In the Research Master’s in Global Health, students embark on an intensive study of cross-cutting aspects of health systems. They will obtain the latest insights, as well as design and implement interventions and innovation strategies to address these health challenges.

The programme focuses on teaching the knowledge, skills and attitude to (1) analyse complex national and international health challenges by drawing from a range of disciplines, and (2) design, implement and evaluate integral strategies for intervention in order to meet complex global health challenges. Building on systems thinking and research that combines and transcends individual disciplines, the programme offers an intensive study of multiple aspects of health systems, including burden of disease, finance, regulatory mechanisms, power constellations, the network society and change management.

The Research Master’s programme provides the opportunity to participate in one of the state-of-the-art global health research programmes that the Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development (AIGHD) runs on six continents. Students can customize their programme by selecting electives, a literature review and research projects that reflect their interests.

The year schedule 2012 - 2013 can be found at the [FALW-website](http://www.falw.vu.nl). Further information about the MSc programme [Global Health](http://www.falw.vu.nl). A complete programme description can be found at the [FALW-website](http://www.falw.vu.nl).
### Inhoudsopgave

| MSc Global Health year 1                                                                 | 1 |
| Vak: Aids, Medicine and Human Rights (Periode 3)                                     | 1 |
| Vak: Challenges in Health Systems Innovation (Periode 3)                              | 3 |
| Vak: Future Medicine (Periode 3)                                                      | 4 |
| Vak: Global Health in Historical Perspective (Periode 1)                              | 5 |
| Vak: International Comparative Analysis of Health Systems (Periode 2)                 | 7 |
| Vak: Research Project Global Health (Ac. Jaar (september))                            | 9 |
| Vak: Systems Thinking – Theory and Research Methods I (Periode 1)                     | 10|
| Vak: Systems Thinking – Theory and Research Methods II (Ac. Jaar (september), Periode 2) | 12|
MSc Global Health year 1

Vakken:

<table>
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Aids, Medicine and Human Rights

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Doel vak
The student acquires knowledge and insight into:
- State-of-the-art social-cultural research into AIDS at the beginning of the 21st century
- Transdisciplinary research for studying AIDS
- Transdisciplinary perspectives on a variety of subjects in the field of medicine and human rights
- Transdisciplinary research methods for studying and analysing case studies about the abuse of human rights in different cultures, and 'the right to medical care' in situations of conflict and rebuilding, asylum and extradition

Inhoud vak
This course gives a state-of-the-art overview of the anthropology of AIDS; promotes the analysis of AIDS in a broad social, political and economic context; and extensively explores the possibilities for combining qualitative and quantitative methods for studying AIDS. Students apply these insights to case studies that illustrate the complexity of AIDS, and they reflect on how anthropological research can contribute to the design of interventions to fight AIDS. While the
disease and efforts to fight AIDS have flourished for more than 20
years. AIDS is often formulated in terms of crisis, and thereby little
room is left to study the already achieved successes and failures, or to
make a comparison with other efforts promoting public health. At the
interface of sexuality and death, AIDS is a potential metaphor for
inequality, the failures of modernisation, and the rise of
globalisation. Those infected with AIDS are often stigmatised and
associated with the collapse of morality in society. This paradox, where
the individual as well as structural political and economic factors are
blamed for the spread of the disease, creates a number of possibilities
for studying the meanings and causes that people attribute to the
disease. Placing AIDS into the context of everyday life allows us to
better understand how people live with AIDS.

The second half of the course is directed towards more complex problems:
AIDS in conflict situations. Legislation on human rights provides a
standard for medical care for victims of war and abuse for example. What
is the role of culture in the application of this legislation in
conflict and post-conflict situations around the world? Ensuring human
rights generally leads to nothing. Why is this? The anthropological
argument is that respect and justice presume a deep knowledge of what is
at stake for the victims, perpetrators, politicians, witnesses, judges,
and doctors. What do human rights mean for these stakeholders? How do
victims deal with their suffering if they do not value themselves?

