



## **Beyond the Biological Basis of Disease: The Social and Economic Causation of Illness**

An Immersion Course in Social Medicine

Central Plateau, Haiti

July 19- August 8, 2020

### **Course Overview**

July 2020 will mark EqualHealth's launch of the seventh annual "*Beyond the Biological Basis of Disease*" course. This annual three-week course, which is designed for health profession students of all levels (including but not limited to those studying medicine, nursing, midwifery, and public health), reimagines health through the lens of social medicine. The course will be held in Haiti's Central Plateau region and taught in French.

This course in Haiti represents the first site expansion of a course that has been offered since 2010 in Gulu, Uganda by SocMed ([www.socmedglobal.org](http://www.socmedglobal.org)). EqualHealth ([www.equalhealth.org](http://www.equalhealth.org)) is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Haiti's next generation of health professionals through offering innovative educational programs and opportunities through partnership.

Approximately twenty health professional students will participate in the course, with half from various Haitian medical and nursing schools, and the other half from around the world. The course will be held in Haiti's Central Plateau,, and students participating in the course will have the opportunity to visit different sites across the region.

The course merges a number of pedagogical approaches including field visits, classroom- based presentations and discussions, group reflections, student presentations, films, and patient interactions. These approaches are utilized to create an innovative, interactive learning environment in which students and faculty participate as both learners and teachers. We hope to advance the entire class' understanding of the interactions between the biology of disease and the social, cultural, economic, political, and historical factors that influence health.

The course curriculum places great importance on building partnerships and encouraging students to reflect upon their personal experiences with power, privilege, race, class, gender, and sexual orientation as central to effective partnership building in global health. In the spirit of *praxis* (a model of education that combines critical reflection with action) these components of the course give students the opportunity to discern their role in global health and social medicine through facilitated, in-depth conversations with faculty and student colleagues. This course is not about finding the perfect solution to the global problem of health inequity, but rather about developing a deep understanding of the causes of health inequity, and collectively devising creative solutions to counter deadly forces of oppression.



### **Course Objectives**

1. To promote international solidarity and partnership for generating solutions to global health challenges facing societies throughout the world
2. To foster reflective dialogue between Haitian and international health profession students as a means of strengthening ties between the next generation of Haitian health professionals and a global network of their peers.
3. To provide a structured global health experience for health profession students with dedicated supervision and teaching in social medicine
4. To study issues related to global health in a resource-poor setting with an emphasis on local and global context
5. To foster critical analysis of global health interventions in resource-poor settings
6. To facilitate the development of a clinical approach to disease and illness using a biosocial model through structured supervision and teaching
7. To build an understanding and skill set associated with health advocacy

### **Course Curriculum**

The course includes the following themes:

- Determinants of Health Beyond Biology: Social and Economic Causation of Disease
- Global Health Interventions: Paradigms of Charity, Humanitarianism, and Structural Change
- Social Justice in Health Interventions: Models of Community-based Healthcare
- Health and Human Rights and the Healthcare Worker as Advocate
- Tools for Change: community organizing, self-awareness, writing, art, and research

Clinical topics will include cholera, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and other relevant diseases implicated in social determinants of health.

### **Course Faculty**

A group of course leaders from both the U.S. and Haiti with expertise in clinical medicine and public health make up the core faculty, and will teach the courses in French. Our 2020 core faculty include:

Michelle Morse, MD MPH (Course Co-Director)

Marisa Nadas, MD (Course Co-Director)

Ruth Staus, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC (Core Professor & Curriculum Design)

Zadok Sacks, MD (Core Professor & Curriculum Design)

Miliane Clermont, MD (Professor)

Ornella Sainterant, MD (Professor)

David Policard, MPH (Staff)

Cassandra Fox, BA (Staff)

Guerson Maurace (Staff)

Johane Josema (Intern)

### **Cost**

Cost for the 2020 course include:

- Room and Board for 3 weeks: \$1025



- Course Fee: \$ 1375
- Total: \$2400

This estimate does not include flights to Haiti, vaccination costs, costs for gifts and other personal expenses, or any additional travel not associated with the course that students may wish to do.

EqualHealth may offer a limited number of tuition waivers to defray individual student costs. We have very limited capacity to grant these waivers, and we thus ask that students explore all other options before submitting a tuition waiver request. Additional information provided on request.

**Eligibility criteria for applicants:**

- Health profession student of any year or early-career healthcare professional
- Working proficiency in French (we are happy to work with students who may be concerned about their proficiency level-- please direct questions to the contacts listed below)
- Available for the entire length of the course (July 19-August 8, 2020)

**Application Process**

*Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until all spots are filled.*

To complete an application or for more information, please visit [www.equalhealth.org/socialmedicine](http://www.equalhealth.org/socialmedicine)

Please email [cfox@equalhealth.org](mailto:cfox@equalhealth.org) or [david.policard@equalhealth.org](mailto:david.policard@equalhealth.org) with any questions or concerns

***Note: Credit for away electives can usually be arranged with a student's home institution***