



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.

**Learning 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. Each student is required to participate in a minimum of three professional visits and eight independent cultural visits (ICVs). Students are expected to meet with their SIS Coordinator regularly throughout the course for consultation and assistance. Please note that your SIS Coordinator may ask you to attend a regularly-scheduled class when that material is relevant. Grading will consist of four essay assignments, a midterm, an oral presentation, and a final, handwritten exam.

**Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"**

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session with occasional distinguished guest lectures. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Knowledge from and participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

## **Assignments and Grading:**

### **Essays**

After completing the reading assignment for the unit, students are expected to write 900-1300 word essays responding fully to the prompts listed below. Students are expected to make explicit reference to the readings and to cite their references properly (Chicago footnotes style). An essay should have an introduction and conclusion.

#### **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 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 10-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of your independent study. You should reflect not just on the material from the essays, but also from all the assigned readings. Presentations are expected to be synthetic, and placing all the knowledge learned in context. After your presentation, the professor will ask questions to assess your knowledge.

### **Midterm & Final Exams**

The midterm and final exams will assess your overall progress throughout the study abroad semester. You will be asked not only to demonstrate knowledge based on the readings, but also to make connections between the various course units and reflect holistically on the knowledge you have gained in this 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:

- *Becoming a Mother: Preparing for Baby, Assurance Maladie*, 2019 ([link](#))
- 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**

Essay #1	10%
Essay #2	10%
Essay #3	10%
Essay #4	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Presentation	20%

**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 Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore 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.

### **AI Policy**

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, Grammarly, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your creative ideas for specific writing assignments;
- Finding information on relevant topics related to the course;
- Checking spelling on your writing assignments and presentations.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

1. Generating a draft of your writing assignments and final presentation.
2. Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or responses to complete class assignments.

In sum, any content that you hand in must not be generated by AI software, but it has to represent your intellectual contribution. Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence tools to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is considered unauthorized assistance in this course and will result in a failing grade on the assignment.