During this course, students are introduced to a multidisciplinary
perspective on a variety of topics in the field of medicine and human
rights. Topics discussed include: incidences of human rights abuse in
different cultures, the ‘right to medical care’, and human rights in
situations of conflict and rebuilding, asylum and extradition. Care
providers and scientists are confronted with human rights at home and
abroad, when they are working in a centre for asylum seekers, or in a
psycho-trauma centre, in humanitarian NGOs, or in fieldwork and
research.

**Onderwijsvorm**
Lectures, work groups, problem-driven learning, self-study

**Toetsvorm**
Written exam (50%) and assignment (50%)

**Literatuur**
Syllabus with articles that is put together each year. Returning core
literature is

University of California Press (excerpts)
Activism: Mapping the Middle,” American Anthropologist 108(1): 3851.
4. Mark Heywood (2009), ‘South Africa's Treatment Action Campaign:
Combining Law and Social Mobilization to Realize the Right to Health’,
7. Nguyen, Vinh-kim, 2007, Antiretroviral Globalism, Biopolitics, and
Therapeutic Citizenship, in Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and
of Everyday Life in Brazil, Introduction, Berkeley: University of
Doelvak
The student acquires knowledge and insight relevant to
- Innovation and reform of health systems
- Central concepts in transition theory
- Different mechanisms of innovation development, so-called niche experiments, in the health system
- Effects and challenges of ‘niche experiments’ in different cultural contexts
- Different theoretical perspectives on innovation studies
- Theoretical concepts and methods for the management of system innovation, including transition and strategic niche management, essential for sustainable health systems and transdisciplinary research
- Theoretical concepts and methods to interpret and evaluate the results of system innovation and its efficiency

The student learns to:
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practical cases
- Evaluate his/her own actions, thinking and decision-making
- Be solution-oriented
- Reflect on responsibilities with respect to the implementation of interventions

Inhoud vak
The course consists of complementary theoretical and research components. The theoretical component develops insight, through lectures and seminars, into the central theoretical concepts of innovations and reform of health systems. Illustrative case studies are reality-based and use former as well as current innovations and developments in health care systems of low- and higher-income countries, such as the introduction of primary health care or long-term care system innovations). Discussion focuses on:
- Difficulties in tackling certain persistent health problems
- Systemic factors that form the basis of these persistent problems
- The moderate effect of health reforms and emergence of
unsustainable niche experiments
• Exploration of possibilities to effectively link niche experiments to existing regimes
• The importance of transdisciplinary research for system innovation
In the research component of the course, students work in pairs to analyse efforts to address a concrete persistent problem in a health system. This involves identification of underlying systemic factors, such as structures, culture, and existing practices, and delineating the role of the significant actors. Students conclude the course by designing a niche experiment for this problem according to the principles of transition management.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, work groups, problem-based learning, self-study

Toetsvorm
Written exam (50%) and assignment (50%)

Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health

Overige informatie
Elective for Global Health students

Future Medicine

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Doel vak
The student acquires knowledge and insight into
- Innovative developments that can change medicine and health systems now and in the future, such as telemicrobiology, new imaging techniques, rational drug design, personalised medicine, tailoring medicine and telemedicine, and the newest developments in the field of gene therapy
- Innovative processes in the development trajectory of new medicine
- Experimental immunological interventions for chronic diseases
- The meaning that these developments can have in different system contexts (high- versus low-income countries, private versus public care systems, systems with different underlying cultures and states of technique)
The student learns
- To apply theoretical knowledge to concrete practical cases
- To carry out a transdisciplinary scenario analysis by means of a specific innovative development in a particular system context

Inhoud vak
National health systems have big challenges ahead of them, such as a greying society, faster spreading of (new) diseases, resistance against
existing medication. The easy solutions have already been implemented. Traditional medicine development and compensation systems are under pressure. New solutions need to be found in new developments and by combining knowledge and skills in different disciplines, different sectors and both public and private organisations.

