

# INTL 4615e: The Politics of Disease Control

University of Georgia

Maymester 2020, May 13 - June 4

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## Welcome!

The current global pandemic has made it obvious that disease can profoundly 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 administer three **exams**. These will be primarily multiple choice, though they may also contain some short answer items. The dates and area of focus for each exam are listed in [Table 1](#). While the primary modules reflect the main focus of the exam, material from modules previously covered may appear on any exam. Good performance on the exams requires engagement with all of the course materials. For this online class no exam makeups will be offered. You will also be required to complete a data collection project on national responses to the COVID pandemic. Details on this assignment will be posted to ELC.

Table 1: Assignment information

Item	Primary Modules	Date	Prop. of grade
Exam 1	1 and 2	May 21	25%
Exam 2	3	May 28	25%
Exam 3	4	June 4	25%
Data collection (draft)	–	May 28	–
Data collection (final)	–	June 4	25%

All exams will be open from 9am to 9pm on the day listed.

## 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. Your deep engagement, responsibility, and self-motivation are particularly important in the online format.

## 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 think critically 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

**Unless otherwise indicated, readings will be available via UGA's electronic course reserves system (password: collective). Please let me know if you have trouble locating the readings.**

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

## Foundations: May 13-15

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 are available on elc

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## Vaccination as a collective action problem: May 18-21

Topics:

- Vaccination today
- Vaccination in the past
- Smallpox eradication

Required reading:

- Packet of vaccine news articles on ELC. These will be our jumping off point for discussion.
- [Nyhan et al. \(2014\)](#) and [Nyhan and Reifler \(2015\)](#) Parallel experiments
- [Troesken \(2015, Chapter 4\)](#) Historical chapter on smallpox in the U.S./abroad
- [Stepan \(2011, Chapter 6\)](#) Smallpox eradication

Additional reading:

- [Obaro and Palmer \(2003\)](#) For context

**May 21, Exam 1**

## **Disease control and the environment: May 22-28**

Topics:

- Control of diseases linked to water quality
- Externalities in the provision of public goods

Required reading:

- Troesken (2004, Introduction,<sup>2</sup> Chapter 4)
- Williams and Mohammed (2013)
- Frerichs (2016, See roadmap for selected chapters)

**May 28, Exam 2**

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## **HIV and malaria: May 29-June 3**

Topics:

- HIV and ethnic diversity in Africa and Brazil
- HIV and stigma
- Malaria eradication in the past and today

Required reading:

- Lieberman (2009, Chapter 4, Chapter 2<sup>3</sup>)
- Haile et al. (2014)
- Rhodes (2002)
- Strathdee and Magis-Rodriguez (2008)
- Epitaph for global malaria eradication<sup>4</sup>
- Szreter (2003)
- Dupas (2014)

**June 4, Exam 3**

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<sup>2</sup>Available on ELC

<sup>3</sup>on ELC

<sup>4</sup>On ELC

## References

- Dupas, Pascaline. 2014. "Getting essential health products to their end users: Subsidize, but how much?" *Science* 345(6202):1279–1281.
- Frerichs, Ralph R. 2016. *Deadly River: Cholera and Cover-Up in Post-Earthquake Haiti*. Cornell University Press.
- Haile, Rahwa, Tawandra L Rowell-Cunsolo, Edith A Parker, Mark B Padilla and Nathan B Hansen. 2014. "An empirical test of racial/ethnic differences in perceived racism and affiliation with the gay community: Implications for HIV risk." *Journal of Social Issues* 70(2):342–359.
- Krugman, Paul. 1995. *Development, Geography, and Economic Theory*. MIT Press chapter The Fall and Rise of Development Economics.
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- Obaro, Stephen K and Ayo Palmer. 2003. "Vaccines for children: policies, politics and poverty." *Vaccine* 21(13):1423–1431.
- Rhodes, Tim. 2002. "The "risk environment": a framework for understanding and reducing drug-related harm." *International journal of drug policy* 13(2):85–94.
- Stepan, Nancy Leys. 2011. *Eradication: Ridding the World of Disease Forever*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Strathdee, Steffanie A and Carlos Magis-Rodriguez. 2008. "Mexico's evolving HIV epidemic." *jama* 300(5):571–573.
- Szreter, Simon. 2003. "The population health approach in historical perspective." *American Journal of Public Health* 93(3):421–431.
- Troesken, Werner. 2004. *Water, Race and Disease*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
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Williams, David R and Selina A Mohammed. 2013. "Racism and health II: a needed research agenda for effective interventions." *American behavioral scientist* 57(8):1200–1226.