



GLS 399: Politics of Pandemics & Global Outbreaks

Global Studies Department

Bentley University

Fall 2023

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Office: Morison 223

Office Hours (beginning on September 13): Tuesdays 1-3pm*; Wednesdays 1-3pm*; and by appointment

*On October 3, November 1, and December 5, office hours will end at 2pm. Office hours are generally in person in Morison 223, but may occasionally be held via Zoom with prior announcement.

Class Meeting Day & Time: Mondays and Thursdays 2pm – 3:20pm

Class Location: Jennison 200

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic exposes persisting challenges to the system of institutions governing global outbreak preparedness and response. While infectious disease outbreaks have long posed transboundary governance challenges, technological advancements and effects of globalization in recent decades contribute to increasing instances of outbreaks requiring global cooperation. The COVID-19 pandemic represents the sixth Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) since this designation was created in 2005—following declarations for H1N1, polio, two for Ebola, and Zika. In 2022, the global outbreak of Monkeypox became the seventh. In this class, students will develop an understanding of the actors, institutions, and processes underpinning the global governance of outbreak preparedness and response, as well as an analytical tool kit for understanding their effectiveness and limitations. We will ask what factors impede global cooperation in pandemic response—and whether these are insurmountable. What characterizes the relationships between country governments and other actors such as corporations, private philanthropy, and public-private partnerships in these endeavors? How do these policies and processes impact diverse groups and constituencies globally? And finally, what does the future hold for global governance of outbreak response? The semester begins with an examination of the social and political implications of framing global health as security issue, and a discussion of global public goods and outbreak response. From there, we progress to explore key concepts, actors, issues, and cases—with an eye toward ongoing negotiation of a new Pandemic Treaty as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the semester, students should have improved upon: 1) their knowledge and understanding of the processes, institutions, and actors contributing to global health governance in the areas of outbreak preparedness and response; 2) understanding of the implications of global health policies for diverse groups and constituencies affected by them; 3) development of analytical tools to understand relevant health systems and policy processes; 4) public speaking and communication skills targeting diverse audiences.

The primary student learning outcomes for this course include:

- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of major processes, institutions, and actors shaping global governance of outbreak preparedness and response, including implications of global health policies for diverse groups and constituencies
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of global public goods provision, and the relevance of this concept to international cooperation (or lack thereof) in outbreak preparedness and response
- ❖ Synthesize, analyze, and critique policy processes underpinning the current system of global health governance, to articulate its strengths and limitations
- ❖ Interpret, analyze, and evaluate cases and issues in global outbreak preparedness and response; make analytical arguments supported with evidence; and identify and discuss counterarguments and policy implications
- ❖ Communicate effectively to diverse audiences in written and oral formats relevant to the study of global health governance

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to complete all readings, assignments, and exams in a timely manner. **Readings should be completed in advance of the first class meeting for each week**, and students should come to class prepared to ask questions and engage in discussion and analysis.

I. Course Readings: All course readings will be posted on Brightspace and/or accessible via direct links.

II. Assignments & Grading

Attendance & Participation	15%	Attendance (5%), participation in class and small group discussions (15%)
Response Papers (5)	30%	Students will submit 2-page double-spaced response papers on the readings for any five weeks of their choice. Detailed instructions to be presented in class. Each paper is worth 6% of the total grade. Please upload to Brightspace prior to the start of class, and submit a hard copy in class. At least three response papers must be submitted prior to Spring Break.

Midterm Exam (take-home)	25%	The midterm exam will cover all readings and material from the first part of the course. It will be take-home and open note.
Final Group Project & Presentation	25%	Research assignment with individual & group components culminating in a podcast, with accompanying text and resources. Groups will present final projects as works in progress for feedback from the class during the final two weeks of the semester. Please upload to Brightspace by our section's assigned final exam period.
Pandemic Treaty Simulation Exercise	5%	Role assignments and preparation material to be distributed in class.

