vaccination as a collective action problem

Topics:

- Vaccination today

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<sup>1</sup>A note about my name: Feel free to call me Micah or Professor Redman or Professor Gell-Redman.

- Vaccination in the past
- Smallpox eradication

Required reading:

- Nyhan, Reifler and Richey (2012)
- Nyhan et al. (2014)
- Troesken (2015, Chapter 4)
- Jannetta (2007, SELECTION TBD)
- Riedel (2005)
- Stepan (2011, SELECTION TBD)
- Barrett (2007)

Additional reading:

- Kirkland (2016)
- Berejekian (1997)

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## **Weeks 6-8: Controlling water- and air-borne diseases**

Topics:

- Typhoid in early 20th century USA
- Air pollution in 19th century Britain
- Smallpox eradication

Required reading:

- Troesken (2004, Chapter 1)
- Cutler and Miller (2005)
- Frerichs (2016, Selection TBD)
- Clay and Troesken (2010)
- Additional required reading TBD

## Week 9: Midterm review and exam

March 12-16: Spring Break

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## Weeks 10-13: HIV and malaria

Topics:

- HIV and ethnic diversity in Africa and Brazil
- Malaria eradication in the past and today
- Additional topics TBD

Required reading:

- Lieberman (2009), Chapter 4
  - Humphreys (2001, Chapter 3)
  - On the first attempt at global malaria eradication Stepan (2011), Chapter 5
  - On the current efforts to eradicate malaria Newby et al. (2016)
  - Additional required reading TBD
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## Week 14 - Week 15: Democracy and disease

Topics:

- Cross national studies
- Sub-national studies

Required reading:

- Besley and Kudamatsu (2006)
  - Kudamatsu (2012)
  - Dreze and Sen (1989, Chap. 11)
  - Miller (2008)
  - Touchton, Sugiyama and Wampler (2017)
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