In this course, promising new developments will be studied, such as translational medicine, in which pharmaceutical companies, governments, hospitals and universities jointly invest. Other examples are the new imaging techniques in combination with telemedicine, enabling the ‘Heart Institute of the Caribbean’ to offer cheap local treatments with advice from renowned Swiss surgeons. We also study the challenges that these new developments bring along. How can translational medicine ensure faster and cheaper medicine development while at the same time guaranteeing the patients’ privacy? How do we make sure that these developments remain focussed on the patients’ benefit and recovery? Experimental immunological research for chronic diseases and gene therapy will also be discussed: what are the problems now, and what do they look like in the future? What role can telemicrobiology play in this?

In groups of five, the students choose one development for which they make a transdisciplinary scenario analysis in a particular system context. All system levels will be addressed. The course culminates in a presentation of the scenarios in a small congress.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, work groups, problem-driven learning, self-study

Toetsvorm
Written exam (50%) and assignment (50%)

Literatuur
Syllabus of articles is put together each year

Doelgroep
First-year students in research master in Global Health

Overige informatie
Elective course

Global Health in Historical Perspective

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Doel vak
the student acquires knowledge and insight into:
- The increasing complexity of global health questions from a historical perspective in high- and low-income countries
- Insight into disease burden and diseases with a big impact, as well as the development of effective interventions
- Border-crossing health problems from the perspective of different disciplines (biomedical sciences, epidemiology, health sciences, health economics, anthropology)
- Possibilities and limitations of old paradigms of health perspectives
- Positioning transdisciplinary research in relation to mono-, multi-, and interdisciplinary research
- Relationships between diverse global health problems (well structured versus complex problems) and various research approaches (mono- versus transdisciplinary)
- Overview of theory creation in transdisciplinary research (epistemology and methodology including criteria for scientific quality)
- Central concepts of transdisciplinary approaches, including participatory and active involvement of relevant societal actors, collective learning processes, and systems thinking.
- Steps in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and related methodological aspects
- Different forms of “needs assessments” in relation to the nature of the problem
- Different qualitative and quantitative research methods

The student learns:
- How to formulate research questions and write both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research proposals. The proposals provide the basis for needs assessments of complex health problems
- Communication skills such as those needed in intervision and team work, and working together with other researchers from different disciplines
- Giving and receiving feedback as would take place in a peer review
- Methods and techniques for analysing health problems: epidemiological statistics, document analysis, observation, interviews, surveys/questionnaires
- How to apply the previously mentioned methods and techniques in the framework of transdisciplinary research

**Inhoud vak**

This course highlights the increasing complexity of health questions from a historical perspective. Various issues will be addressed, such as the significant societal impacts of diseases. For example, the relationship between unipolar depression and absenteeism and possible interventions will be investigated. This increasing complexity requires a transdisciplinary research approach rather than the limited and restrictive monodisciplinary approach used for highly structured health issues. The course consists of complementary theoretical and research components. In the theoretical component of the course, the student becomes acquainted with the problems in global health. Through the use of HIV/AIDS and diabetes case studies, students are taught about the complexity of an “emerging disease”. This enhances the student’s insight into the different paradigms and models used to address global health issues. The student applies them to the case of HIV/AIDS and diabetes and learns the possibilities and restrictions of these paradigms.

In the research component of the course, the student acquires insight
and skills to carry out various research methods that will enable the identification, analysis and prioritization of health problems at the “community” level. Moreover, the student is provided with an overview of different qualitative and quantitative research methods that are important for transdisciplinary research, such as techniques in epidemiological statistics, document analysis, observation, interviews and surveys/questionnaires. In training workshops, students engage in document analyses and gain insight into how monodisciplinary research methods can contribute to the multi/inter- and transdisciplinary analysis of complex problems. In different intervision groups, students work on health problems that extend beyond their own disciplinary boundaries. On the basis of a literature review, every student will write a research proposal for a needs assessment of a complex global health issue. Through a peer review system, groups, students provide feedback on different versions of their research plan in the intervision groups.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, workgroups, problem driven education, self-study, and symposium