Participation and Attendance: Students are required to attend and participate in class unless they have contacted me in advance about an extenuating circumstance. Missing more than 2 classes unexcused may jeopardize student's participation grade. Participation lends itself to success in other components of the class—the more you engage with your classmates and the material, the more you will learn! Participation can take multiple forms. It can include speaking in full class or small group activities, asking questions, responding to questions, and engaging in class activities.

Response Papers: Students will complete five 2-page double-spaced papers on the readings for weeks of their choice, to be briefly discussed in class. Instructions to be distributed and discussed class. Papers must be uploaded to Brightspace prior to the start of class on Monday of each week. Students must also submit a hard copy in class. The first three response papers must be submitted prior to spring break.

Midterm Exam: The midterm will cover all material from the first half of the semester. It will be take-home and open note. Students will be asked to synthesize material in the form of short answer and essay questions, provide examples of key concepts from the class, and make evidence-based arguments relevant to course material.

Pandemic Treaty Simulation: In class, students will conduct a simulation of negotiations for a new Pandemic Treaty. Roles and preparation materials will be assigned and discussed during the semester.

Final Project: In groups of three, students will script, and record a podcast in response to a prompt I will provide. Students are required to submit descriptive text and additional resources accompanying their podcast. Detailed instructions to be distributed and discussed in class. We will set aside class time over the course of the semester for project development and peer review of drafts.

Presentation: Students will give a 20-minute group presentation on their final projects at an assigned time in class during the final two weeks of the semester. Presentations must include a

visual aid. Each group member must take an active role in presenting. Feedback from presentations is intended to inform each group's final podcast submission.

Extra Credit: Students may briefly present a short news article related to an area of global governance of outbreak preparedness and response at the beginning of class. Please email me before class if you would like to do this. Extra credit will be applied to the overall grade at the end of the semester, and may be used to round up any borderline grades. For instance if a student has an average of 89.4, this could bump up the final grade to an A-. Students may also attend and write a short paragraph about a campus or external lecture. Talks that count for extra credit will be announced in class, or you may email me with ideas or suggestions.

Grading Rubric for Class Participation

Points	Level of Participation
100	Actively participates (in some form) during almost every class. Demonstrates excellence in grasping key concepts; ability to critique readings and ideas; stimulates discussion; consistently provides evidence from class readings for support of opinions.
85	Participates during most classes. Demonstrates understanding of most major concepts; often supports ideas with evidence.
75	Minimal participation in class. Demonstrates shallow understanding of course material; does not support claims with evidence.
50	No participation in class. Does not engage with material or classmates.
0	No participation in class and has missed more than 2 lectures without a previously discussed excuse.

Final grades will be determined using the following percentage scale:

A = 95-100	A- = 90-94	B+ = 87-89
B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-69
D = 63-66	D- = 60-62	F = Below 60

CLASSROOM POLICIES & ETIQUETTE

Name Placards: Please bring a name placard displaying the name by which you wish to be called to class each day. I will provide placards on the first day. As we all get to know each other, this will ensure that everyone in the room is addressed appropriately by both the instructor and other students. I make every effort to learn students' names early in the semester. If for some reason I call you by a name other than your preferred name, please do not hesitate to let me know so I can correct myself.

Laptops and Cellphones: Please use laptops only for note-taking during designated times, and not for any other purpose during class. Cell phones should remain out of view (in your bag rather than on the desk or in your lap) in order to minimize distractions.

Appealing a Grade: If you have concerns about a grade, you have one week to appeal your grade from the date the assignment is returned to you or grades are posted. Appeals must be submitted to me in writing via email, outlining your concerns and explaining why you are requesting a re-grade.

Late Assignments & Incompletes: In general, I will not accept late assignments. Students are expected to meet deadlines listed in the syllabus and reach out to me **well in advance** if extenuating circumstances will prevent them from doing so. Barring such extenuating circumstances, **assignments submitted after the deadline will be marked down at least 10 percentage points per day late, and I will not accept assignments more than one week late.** This policy does not apply for response papers, which must always be submitted in advance of class.

