Global Mobility, Contagious Disease and International Relations

Fall 2021

Draft syllabus

Unprecedented human mobility across international boundaries at the rate of over 2 billion international travelers per year increased humanity’s vulnerability to contagious diseases with economic and security consequences that have major ramifications for International Relations. Epidemiologists have long feared an outbreak of influenza that reached proportions similar to the 1918 pandemic, particularly because air travel now connects all populations and makes rapid worldwide spread of diseases through human-to-human contact possible. A novel coronavirus, not influenza, caused the feared pandemic, which forced governments to limit in-person interactions in schools, businesses, and social gatherings as well as restrict international and domestic travel and is only beginning to be brought under control through mass vaccinations in a few countries. Some vaccines have proven less effective against emerging variants of COVID-19 and, even if enough of the world’s population is sufficiently vaccinated to contain the disease through global herd immunity, other diseases, like influenza, still present similar threats to humanity. This course examines: the security consequences of human mobility and disease in world history; the role of isolation and quarantine to control disease transmission within a broader discussion of state controls over borders, the relationship between epidemics and national security as well as international political economy; and, finally, international cooperation on global mobility and public health.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for the course.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, all students should:

1. Understand the historical evolution of human mobility and contagious diseases
2. Understand how major theories of international relations address (or fail to address) the subjects of disease and mobility
3. Understand the implications of global mobility and pandemics for international relations
4. Identify key concepts in readings and describe the steps of an argument
5. Critically evaluate common readings in discussions with instructor and fellow students
6. Ask incisive questions of texts as well as of fellow seminar participants
7. Be able to speak and write effectively about course topics in formats appropriate to career goals.

Teaching mode: Synchronous simulcast using Zoom. This means that some students will be in the classroom with the instructor and some students will be joining class via Zoom. Even though we all won’t be meeting in a physical classroom, we’re going to try to create a classroom experience on Zoom that’s as close as possible to everyone being in a regular classroom. To help achieve that goal, I would like all students who take this course to do the following when joining via Zoom:
• Situate yourself in a place that’s suitable for learning—ideally in a quiet room where you can sit upright in a chair and place your laptop or mobile device on a stable surface for capturing your Zoom video;
• Join the Zoom meeting right at the start of each class and remain in the meeting until the class is dismissed;
• Keep your camera turned on throughout the class and keep your face in the picture;
• Keep your microphone turned off when other people are speaking, but be ready to turn it on when you’re asked to speak; and
• Ensure that your Zoom window displays the name you would like me to refer to you by.
*If you think you may have difficulty with any of these items, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me so that we can discuss suitable accommodations.

We may also have guest lecturers join class from remote locations using Zoom. Groups of students should also use Zoom to work together on their team projects. Students will give presentations to the class and may use Zoom to do so, simply by using the screen share feature of Zoom. Students aspiring to professional in political science, public policy and international affairs careers should be able to express themselves and communicate in a range of formats and modes from email exchanges and informal dialogues with co-workers to formal written reports and oral presentations to the leadership of their organizations and the leadership of other organizations with whom they may need to negotiate. While presentations often take place in conference rooms similar in size to a seminar room, they may also be done on conference calls and through videoconferences. Hence, class sessions should be considered opportunities to practice and learn effective communication and presentation skills.

Textbooks:

Required:
(available at the UAlbany Bookstore)
(any more recent editions/printings are fine)
(available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: limited user access, 1 copy)
(any more recent editions/printings are fine)
(available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: limited user access, 1 copy)
(available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: unlimited user access)

Recommended:
(available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: unlimited user access)
Additional required readings: The bulk of the readings not in the above books will be journal articles and policy reports that will be posted on Blackboard. Unless noted, all required articles can also be accessed on-line at a under “e-journals” or through Lexis/Nexis. Readings that are not available in the UAlbany e-journal collection and are marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available on Blackboard. The instructor will assign several additional readings after the course begins – refer to the syllabus posted on Blackboard for all assignments and required for each session.

Knowledge of current events: All students should keep abreast of recent developments with respect to the contemporary coronavirus pandemic and international travel by reading a high quality daily news source with good international coverage (e.g. New York Times; Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, Washington Post) supplemented by a weekly newsmagazine, such as the Economist. Additional online world news sources include: BBC World News https://www.bbc.com/news/world; Reuters World News https://www.reuters.com/news/world; NPR World https://www.npr.org/sections/world/

Guest speakers: We will have guest speakers join the class throughout the semester via Zoom. We may not be able to arrange for some of them to join during our Wednesday evening classes, given that some guests may be connecting from different time zones or may only be able to join during the day, Students may be asked join sessions with guests outside of class periods and, in order for these visits to be worthwhile, most students will need to commit to out-of-class-times (that will be scheduled at the most convenient times for speakers and students).

