



MSc Health in Urban Development

Producing theoretical and practical knowledge on the interrelationships between formal and informal urban contexts, health disparities, social justice and development planning in the Global South.



Overview

The MSc Health in Urban Development (HUD) aspires to produce an interdisciplinary and critical perspective of the interrelationships between formal and informal processes, health disparities and development planning in general, and in the Global South in particular. The current global pandemic crisis highlights the crucial role of urban health experts, and their contribution for justice, health and equity in cities today. The MSc comprises three taught terms, including practice and urban health experts based workshops and a field engagement. In the fourth (summer) term, participants produce a final dissertation that further explores the link between development planning and health; this will typically look at how key issues impact on the health of urban residents, such as urban governance (institutions), the physical (land, infrastructure) and social (community) environments.

As the world population continues to urbanise and city populations in the global south are dually affected by communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well growing mental health problems, the MSc, in respond to current health challenges seeks to answer some questions:

- How (and why) does the urban, as both a political and a spatial entity, produce and reproduce disparities in health outcomes?
- What are the epistemological and ideological foundations that shape intervention strategies to create significant institutional and disciplinary transformations in the field of urban health?
- What are the synergies between public health and urban development planning, and how can both disciplines contribute to health equity?
- What is the role of different agents (international, national, urban and community-based initiatives) in producing transformation towards urban-health justice?
- Under what conditions can healthy cities be planned, managed and designed in the Global South?

Structure

The MSc comprises three compulsory modules (and one or two elective modules taken from a large offer available in the DPU and elsewhere in UCL):

Core Module 1, Health, Social Justice and the City, introduces key approaches and methodologies for the study of urban health, focusing on public health, planning and health equity pandemic urbanism, and on the political and institutional processes that enable public health interventions to address the social determinants of health. Key themes include the goals of public health, theories on Global South urbanism, urban informality, urban and infrastructure justice.

Core Module 2, Urban Health and Development Planning Strategies, introduces and develops analytical skills to critically evaluate and constructively develop strategies of intervention in the field of urban health, focusing on three levels of analysis: policy, spatial intervention and community-based initiatives.

Core Module 3, Urban Health: Reflections on Practice, focuses on the ways in which planning interventions can be important determinants of population health. This module integrates the students' work into practice, identifying leading urban health problems, analysing the advantages and limitations of the various types of population-based approaches to improve public health. Students will also undertake an independent research project culminating in a dissertation. The dissertation process is supported by learning how to: search literature and plan a research project; use knowledge acquired in the programme to critically appraise work; and communicate and justify research results.

Programme Leader
Prof Haim Yacobi

Graduate Teaching Assistant
Qurratulain Faheem

Other Members of Staff
Dr Donald Brown
Dr Liza Griffin
Dr Carolyn Stephens (Honorary Prof)

Core and Optional Modules
Health, Social Justice and the City |
Urban Health and Development
Planning Strategies |
Urban Health: Reflections on Practice

Careers

The programme has been designed with employability in mind. You will gain a strong core knowledge, combined with hands-on experience. You will also learn how to evaluate, analyse and develop intervention strategies, and will become familiar with more advanced research tools, theory and methodology. Graduates of this programme are likely to find employment in local and international NGOs, international donor organisations, local and national government departments or with consultancy firms. The programme also equips graduates to pursue an academic research career.