Toetsvorm
Written exam (50%), research design (individual assignment) (50%), presentation

Literatuur
Reader with selected scientific articles:
3. Complexity and Human Health: The Case for a Transdisciplinary Paradigm, Glenn Albrecht et al., Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry, Volume 22, Number 1, 55-92, 1998

Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health; compulsory course

Overige informatie
Course co-ordinator: prof. J. Bunders-Aelen

International Comparative Analysis of Health Systems
Doel vak
Students acquire knowledge and insight into:
- Different ways in which health systems in different countries are formed
- Underlying reasons for reforming systems and different models for reforming health systems
- The relationship between system innovation and transdisciplinary research
- Different conceptual frameworks for carrying out a comparative analysis
- Benchmarking the cost effectiveness of different health systems
The student learns:
- To design and carry out a comparative analysis and to reflect on the scope of application, to make use of the framework for comparative studies (including transdisciplinary research)
- To write a clear, structured, academic paper about the comparative analysis conducted

Inhoud vak
Recent demographic and epidemiological developments occurring in health systems worldwide necessitate re-evaluation of the health care systems. Applicability, appropriateness and effectiveness of existing organizational structures, goals and frameworks will be critically analysed. In this course, the students gain insight into the complex world of ‘health systems comparison’. In lectures, quantitative and qualitative aspects of ‘health systems comparison’ are discussed and critiqued. Case studies of the health systems of France and Botswana clarify the economic and socio-cultural factors that are influential in the design and modification of the health systems.
Small group work (three students) provides opportunities to practise these skills by critically analysing reports of comparable research on health systems in Europe. Next, they make their own comparable analysis of three selected European countries according to a defined theme (for example, health insurance, primary health care). Subsequently, the analysis is extended by comparing earlier findings with an analysis made of two low-income countries. In this way the students are challenged to constantly improve their own analysis process. Interviewing ‘Health System Experts’ is part of the analysis. The findings are described in a group report and are presented in a poster.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, work groups, problem-driven learning, self-study

Toetsvorm
Written exam (60%), assignments (40%)

Literatuur
5. For each work group, 8 - 10 selected articles about different aspects of health systems.

Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health

Overige informatie
Compulsory course for Global Health students

Research Project Global Health

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<td>dr. M.B.M. Zweekhorst</td>
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Doel vak
The student learns
- To independently prepare a transdisciplinary research design and develop this into a research proposal (under supervision)
- To independently collect, process and analyse research data (under supervision)
- To integrate former knowledge and skills into the research
- To work independently and responsibly in a research organisation
- To independently integrate theory and research data and to develop this into a research report (under supervision)
- To critically reflect on their own working methods and experience
- To monitor the quality of the research
- To deal with uncertainties
- To present the research orally and to defend it before a scientific public

Inhoud vak
In this first research internship, a concrete problem will be structured along descriptive (what is it about?) and analytical (what is the underlying cause?) questions. In this analysis a distinction is made between different levels of aggregation (individual, group, society, system) and appropriate monodisciplinary and transdisciplinary research methods.

The student starts with a scan of the literature to place the specific problem in context relative to comparable problems, and to interpret it by means of existing global health system models. This provides the basis for the main question and relevant sub-questions and will determine the research methodology. Data collection can take place via questionnaires and qualitative interviews.