Description of requirements

1. Class participation: All students are expected to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings in advance of class and be prepared to discuss them, including cold calls. The base line grade for class participation is a D. Routine attendance with minimal participation will earn a C. Regular contributions to class discussion that are appropriate and draw on readings will earn a B. Students who are consistently well prepared to discuss the assigned readings nearly every class and actively participate in discussions will receive an A for class participation.

2. Personal statement: All students are asked to submit a 250-word statement describing their background, academic interests and research objectives as they relate to this course. These should be posted on the discussion forum on Blackboard. Although mandatory, the assignment will not be graded; its purpose is for students (and the instructor) to get to know one another better.

3. Reaction memos: Students will submit five brief memos (of approx. 700-1,000 words) in which students react to required weekly readings of five selected class sessions. Students need not cover each and every reading for the week in these memos. The point is to focus on and analyze what you see as important, interesting issues in the reading. The memo should be analytical, not just a summary. These reaction memos are intended generate informed class discussion, so they must be written and submitted before class (via Blackboard). Each reaction memo is worth 5% of the course grade. Excellent papers will receive 5 points, good 4 points, failing 3 points. A total of five reaction memos must be submitted for full credit. Students may choose which week’s readings to review, however, reaction memos chosen must be distributed in the following manner:
   One on or before 9/20
   One on or before 10/18
   One on or before 11/1
   One on or before 11/15
   One on or before 12/6
If students do not hand in the required reaction memo by the date specified above, the overdue memo will be considered a failed assignment. They will not receive credit for the missing reaction memo.
4. Questions for discussion: All students should formulate one thoughtful question about the required readings for each week of class (aside from the first class, i.e., 12 weeks worth). Each question should explicitly reference one (and possibly more) of the assigned readings (other than the readings referred to in a reaction memo for that week). Each question should be no more than 50 words long, be formulated with the audience of the entire class in mind and with the objective of generating discussion. Questions that do not demonstrate engagement with one or more of the required readings will not receive full credit. Students must post the questions on the appropriate question section of the Blackboard discussion board by 12:00 noon on the day of class. Over the course of the semester, students should paste the questions in a word document that lists by date all of the students’ questions (A schedule of class session dates and titles will be posted and can be used for organization). Send this inventory of questions to the instructor on the last day of class.

5. Data analysis report:
Students will select a topic of global mobility and/or contagious disease, assess the data available in this area and provide a descriptive analysis of the data in a word document (1,000-1250 words) that includes data tables and data visualizations (graphs) derived from excel spread sheets (also submitted) and a set of powerpoint slides that presents the highlights of the analysis, the data and visualizations. Students should use this exercise to explore the data available in an area of interest (e.g., differences in the number of cases of COVID-19 in certain countries; declines in the number of air travelers to various countries, vaccination rates, travel restrictions, etc.). The report should provide comparative (two or more countries), regional or global descriptive statistics including time series data, if available, and the report should critically examine any data availability and quality issues. This data analysis report may be utilized as a preliminary exploration of data that may subsequently be further analyzed in the student’s seminar research paper. The report is due Oct. 25.

6. Seminar paper: PhD Students are expected to write a paper of about 6,000 – 7,000 words (double-paced, 12 pt, one inch margins). PhD student papers should demonstrate a command of the theoretical literature relevant to the topic selected and develop an analytical argument related to debates in that literature. Students may do any one of the following: 1) a paper that is based on secondary sources; 2) a paper based mostly on primary sources or 3) a paper based on the analysis of existing data sets or data that the student has collected. Masters students are expected to write a paper of about 4,000-5,000 words. Masters students may opt to model their papers on policy reports published by think tanks such as the Brookings Institution, the Wilson Center, etc. or articles found policy-oriented journals such as Washington Quarterly, etc. All students are expected to draw on material from the syllabus but students should also incorporate significant additional research on the topic chosen (which would be reflected in a majority of references to material not listed as required reading on the syllabus). All students may select a topic of their own choosing as long as it is within the confines of the course and approved by the instructor. For those students having difficulty selecting a topic, a good approach would be to consider a paper topic that delves into the details of one aspect of one of the session topics. At the very beginning of the course, students should carefully review the entire syllabus and scan readings for possible topics. Students are expected to submit a paper topic by Sept. 13. Students are expected to submit a full paper proposal comprised of a 100-150 word abstract, outline and preliminary bibliography by Sept. 27 then schedule a Zoom meeting with the instructor to discuss their project. Students should submit a rough draft of their paper (at least half the total length) by Nov. 1. If students miss the deadline for the proposal 2 points will be subtracted from the final grade for the paper. If the rough draft deadline is missed, a half letter grade (5 points) will be subtracted from the final grade for the paper. Students will give a brief presentation (10-12 minutes) of their paper project to the class, which will contribute to the overall grade for the paper. Seminar papers are due on Wed. Dec. 8.