In general, Incompletes will not be granted for this course except under extraordinary circumstances. In cases where Incompletes are approved, I will work with the student to come up with a contractual agreement for completion of coursework, in compliance with university policy.

These policies are in place to ensure your success and encourage timely completion of coursework for all students. I strongly encourage you to **meet with me early to discuss any challenges or extenuating circumstances you are facing**, so we can work together to come up with a plan to help you enjoy and succeed in the course.

Make-Up Exams: Make-up exams will only be scheduled if a student reaches out to me in advance with a valid excuse for missing the exam. In general, if you miss an exam without contacting me in advance about an extenuating circumstance, you will not be able to make-up or receive credit for the exam.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism: In adherence with Bentley's Honor Code, students are expected to submit professionally written academic work. This requires thorough research and collection of evidence, as well as analysis. Plagiarism may occur either deliberately or by accident. Passing off work written by someone else as your own constitutes plagiarism. This includes use of AI tools—such as ChatGPT—to complete assignments. Plagiarism may also take the form of including any ideas that are not common knowledge in your work without citation. When in doubt, cite—and if you are uncertain about a specific situation, please reach out to me. Over-citing is always preferable to under-citing.

I will accept any citation style so long as you are consistent. I encourage you to look into citation trackers such as Zotero or Mendeley to help keep track of your sources.

Classroom Respect: Be civil to your fellow students and your professor. In the spirit of open debate and intellectual curiosity, I ask that you approach our classroom discussions with an open mind, be willing to consider new evidence, and challenge your previously held beliefs. To create a space

where all students feel comfortable engaging with new ideas, please be thoughtful in your questions and comments.

Classroom Engagement: You will get out of this class what you put into it. Don't be afraid to speak up and ask questions if you don't understand something—chances are, you are not alone. Questions and informed opinions are always encouraged.

Email Etiquette: Please address all emails appropriately (e.g., “Dear Professor X,”). I do my best to respond to student emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday, though there may be times I require slightly longer due to other responsibilities. I do not generally check my email over the weekends or on holidays.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES & POLICIES

All courses offered at Bentley University reflect our institution's commitment to a set of core values and practices. The links below will take you to full explanations of our policies and procedures related to accommodations and equitable learning environments. As a student, you are expected to review and be familiar with each of these policies:

- **[Bentley's honor code and academic integrity system](#)**
- **[Equity and bias reporting forms and procedures](#)**
- **[Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) requirements for disability accommodations](#)**
- **[Religious observances](#)**
- **[Bentley's core values](#)**

Disability Services: Bentley University abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which stipulate no student shall be denied the benefits of an education solely by reason of a disability. If you have a hidden or visible disability which may require classroom accommodations, please call Disability Services within the first 4 weeks of the semester to schedule an appointment – **781-891-2004, Jennison 336**. Disability Services is responsible for managing accommodations and services for all students with disabilities. More information: <https://bentley.edu/offices/disability-services>.

Bentley University Library: The Bentley Library supports the research and learning needs of the Bentley community through our spaces, technology, collections, teaching, and expertise. Open 99 hours per week during the semester, the Library provides spaces for quiet study and group collaboration, as well as computers, printers and other equipment. Research assistance is available until 9:00 p.m. most nights in-person at the Reference Desk and via email (refdesk@bentley.edu), phone (781.891.2300), text (781.728.0511), and live chat (<https://www.bentley.edu/library/research/help>). Reference Librarians can help you develop research questions and topics, select databases and other resources, evaluate information, and properly cite sources. Research consultations for individuals and small groups are available in-person and via Zoom by appointment. For more information about the Library's hours, services, and resources visit our website library.bentley.edu.

