

IP381-15 Health and well-being across the life course

24/25

Department

Liberal Arts

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Lauren Bird

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The social determinants of health describe how elements of our lives, social factors and experiences help shape our health and well-being. The purpose of this module is to enable students to understand the relationships between our social lives (in family, work, education and community) and our health and well-being through epidemiological, sociological and demographic lenses. Moreover, while many people believe, or have feelings, regarding how our bodies and minds are shaped by our life experiences, it is important to be able to study the topic objectively and scientifically and in interdisciplinary ways.

In particular, this module will enable students to examine social predictors of health and well-being across the life-course. Students will first gain a deeper understanding of the meaning and measurement of health and wellbeing as well as an introduction to the concept of the life-course as it pertains to health and development. The course then moves through different determinants of health, such as work, class and income, families and caring and more across different integral points in the human life-course.

Module aims

The module aims to empower students to understand and reflect on the role our social lives play in our health and well-being. Much of our study will centre families and communities, the people we care about and with whom we spend most of our lives. Work, wealth, education, and more shape families' abilities to develop, grow, and lead healthy, happy and productive lives and a better understanding of this will enhance our understanding of many contemporary issues today.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The module explores many of the social determinants of health across the life-course and as embedded within families and communities. Using a combination of case studies, primary sources, and hands-on workshops, it engages with questions such as “How do we measure health and well-being?”, “What is life-course theory and how can it inform our health and well-being?” and “How might our biological health be impacted by social events and situations?”,

It aims to not only develop advanced research skills, but also to help students apply critical thinking skills combining social and scientific methodologies.

The syllabus below provides an indicative overview of what the module may cover:

What is health and well-being? How do we define, describe, and measure and how might it matter when definitions vary?

Social determinants of health framework and life-course studies

Social Class, employment and working conditions

Social connections: family and child (including education, living conditions and diet and exercise)

Social connections: relationships and sex, friendship and community

Social connections: caring and contact and the end of the life course (including social contact, loneliness, and caring as work)

Living longer lives? Emerging science and demography at the edge of life

Treating health through a social lens, productive policies for the future

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Compare and contrast different theories and definitions of health and well-being and specifically in the context of life-course studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of many of the social determinants of health.
- Evaluate evidence of social determinants of health from research literature and data.
- Understand and interpret statistical measures, data sources and scientific approaches to the

study of social determinants of health.

- Apply appropriate research methods and skills in the delivery of assessments.

Indicative reading list

The below list provides an indication of the types of reading we will be doing. Specific case studies and papers will be discussed according to weekly topics and provided well in advance of the class.

Wadsworth, Michael E. J., and Bynner, John, eds. 2011. *A Companion to Life Course Studies : The Social and Historical Context of the British Birth Cohort Studies*. London: Taylor & Francis Group. Accessed April 24, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Arber, Sara, and Virpi Timonen, eds. 2012. *Contemporary Grandparenting: Changing Family Relationships in Global Contexts*. Bristol University Press. doi:10.46692/9781847429698.

Park, Alison, Curtice, John, Thomson, Katarina, Phillips, Miranda, Clery, Elizabeth, and Butt, Sarah, eds. 2010. *British Social Attitudes : The 26th Report*. London: SAGE Publications, Limited. Accessed April 25, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Perry-Jenkins, Maureen. 2022. *Work Matters: How Parents' Jobs Shape Children's Well-being*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. doi:10.1515/9780691185866.

Marmot, Michael. 2020. *Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review Ten Years on*. London: Institute of Health Equity.

Social Determinants of Health: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Inequality and Wellbeing 2018., edited by Adrian Bonner. Bristol: Policy Press.

Lancet, The. 2020. "Global Health: Time for Radical Change?" *The Lancet (British Edition)* 396 (10258): 1129-1129.

Vollset, Stein Emil, Emily Goren, Chun-Wei Yuan, Jackie Cao, Amanda E. Smith, Thomas Hsiao, Catherine Bisignano, et al. 2020. "Fertility, Mortality, Migration, and Population Scenarios for 195 Countries and Territories from 2017 to 2100: A Forecasting Analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study." *The Lancet (British Edition)* 396 (10258): 1285-1306.

Alasuutari, Pertti, Leonard Bickman, and Julia Brannen. 2008. *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods*. London;Los Angeles, [Calif.];: SAGE. doi:10.4135/9781446212165.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Alan Bryman, and Tim Futing Liao. 2003. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, [Calif.];London;: SAGE. doi:10.4135/9781412950589.

Research element

Students will conduct independent secondary (and possibly primary) research both for their poster presentation and for their critical review.

Interdisciplinary

This module requires students to engage with materials from multiple disciplines, and merge ideas and thoughts in interdisciplinary ways. Through qualitative and quantitative case studies, students will use multiple methodologies to develop their understanding and present their ideas for interdisciplinary audiences.

International

This module will discuss case studies from around the world. Depending on the students and module convenor, international approaches to the case studies, to presentations, and to research elements will be strongly encouraged.

Subject specific skills

Demonstrate both knowledge and understanding of the social determinants of health, life-course studies and how they relate to inequalities in health and global challenges to well-being. Develop and enhance the skills necessary to research, discuss and quantify the issues surrounding healthy and social lives.

Transferable skills

Principles and applications of research project design, management, and evaluation

Principles and applications of science and social science communication and presentation

Quantitative and qualitative methods and interpretation

Understanding strengths and limitations in research, quantitative and qualitative methods and the interpretation of data.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours (13%)
Private study	65 hours (43%)
Assessment	65 hours (43%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Weekly readings and optional readings, finding and interpreting relevant data.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Understanding Evidence Students will be challenged to interpret and critically engage with types of scientific evidence, and assessing quality of evidence.	40%	25 hours	Yes (extension)
Social determinants of health poster presentation Students are to prepare a poster presentation on a health or wellbeing issue related to a social determinant of health and provide a brief presentation to the audience.	45%	35 hours	Yes (extension)
Poster Abstract Students are to write an abstract based on their poster.	15%	5 hours	Yes (extension)

Feedback on assessment

Individual, detailed feedback for the essays will be provided via Tabula. Feedback for the poster presentations will be provided verbally, and in writing via Tabula. Feedback on strategy informing review will be provided via written comments published on Tabula.

Availability

Courses

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 3 of UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
- Year 4 of UVCA-LA98 Undergraduate Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year