Grading

Reaction memos  about 25%
Questions  about 5%
Data analysis report  about 10%

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Seminar paper about 40%
Class participation about 20%

Grade Scale:
A 90 and above
A- 88-89
B+ 85-87
B  80-84
B- 78-79
C+ 75-77
C  70-74
C- 68-69
D+ 65-67
D  60-64
E  Below 60

Late assignments will be penalized.

Incomplete grades: A tentative grade given only when the student has nearly completed the course but due to circumstances beyond the student's control the work is not completed on schedule. The date for the completion of the work will not be later than one month before the end of the Fall semester. The grade I is automatically changed to E or U unless work is completed as agreed between the student and the instructor.

References:
All papers submitted must have all sources properly referenced. Students should use footnotes following the Chicago manual of style https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html. Papers without proper references are unacceptable and will not be read. Papers should be submitted via Blackboard.

Academic integrity: All students are responsible for understanding and following the university’s rules on academic integrity (see http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php.) Students must properly reference all sources, including assigned readings, in all written assignments. References to all sources must be clearly indicated. Direct quotations must be marked with double quotation marks (e.g. "...") and the source cited. Indirect quotations must have sources cited. Sources require citation each time they are referred to.
Class Schedule:

Outline:

8/23 Introduction

I. Migration and epidemics in world history
   8/30 The interaction of diseases and peoples from prehistory to the modern era
   9/13 The emergence of modern medicine, public health and epidemiology
   9/20 Influenza pandemic of 1918-19

II. Border controls and public health
   9/27 Pandemic preparedness, surveillance and response
   10/4 International travel: inspection, isolation and quarantine

III. Epidemics and international security
   10/18 Epidemics, differential immunities and military conflicts
   10/25 Pandemics, state power and international relations
   11/1 Biological warfare and bioterrorism

IV. Epidemics and international political economy
   11/8 Epidemics and Economic Globalization
   11/15 Epidemics and economic development

V. International cooperation on global mobility and public health
   11/22 Politics of Global Health and Global Mobility Governance
   11/29 Vaccine Diplomacy and Vaccine Nationalism
   12/6 International cooperation to combat COVID-19

8/23 Introduction
Required:
(Total: 73 pp)

I. Migration and epidemics in world history

8/30 The interaction of diseases and peoples from prehistory to the modern era
Required:
Crosby, Ecological Imperialism, prologue, pp. 1-7, Ch. 9, pp. 195-216.
(available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: unlimited user access)
(Total: 262 pp.)
Recommended:
Philip D. Curtin, Death by Migration: Europe’s Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
Patrick Manning, Migration in World History 3nd edition (Routledge, 2020). (available on-line through UAlbany Library: Concurrent user: unlimited user access)
9/13 The emergence of modern medicine, public health and epidemiology
(Paper topic due)
Barry, The Great Influenza, Prologue, Part 1, pp. 1-87
Chapter 1, pp. 1-80 (exercises optional)
(Total: 177 pp.)
Recommended:
McNeill, Plagues and Peoples, Ch. 6, pp. 208-257.

9/20 Influenza pandemic of 1918-19
Required:
Barry, The Great Influenza, Parts 2-10, pp. 89-448.
(Total: 359 pp.)
Recommended:
Watch: “Pandemic Preparedness: Lessons Learned 100 Years after the Spanish Flu Pandemic,” a panel discussion with John Barry, Laurie Garrett and Anne Schuchat, Council on Foreign Relations https://www.cfr.org/event/pandemic-preparedness-lessons-learned-100-years-after-spanish-flu-outbreak

II. Public health and border controls

9/27 Pandemic preparedness, surveillance and response
(Paper proposal due)
Required:
*Emily Moon, “Predicting the Pandemic, The Smithsonian, June 2020, (one page)
CDC Influenza Global Planning webpage (1 pp.) https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/planning-preparedness/global-planning.html

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U.S. Influenza Surveillance System: Purpose and Methods webpage, read (about 3 pp.)
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm
Watch “How has WHO Responded to COVID-19” (5 min.) https://youtu.be/qHksVwOrpbE
Ashish Jha, "One Virus, Two Americas: How Federalism Both Saved and Doomed the United States,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), September 22, 2020, (2 pp.)
https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/01/04/the-plague-year
The UNU Evidence, Policy, and Interventions for COVID-19 Tracker (UNU EPIC Tracker), read “Know More” (2 pp.) then browse https://epictracker.org
(Total: 184 pp.)
Recommended:
Emerging Infectious Diseases: Asian SARS Outbreak Challenged International and National Responses.