The research project lasts 5 months and is supervised by a scientific employee from one of the three collaborating partners (VU, UvA, AMC).
Onderwijsvorm
Individual supervision, meetings with the research team, progress interviews

Toetsvorm
Written report, oral presentation

Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health

Overige informatie
Obligatory component for Global Health students

Systems Thinking – Theory and Research Methods I

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<td>prof. dr. J.E.W. Broerse, dr. M. Campos Ponce, prof. dr. P.R. Klatser</td>
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Doel vak
The student obtains knowledge and insight in
- Complex systems where diseases emerge and spread on different levels
- Systems thinking, system models and transdisciplinary research
- Various interventions for complex global health problems in high- and low-income countries
- Challenges with context-specific innovations for ‘health care delivery’
- Economic perspectives on interventions and innovations
- Social and cultural aspects of innovations and innovation strategies
- Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research methods for the development and implementation of complex innovations and interventions in the field of global health. This ranges from needs assessment to interventions in transdisciplinary research
- Varied disciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to monitoring and evaluation of interventions
- Theoretical concepts and methods to interpret results and evaluate the efficiency of programs
The student learns to:
- Analyse different innovations and interventions in global health
- Formulate implementation strategies within a health problem framework and identify and describe implementation problems
- Analyse and interpret case studies
- Design and implement research methods relevant for evaluating intervention strategies including focus groups, "learning histories", randomized controlled trials, cohort study
- Be self-reflective in regard to actions, thinking and decision-
making
- Be solution-oriented
- Be aware of the wide range of influences on interventions and
to reflectively consider them whilst conducting the research
- Analyse data and integrate knowledge
- Present arguments verbally and in a written form

Inhoud vak
In this course, systems thinking is introduced. Complex health problems
manifest on different, interrelated levels: molecular, cellular,
organism, population, society and global. Initially, attention is paid
to the relationship between the analysis of complex health problems
(needs assessment) and the design, implementation and evaluation of
intervention strategies for specific health problems (particularly
determinants of effective health interventions). The advantages and
disadvantages of various interventions will be discussed. The effect
that these interventions have on different individual, group and
societal levels is assessed from an economic and socio-cultural
perspective. Subsequently, the student becomes acquainted with
different development protocols to shape interventions, such as
intervention mapping. Specific attention is paid to the economic
dimensions of innovation in ‘health care delivery’, including ‘private
funded insurance’ and the ‘value chain in health care’. Interventions
in the field of health care such as behaviour change relevant to
compliance with medication will be addressed. Discussion topics are, for
example, the prioritization of scarce resources and ensuring the
provision of safe, effective, efficient and cost-effective health
services. Students acquire insight into the economic and socio-cultural
aspects of innovations, implementation strategies, and their
feasibility in different contexts. The last part of the course focuses
on the evaluation of interventions, and comparisons are made between
the first-, second-, third- and fourth-generation evaluation studies.
The final study emphasizes a transdisciplinary approach. Research
techniques, including focus group discussion, methods of evaluation,
learning histories, randomised controlled trials, and cohort studies,
are taught and exercised.

In the research component of the course, students work in pairs to
design a transdisciplinary, case-based intervention for a global health
issue. Half of the students choose from interventions applied in high-
and low-income countries to which they apply the protocol of
Intervention Mapping, amongst others. At the end of the course, the
interventions are presented and their similarities and differences
critically analysed.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, work groups, problem-based learning, self-study

Toetsvorm
Written exam (50%), intervention report (pairs assignment) (50%)

Literatuur
Reader with selected scientific articles:
2. Statistics for Epidemiology, by Nicholas P. JEWELL, Boca Raton,
3. Discovering Statistics Using SPSS, by Andy Field, 3rd Revised
edition, 2009, SAGE Publications Ltd
4. Toward Transdisciplinary Research. Historical and Contemporary
Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health; compulsory course

Systems Thinking – Theory and Research Methods II

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<td>prof. dr. J.E.W. Broerse, prof. dr. J. de Lange</td>
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Doel vak
The student acquires knowledge and insight into:
- Different theoretical concepts of the design and implementation of policy in the field of public health and the difference between monodisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches
- Different elements of health systems and different organizational models
- Different health system financing strategies
- Underlying economic feasibility and sustainability assumptions of different models for reforming health systems
- Different research methods for analyzing policy and health systems
- Theories about the implementation of interventions on a systems level
- Actors’ perspectives and participation, including power configurations inherent in transdisciplinary research
- Deepening of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research methods including case histories