Writing Center: The Writing Center offers one-on-one tutoring for writing **and presentations**. They help students of all years and skill levels. Located on the lower level of the Bentley library (room 023), the Writing Center provides a welcoming and supportive environment in which students can work on writing or presentations from any class or discipline. Students are encouraged to visit at all stages of the process; they can bring a draft of a paper or come **get feedback on a practice presentation**. They can come in to brainstorm, work on an outline, or just discuss some initial thoughts and questions.

Staffed by highly skilled student tutors, the Writing Center is open six days a week. Our conferences are available online or in-person. They take walk-ins, but encourage students to make appointments in advance. Hours and additional information are available on the [Writing Center SharePoint site](#). Appointments can be made at bentley.mywconline.net.

The ESOL Center: The ESOL Center offers online appointments for helping undergraduate and graduate students strengthen their writing and English language skills. Our ESOL faculty tutors specialize in working with international and multilingual students to provide one-on-one support for all courses writing at any stage in the writing process. Along with individualized help for writing, the ESOL tutors provide guidance and feedback for documenting sources, oral presentation practice, and pronunciation/fluency enrichment.

The ESOL Center offers real-time video appointments Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. These can be reserved through our website: <https://bentleyesol.mywconline.net>. The complete information about booking appointments and uploading papers is clarified on the website's announcement page.

Bentley's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Our university does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further a more positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and will be given serious consideration. Personal and professional courtesies are especially important to me. My class roster has your preferred name, but I will happily address you by an alternate name and/or pronoun that you include in my survey form sent at the start of the term. You can also read about Bentley's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion concerning the newly formed Racial Justice Task Force, Strategic Initiatives for Racial Justice, and the Black at Bentley on Instagram alumni group demanding change to make Bentley a more actively anti-racist community: <https://www.bentley.edu/offices/diversity-inclusion/racial-justice>.

Title IX & Gender-Based Harassment and Discrimination: The Title IX Coordinator works to ensure that all members of the campus community flourish in a supportive and fair climate. Visit the Gender-Based Harassment and Discrimination Policy [website](#) to learn more regarding all resources for survivors.

Ally Network: Bentley has an active Ally network that strives to create a safe environment for LGBTQIA faculty, staff, and students. You can find information about the Ally Network and on-campus resources here: <http://www.bentley.edu/campus-life/student-life/lgbtq>. You can also find information on Gender and the LGBTQ community at Bentley here: <https://www.bentley.edu/university-life/diversity-equity-inclusion/gender-and-lgbtq-community>.

Health and Wellness: These are difficult times and it's important that you provide yourself with self-care throughout the semester. It's equally understandable that attending this semester may feel overwhelming, be rife with the unexpected, or have you feeling uncertain in how to approach new challenges. Here are some further resources to help you:

Center for Health and Wellness: <https://www.bentley.edu/university-life/student-health>

Counseling and Student Development: <https://www.bentley.edu/university-life/student-health/counseling-center>

Ombuds Office: <https://www.bentley.edu/offices/ombuds-office>

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Subject to change; instructor will provide advance notice.

I. Course Introduction & Key Concepts

WEEK 1 (September 7) – Course Introduction & Global Health Security

Reading (due January 26):

Read the Syllabus!

1. Rushton, Simon. "Global Health Security: Security for Whom? Security from What?" *Political Studies* 59, no. 4 (2011): 779–96.
2. Abimbola, Seye and Madhukar Pai. "Will global health survive its decolonisation?" *The Lancet* 396, issue 10263, 21–27 November 2020, Pages 1627-1628.

WEEK 2 (September 11, 14) – Global Public Goods & Outbreak Response

Reading:

1. Kaul, Inge and Donald Blondin. "Global Public Goods and the United Nations" in *Global Governance and Development* (2016): 32-65.
2. Barrett, Scott. 2006. "Transnational public goods for health," in Expert Paper Series One: Infectious Disease, Secretariat of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods, ed. Stockholm: Secretariat of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods. 1-20.
3. GAVI Alliance. 2020. "Are vaccines a global public good?"
4. Walt, Stephen M. 2009. "What Swine Flu Tells us about Global Cooperation." Foreign Policy Blogs.

