

CUGH Recommendations for Global Health Across the Curriculum

Interest in global health is strong among college and university students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Courses in any discipline can be adapted to meet the growing demand for global health content by incorporating global health themes.

WHAT IS GLOBAL HEALTH?

- **Global health** is a multidisciplinary and interprofessional field that seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of people and the planet.
- The World Health Organization defines **health** as “a complete state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Human health is dependent on healthy communities and a healthy environment.
- In the context of global health, the word **global** means both worldwide and comprehensive. Global health focuses on issues that affect people everywhere, and it uses a diverse set of disciplinary and professional lenses to understand the social, economic, political, and other contributors to population and planetary health.

GLOBAL HEALTH THEMES

These are some of the cross-cutting themes that are most often integrated into global health courses:

- **GLOBALIZATION:** Economic integration and the intensification of international trade and travel contribute to new health challenges, such as climate change and pandemics of emerging infectious diseases, but globalization processes also create new opportunities to solve shared health concerns.
- **HEALTH EQUITY:** The world will be healthiest when all people have access to affordable high-quality health services and technologies, safe environments, and legal protections. Advocating for human rights, social justice, and equitable inclusion advances global health.
- **GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS:** Complex global health challenges require multisectoral responses at global, regional, national, and local levels to improve health while also promoting economic growth, environmental sustainability, and good governance.
- **LOCAL ENGAGEMENT:** Because global health is about challenges that affect people around the world, global health is relevant in every community. Community-led interventions that improve the health of disadvantaged local populations contribute to global health.