The student learns:
- To carry out an analysis of a concrete health policy in a stipulated country on a set theme in the context of specific determinants in the health system of that country
- Improving interviewing and focus group discussion skills within the framework of transdisciplinary research
- To integrate humanities, natural and social sciences disciplines as well as relevant societal knowledge
- Application of a causal analysis and ‘fact-value’ strategy
- Techniques for communicating and working together with social
actors, including facilitating effective group processes and learning processes
- How to formulate policy recommendations on the basis of the analysis
- To deal with uncertainties and be open to value discussions and cultural diversity
- To have a reflective, critical and culturally sensitive attitude
- To work in project teams
- To provide verbal and written reports on analyses, findings, and policy recommendations.

Inhoud vak
In this course, students enhance their systems thinking by studying the wider context of health systems. Interactions between different actors such as governments and insurers, beneficiaries and healthcare providers are addressed, along with their different aims and interests. A power configuration exists between these actors depending on the system. Important dynamics are involved, such as decision-making power, development of medicines and the unequal distribution of finances in their development. Critical analysis of the evident disparity in the development of profitable (e.g. medicines lowering blood pressure) versus non-profitable medicines (e.g. malaria vaccine) is encouraged. The lack of attention for preventative measures in health is addressed, as well as the influence of ‘regulatory affairs’, such as the Nederlandse ZorgAuthoriteit, on the availability of medicine. Students research the positioning of interventions within the broader context of government policy and health systems. Knowledge and insight are acquired into the possibilities and challenges in realizing system innovation, in particular health system organization and management. Additionally, determinants of the effectiveness of health interventions and system innovations are investigated.
The course consists of complementary theoretical and research components that run in parallel. In the theoretical component, students obtain insight into the various elements of health systems, such as financing, allocation, regulation, public-private partnerships and service provision. Additionally, theoretical concepts of policy sciences and ‘health system research’ are addressed. Attention is paid to the core concepts of power relations, interests, public versus private sector, change management and the network society. Emergent issues include the influence of political structures in the establishment of national health systems and health policies, determinants of who makes it onto policy agendas, and criteria for converting scientific findings into policy. The degree to which international organizations, such as the WHO, the Gates Foundation, the World Bank and other multinationals reciprocally influence national health policy is discussed. The relationship between the effectiveness of interventions and implementation at different levels is analysed as well as the role of ‘public-private partnerships’ in health systems.
In the research component of the course, students learn how to conduct a policy analysis and a health system analysis. Working in small groups (four students), they adopt a project-based approach to analyse a concrete health policy of a specific theme in a specific country. Students can choose an example from high- and as well as low-income countries. In the assignment, they explicitly include the specific determinants and the health system of that country in the analysis. At the same time, the students identify and analyse barriers for the implementation of interventions. The data gathering involves a literature review, document analysis, focus groups and interviews. In order to enhance these research skills, students receive training in
techniques such as communication with societal actors, facilitation of
group processes, stimulation of learning processes and cultural
sensitivity. The findings are described in a report and presented orally
to the other students.

Onderwijsvorm
Lectures, work groups, problem-driven learning, self-study

Toetsvorm
Written exam (50%), group process (during the group assignment)(25%),
research report and oral presentation (25%)

Literatuur
Reader with selected scientific articles:
2. Statistics for Epidemiology, by Nicholas P. JEWELL, Boca Raton,
3. Discovering Statistics Using SPSS, by Andy Field, 3rd Revised
edition, 2009, SAGE Publications Ltd
4. What is progress in transdisciplinary research? Pohl, C., Futures
43, pp. 618-626, 2011
5. Practical Challenges of Systems Thinking and Modeling in Public
6. Reader with recent articles from journals such as ‘Lancet’,
‘Globalization and Health’, ‘Journal of Health services research and
policy’ ‘Applied Health Economics and Health Policy’, ‘Health Policy &

Doelgroep
First-year students MSc Global Health; compulsory course