II. Actors

WEEK 3 (September 18, 21) – Conventional Governance Actors & Institutions: The World Health Organization (WHO) & the International Health Regulations (IHR)

Reading:

1. Council on Foreign Relations. 2020. “What Does the World Health Organization Do?”
2. Chapters 1 and 2 from Youde, Jeremy. *Global Health Governance*. Polity, 2012.
3. Gostin, Lawrence, Mary C DeBartolo, Eric A Friedman. 2015 “The International Health Regulations 10 years on: the governing framework for global health security” *The Lancet*. 2222-2226.

WEEK 4 (September 25, 28) – Roles of Non-State Actors: Private Philanthropy, Industry, Public-Private Partnerships, & NGOs

September 28: Guest Speaker—Erin Banco, Politico (tentative)

Reading:

1. Harman, Sophie, and Clare Wenham. “Governing Ebola: Between Global Health and Medical Humanitarianism.” *Globalizations* (January 5, 2018): 1–15.
2. Belluz, Julia. “How McKinsey Infiltrated the World of Global Public Health.” *Vox*, December 3, 2019.
3. Marion, Summer. “Beyond Great Power Politics: Conceptualizing Philanthropy’s Return to International Relations Through COVID-19” in: “Forum: Covid-19 and IR Scholarship: One Profession, Many Voices” *International Studies Review* (2021).
4. Banco, Erin, Ashleigh Furlong, and Lennart Pfahler. “How Bill Gates and His Partners Used Their Clout to Control the Global COVID-19 Response—With Little Oversight.” *Politico* Special Report. September 14, 2022.

III. Issues

WEEK 5 (October 2, 5) – Information-Sharing, Surveillance, & Reporting

Reading:

1. Listen: “Understanding Public Health Surveillance.” Pandemic Proof Podcast. Center for Global Development (2022).
2. World Health Organization, 2020. “IHR Procedures concerning public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC)”
3. Kamradt-Scott, Adam. “WHO’s to Blame? The World Health Organization and the 2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa.” *Third World Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (March 3, 2016): 401–
4. Mullen, Lucia, Christina Potter, Lawrence O Gostin, Anita Cicero, and Jennifer B Nuzzo. “An Analysis of International Health Regulations Emergency Committees and Public Health Emergency of International Concern Designations.” *BMJ Global Health* 5, no. 6 (June 15, 2020).

WEEK 6 (October 12) – Trade & Travel Restrictions

October 9-10: No class or office hours—Bentley Fall Break

October 12: Final deadline to complete Reflection Paper #3

October 12: Guest Speaker—Julianne Piper, Simon Fraser University (tentative)

Reading:

1. Wilder-Smith, Annelies. “The severe acute respiratory syndrome: Impact on travel and tourism.” *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease* 4, no. 2 (2006): 53-60.
2. Grépin, Karen, Tsi Lok Ho, Zihan Liu, Summer Marion, Julianne Piper, Catherine Z. Worsnop, and Kelley Lee. “Evidence of the effectiveness of travel-related measures during the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic: a rapid systematic review.” *BMJ Global Health* 6, no. 3 (2021).
3. Meier, Benjamin Mason et al. “Travel restrictions and variants of concern: Global health laws need to reflect evidence.” *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* (2022).
4. Jackson, Carly, Roojin Habibi, Lisa Forman, Diego S. Silva, and Maxwell J. Smith. “Between Rules and Resistance: Moving Public Health Emergency Responses Beyond Fear, Racism, and Greed.” *BMJ Global Health* (2022).

