



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore



**Catholic University of the Sacred Heart - Milan
Franklin University Switzerland - Lugano
Forum-Nexus Program
Undergraduate Division**

Course Syllabus

**PMED 493-SIS
Infant, Child, and Adolescent Healthcare
Services in the European Union**

Course Description

This course provides an in-depth examination of healthcare services for infants, children, and adolescents within the European Union (EU). It explores healthcare policies, access to care, disparities among member states, the role of the EU in health governance, and comparative models of pediatric healthcare. The course also covers pressing issues such as childhood vaccination programs, mental health services, chronic illness management, migrant and refugee healthcare, and the impact of digital health technologies on pediatric care.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand the structure and governance of healthcare systems in the EU, with a focus on pediatric and adolescent healthcare.
- Analyze the disparities in healthcare services among EU member states and their implications for children's health outcomes.
- Assess the impact of EU policies and funding mechanisms on child and adolescent healthcare.
- Evaluate key public health challenges related to child and adolescent health in the EU.
- Examine case studies of successful healthcare initiatives targeting children and adolescents.
- Understand the ethical, legal, and social determinants influencing pediatric healthcare access and delivery in the EU.

Course Requirements

This course requires independent research, organization, and academic discipline. Students are expected to complete the required and additional readings in pace with their assignments and the course outline. Students will meet with their SIS Coordinator regularly throughout the course for consultation and assistance. There will be an oral presentation, a final exam, and five essay assignments.

Essay #1

The European Union consists of diverse healthcare models. Analyze how these different models impact the accessibility and quality of pediatric healthcare services in at least two EU member states. What lessons can be drawn from the comparative analysis?

Essay #2

The EU plays a significant role in shaping child and adolescent healthcare through legislation, funding mechanisms, and strategic initiatives like the European Child Guarantee. Assess the extent to which EU-level policies influence national pediatric healthcare services. How do EU regulations complement or conflict with national healthcare priorities?

Essay #3

Vaccination programs and adolescent mental health are two pressing public health concerns in the EU. Discuss the effectiveness of current EU policies and national strategies in addressing these issues. What are the primary obstacles, and what policy recommendations would you propose for improved health outcomes?

Essay #4

The EU has faced significant challenges in providing healthcare access to migrant and refugee children, particularly in the wake of humanitarian crises. Analyze the policies and healthcare responses of at least two EU member states in managing the health needs of this vulnerable population. What best practices can be identified, and how could EU-wide policies be improved?

Essay #5

The integration of digital health solutions, including telemedicine, electronic health records, and AI-driven diagnostics, is reshaping pediatric healthcare in the EU. Critically evaluate the benefits and challenges of digital health adoption for infant, child, and adolescent healthcare. How can policymakers ensure equitable access to these advancements while addressing ethical and privacy concerns?

Presentation

Deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of your independent study.

Readings:

- European Commission. (2022). *State of Health in the EU: Companion Report 2022*. Brussels: European Commission.
- UNICEF. (2023). *Children's Health in Europe: Ensuring Equitable Access to Care*. UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.
- WHO Regional Office for Europe. (2023). *Digital Health for Child and Adolescent Health in Europe*.
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). (2023). *Vaccine-Preventable Diseases and Immunization Coverage in the EU/EEA*.
- Huber, M., Knottnerus, J. A., Green, L., & van der Horst, H. (2019). *Health in All Policies: Child and Adolescent Health in Europe*. Public Health Journal.
- Pettoello-Mantovani, M., et al. (2020). "Child healthcare in Europe: local diversities and collective potentials." *Turkish Archives of Pediatrics*, 55(Suppl 1), S1–S10.
- European Commission. (2021). "Children and mental health: Preventive approaches to anxiety and depression."

Additional sources:

- European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies: <https://eurohealthobservatory.who.int/>
- European Public Health Alliance (EPHA): <https://epha.org/>
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC): <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en>
- UNICEF Office for Europe and Central Asia: <https://www.unicef.org/eca/>

Course Outline:

Module 1: Introduction to Child and Adolescent Healthcare in the EU

- Overview of healthcare systems in the EU
- Key EU institutions involved in health policy
- Role of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in pediatric healthcare

Module 2: Governance and Financing of Pediatric Healthcare in the EU

- National vs. EU-level healthcare responsibilities
- EU funding for health programs (e.g., European Social Fund, Horizon Europe)
- Comparative analysis of healthcare expenditures for children

Module 3: Child and Adolescent Health Indicators

- Infant and child mortality rates across EU countries
- Malnutrition, obesity, and other non-communicable diseases
- The impact of socioeconomic disparities on child health outcomes

Module 4: Vaccination Policies and Preventive Care

- Mandatory vs. voluntary vaccination policies in the EU
- Herd immunity and vaccine hesitancy in Europe
- Case study: COVID-19 and childhood immunization programs

Module 5: Primary and Specialized Pediatric Healthcare Services

- Pediatric care models: general practitioners vs. pediatric specialists
- Access to neonatal and maternal healthcare services
- Healthcare services for children with chronic conditions

Module 6: Adolescent Health and Mental Well-being

- Mental health services for adolescents across the EU
- The impact of social media on adolescent mental health
- Suicide prevention strategies in European healthcare

Module 7: Migrant and Refugee Children's Healthcare Access

- Health challenges for migrant and refugee children
- Policies addressing healthcare access for undocumented minors
- Case study: Pediatric healthcare response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis

Module 8: Digital Health and Telemedicine in Pediatric Care

- Role of digital health in child and adolescent healthcare
- Telemedicine initiatives for pediatric care in remote areas
- Ethical considerations and data privacy concerns

Module 9: Healthcare Disparities and Policy Interventions

- Regional healthcare inequalities within the EU
- EU programs addressing healthcare disparities
- Case study: The European Child Guarantee initiative

Module 10: Emergency and Crisis Response for Children

- Pediatric care in disaster and pandemic response
- EU emergency preparedness and response mechanisms
- Case study: COVID-19's impact on child healthcare services

Module 11: Child and Adolescent Rights in Healthcare

- The European Charter of Children's Rights in Healthcare
- Legal frameworks for consent and confidentiality in adolescent care

- Ethical dilemmas in pediatric healthcare decision-making

Module 12: Future Trends and Policy Recommendations

- The future of EU child healthcare policies
- The role of artificial intelligence in pediatric medicine
- Policy recommendations for improving child and adolescent healthcare in the EU

Components of Final Grade

Final exam	40%
Essay #1	10%
Essay #2	10%
Essay #3	10%
Essay #4	10%
Essay #5	10%
Presentation	10%

Grading Scale

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-
87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

Academic Integrity

Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.