Beyond the Biological Basis of Disease: The Social and Economic Causation of Illness
An Immersion Course in Social Medicine
Haiti
July 7-27, 2019

Course Overview
July 2019 will mark EqualHealth’s launch of the seventh annual “Beyond the Biological Basis of Disease” course in Haiti. 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 taught in French.

This course in Haiti, which is lead by EqualHealth, represents the first site expansion of a course that has been offered since 2010 in Gulu, Uganda by SocMed (www.socmedglobal.org). EqualHealth (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.

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 other sites across Haiti.

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 2018 core faculty include:
Michelle Morse, MD MPH (Course Co-Director):
Marisa Nadas, MD (Course Co-Director)
Ruth Stauss, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC (Core Professor & Curriculum Design)
Carlo Louis-Charles, SW (Core Professor & Staff)
Zadok Sacks, MD (Core Professor & Curriculum Design)
Cassandra Fox, BA (Staff)
Guerson Maurace (Staff)

Cost
It is estimated that an average US/international student’s cost for the 2019 course will be:
- Airfare (average in recent years): $600
- Room and Board for 3 weeks: $1025
- Course Fee: $1375
- Total: $3000

This estimate does not include vaccination costs, costs for gifts and other personal expenses, or any additional travel in Haiti 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
- Working proficiency in French
- Available for the entire length of the course (July 7-27, 2019)

Application Process
The priority deadline for applications is February 1, 2019. After this date, 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
Please email cfox@equalhealth.org with any questions or concerns

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