WEEK 7 (October 16, 18) – Trade & Travel Restrictions (cont’d), Review & Midterm

October 16: In-class review activity & final group project assignments

October 18: Class will not meet in person due to take-home Midterm Exam due March 10 by 5pm

Reading:

No new reading

WEEK 8 (October 23, 26) – Financing Outbreak Preparedness & Response

October 26: Final Group Project Workshop (in class)

Reading:

1. Micah, Angela et al. “Global investments in pandemic preparedness and COVID-19: tracking development assistance and domestic spending on health between 1990 and 2026.” *The Lancet Global Health* (2023).
2. Complete activity using Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation Health Financing Data (2023). To be introduced in class.
3. Listen: “Funding for the next pandemic.” KHN’s What the Health? Podcast (2022).

WEEK 9 (October 30, November 2) – Identity, Geography, & Disease

Reading:

1. Taylor, Rosemary CR. “The Politics of Securing Borders and the Identities of Disease.” *Sociology of Health & Illness* 35, no. 2 (2013): 241–54.
2. Wenham, Clare, Julia Smith, Sara E. Davies, Huiyun Feng, Karen A. Grépin, Sophie Harman, Asha Herten-Crabb, and Rosemary Morgan. “Women Are Most Affected by Pandemics — Lessons from Past Outbreaks.” *Nature* 583, no. 7815 (July 2020): 194–98.
3. Dionne, Kim Yi, and Fulya Felicity Turkmen. “The Politics of Pandemic Othering: Putting COVID-19 in Global and Historical Context.” *International Organization* 74, no. S1 (December 2020): E213–30.

WEEK 10 (November 6, 9) – Global Vaccine Development, Access, & Equity

November 6: In-class film—The Vaccine: Conquering COVID (2021)

Reading:

1. Listen: “Seeking Equity in the COVID-19 Response.” Pandemic Proof Podcast. Center for Global Development (2022).
2. Fidler, David P. “Negotiating Equitable Access to Influenza Vaccines: Global Diplomacy and the Controversies Surrounding Avian Influenza H5N1 and Pandemic Influenza H1N1.” *PLOS Medicine Policy Forum*. May 4, 2010.
3. Saksena, Nivedita. “Global Justice and the COVID-19 Vaccine: Limitations of the Public Goods Framework.” *Global Public Health* (2021): 1512-21.
4. Sparke, Matthew and Owain David Williams. “Neoliberal Disease: COVID-19, co-pathogenesis, and global health insecurities.” *Environment and Planning* 54(1) (2021): 15-32.

IV. Future Implications

WEEK 11 (November 13, 16) – The Future of Global Outbreak Governance: A New Pandemic Treaty or Revised IHR?

November 13: Final Deadline to complete Reflection Paper #5

November 16: Guest speaker on Pandemic Treaty negotiations (TBD)

Reading:

5. Wenham, Clare, Mark Eccleston-Turner, and Maike Voss. “The futility of the pandemic treaty: caught between globalism and statism.” *International Affairs* 98, no. 3 (2022): 837-52.
6. Lee, Kelley and Julianne Piper. “The WHO and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Less Reform, More Innovation.” In *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* (2020): 523-33.
7. Watch: “Prospects for a Meaningful Pandemic Treaty.” Chatham House Expert Panel (2022).
8. Listen: “Evaluating the Monkeypox Response.” Pandemic Proof Podcast. Center for Global Development (2022).

WEEK 12 (November 20) – Wrapping up & Final Project Peer Review

November 20: In-class Final Project Peer Review Activity

November 23: No class—Thanksgiving holiday

Reading:

1. Prepare for peer review activity (to be discussed in class)

WEEK 13 (November 27, 30) – Pandemic Treaty Simulation

Role assignments and preparation materials to be provided in class

WEEK 14 (December 4, 7) – Group Presentations

No new reading

WEEK 15 (December 11—Last Day of Class) – Group Presentations

No new reading

FINAL PROJECT

Upload to Brightspace by assigned final exam period