10/4 International travel: inspection, isolation and quarantine
Required:
https://sfamjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1365-2672.94.s1.1.x
CDC’s Quarantine Legacy, September 21, 2018 https://youtu.be/3Tf9-Tvoz5w (8 minutes)
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/003335490912400207
https://ajph.aphpublications.org/toc/ajph/110/8

David J. Bier, “Research Provides No Basis for Pandemic Travel Bans,” CATO Institute, April 15, 2020, (5 pp.) https://www.cato.org/blog/research-provides-no-basis-pandemic-travel-bans

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7660668/

International Organization for Migration (IOM) Travel Restrictions database https://migration.iom.int


(Total: 141 pp.)

Recommended:


https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7134995/


Paul Meyer James Kondo Christoph Wolff, “Cross-border travel is confusing after COVID – this framework can help borders reopen safely,” World Economic Forum, Jul. 10, 2020 (2 pp.)

III Epidemics and international security

10/18 Epidemics, differential immunities and military conflicts

Required:


Peter C. Perdue, “Empire’s Little Helper: Chinese history shows that where soldiers march, plague follows,” Foreign Policy, Summer 2020, pp. 88-89.
*Elizabeth A. Fenn, Pox Americana (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), chs 2-4, pp. 44-134.
(221 pp.)

10/25 Pandemics, national security and the global order
(Data analysis report due)
Required:
Barry R. Posen, “Do Pandemics Promote Peace? Why Sickness Slows the March to War,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), April 23, 2020 (2 pp.)
Kurt M. Campbell and Rush Doshi, “The Coronavirus Could Reshape Global Order: China Is Maneuvering for International Leadership as the United States Falters,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), March 18, 2020 (2 pp.)
Branko Milanovic, “Is the Pandemic China’s Sputnik Moment? What a Virus Reveals About Two Systems,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), May 12, 2020 (2 pp.).
(130 pp.)

11/1 Biological warfare and bioterrorism
(Rough draft of paper due)
Required:


Nathan Levine and Chris Li, “Pathogens Have the World’s Attention: The United States Should Lead a New Push Against Bioweapons,” *Foreign Affairs Snapshot* (online), March 16, 2021 (2 pp.)

(122 pp.)

**Recommended:**


**IV. Epidemics and international political economy**

**11/8 Epidemics and Economic Globalization**

**Required:**


11/15 Epidemics and economic development

Required:
Robert Malley and Richard Malley, “When the Pandemic Hits the Most Vulnerable: Developing Countries Are Hurting Toward Coronavirus Catastrophe,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), Mar. 31, 2020, (2 pp).


https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/42435/924154550X.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y


(153 pp.)

Recommended:


Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, “The Pandemic Exposes Dangers of the Informal Economy: And It Is Not Just Developing Countries That Are in Trouble,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), May 18, 2020 (2 pp.)


(117 pp.)

Recommended:

V. International cooperation on global mobility and public health

11/22 Politics of Global Health and Global Mobility Governance

Required:


(156 pp.)

Recommended:
Visit World Health Organization website: [https://www.who.int](https://www.who.int)

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Final Draft July 13, 2018 (34 pp.)
[https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711_final_draft_0.pdf](https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711_final_draft_0.pdf)

11/29 Vaccine Diplomacy and Vaccine Nationalism

Required:
Peter J. Hotez, Preventing the Next Pandemic: Vaccine Diplomacy in a Time of Anti-Science, pp. 1-161.


Yanzong Huang, Vaccine Diplomacy Is Paying Off for China: Beijing Hasn’t Won the Soft-Power Stakes, but It Has an Early Lead, Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), March 11, 2021 (2 pp.)


Michael T. Osterholm and Mark Olshaker, “The Pandemic That Won’t End: COVID-19 Variants and the Peril of Vaccine Inequity, Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), March 8, 2021 (2 pp.)

Tahir Amin, “The Folly of Hoarding Knowledge in the COVID-19 Age: Let Vaccine Producers in Poor Countries Help End the Pandemic,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), January 29, 2021 (2 pp.)


(182 pp)

Recommended:

12/6 International cooperation to combat COVID-19
Required:


Thomas R. Pickering and Atman M. Trivedi, “The International Order Didn’t Fail the Pandemic Alone: The United States and China Are Its Crucial Pillars, Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), May 14, 2020 (2 pp.).

Bruce Jones, “Can Middle Powers Lead the World Out of the Pandemic? Because the United States and China Have Shown They Can’t,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), June 18, 2020 (2 pp.).

Thomas J. Bollyky and David P. Fidler, “It’s Time for an Independent Coronavirus Review The World Health Organization and Its Member States Must Learn From Their Mistakes,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), April 24, 2020 (2 pp.).


Yanzong Huang, “Why the World Lost to the Pandemic Politics and Security Fears Crippled the Collective Response,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), January 28, 2021 (2 pp.).


(92 pp.)

Recommended: