



Detailed Course Syllabus

Academic Year	2025/2026	Semester	Winter
Study Program	University Undergraduate Program	Specialization/Major in	History, Sociology, Communication Sciences
Year of Study	1-3		

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Name	History of Epidemics, Medicine and Society		
Abbreviation	IZBP254	Code	278809
Status	Elective	ECTS	4
Prerequisites	None		
Total Course Workload			
Teaching Mode	Total Hours	Teaching Mode	Total Hours
Lectures	30	Seminars	15
Class Time and Place	CUC according to published timetable		

II. TEACHING STAFF

Course Holder

Name and Surname	Kristina Puljizević		
Academic Degree	PhD	Professional Title	Associate Professor
Contact E-mail	kristina.puljizevic@unicath.hr	Telephone	
Office Hours	According to published timetable	Office	203

III. DETAILED COURSE INFORMATION

Teaching Language	English
Course Description	This course, following the subject and methods of the social history of medicine, analyses the relationship between communities and diseases epidemics, as well as infectious diseases that, at various points in history, "paralyzed" the collectives, influencing economic trends, demographics, and mentalities. The course is structured both chronologically and thematically. Students will be introduced to the earliest recorded epidemics, emerging with the adoption of settled lifestyles. The course will then explore ancient medicine, which formed the foundation of medical responses to disease challenges up until the modern era. Attention will be given to the medieval phenomenon of leprosy and the particularly devastating impact of bubonic plague epidemics, starting with the Black Death of 1348, and

continuing thereafter. The course will investigate the dubious causes behind the disappearance of certain diseases (such as leprosy and plague); the conditions leading to the emergence of new ones (such as syphilis in the 16th century); changes in society's sensitivity toward persistently present diseases (like tuberculosis); and the response to sudden epidemics in the 19th century (such as cholera). The growing role of medicine and the increasing interest of state structures in preventing and treating diseases during the 18th and 19th centuries will also be highlighted. Finally, the course will analyze the first postmodern infectious disease, AIDS, in a time when society had already come to terms with the departure of large-scale and devastating epidemics.

Expected Educational Outcomes	1. Master basic concepts from history of medicine; 2. Recognize fundamental processes from the social history of medicine and the history of epidemics; 3. Distinguish processes of individual historical periods and the social history of medicine themes according to historiographic approaches and research achievements; 4. Recognize the hierarchy of historical factors and explain the causality of historical processes; 5. Critically analyze and interpret historical records.
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Textbooks and Materials

Required	Z. Blažina Tomić; V. Blažina, <i>Expelling the Plague: The Health Office and the Implementation of Quarantine in Dubrovnik 1377-1533</i> . Montreal & Kingston, London, and Ithaca: McGillQueen's University Press, 2015. (selected chapters); M Harrison, <i>Disease and the Modern World. 1500 to the present day</i> . Cambridge: Polity press, 2004. (selected chapters); A. R. Omran, "The Epidemiologic Transition: A Theory of the Epidemiology of Population Change" <i>The Milbank Quarterly</i> 83(4): 731-757; R. Porter, <i>The greatest benefit to mankind. A medical history of humanity from antiquity to the present</i> . London: Fontana Press, 1997. (selected chapters); G. E. Rothenberg, "The Austrian Sanitary Cordon and the Control of the Bubonic Plague: 1710-1871" <i>Journal of the History of Medicine</i> , 1973; F. M. Snowden, <i>Epidemics and Society from the Black Death to the Present</i> , New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2019 (selected chapters).
Supplementary	Z. Dugac, <i>Kako biti čist i zdrav. Zdravstveno prosvjeđivanje u međuratnoj Hrvatskoj</i> . Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2010.; M. D. Grmek, <i>Diseases in the Ancient Greek World</i> . Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991; M. D. Grmek, <i>History of AIDS: Emergence and Origin of a Modern Pandemic</i> . Princeton University Press, 1990; L. Spinney, <i>Pale Rider. The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World</i> . London: Vintage, 2017.

Examination and Grading

To Be Passed	Yes	Exclusively Continuous Assessment	No	Included in Average Grade	Yes
Prerequisites to Obtain Signature and Take Final Exam		1. Regular attendance at classes – attendance of at least 70 % of classes according to the study program. 2. Fully completed seminar obligations - prepared and submitted assignments (critical analysis of selected historical records). 3. Obtaining a minimum success rate of 35 % during classes within the assigned teaching activities - achieved cumulatively.			
Examination Manner		3. Teaching activities (continuous knowledge assessment, midterm exams, seminar). 4. Final exam (oral).			

Grading Manner

Grade Scale:

insufficient (1) – 0 to 49.9%

sufficient (2) – 50–64.9%

good (3) – 65–79.9%

very good (4) – 80–89.9%

excellent (5) – 90% and above.

a) Teaching activities:

d) Seminar obligations – 20 % of the grade

e) Midterm exam 1 – 25 % of the grade

f) Midterm exam 2 – 25 % of the grade

b) Final exam:

b) Final exam – oral: 30 % of the grade (*to pass, it is necessary to solve at least 50% of the exam*)

**Detailed
Overview of
Grading within
ECTS**

ACTIVITY TYPE	ECTS Student Workload Coefficient	GRADE PERCENTAGE (%)
Class Attendance	1,2	0
Seminar Presentation	0,56	20
Midterm Exam	0,70	25
Midterm Exam	0,70	25
Total in Class	3,16	70
Final Exam	0,84	30
TOTAL ECTS (Classes + Final Exam)	4	100

**Midterm Exam
Dates**

According to published timetable.

**Final Exam
Dates**

According to published timetable.

IV. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

Lectures

Week	Topic
1.	Introductory lecture
2.	Diseases in prehistory, the first epidemics

3.	Epidemics in antique; Hippocrates and humoral medicine.
4.	Leprosy; the disease and the social identity of the sick
5.	Black death: the bubonic plague of the 14 th century
6.	Quarantines, lazarettos, sanitary cordons: anti-plague measures until the 19 th century
7.	"The Columbian exchange": epidemics in the early modern world
8.	From variolation to vaccination: the prevention of the smallpox
9.	Public health development (18 th and 19 th century)
10.	Tuberculosis and the efforts of the health enlightenment
11.	Cholera, the "germ theory" and the bacteriology development
12.	Epidemiological transition
13.	Spanish influenza
14.	AIDS – the first postmodern epidemic
15.	Epidemics and society

Seminars

Week	Topic
1.	Researching the epidemics in the past: historical records and methodology
2.	Thucydides' description of the "plague" of Athens
3.	Hippocratic oath, Hippocratic aphorisms
4.	Tristan and Iseult (the leprosy)
5.	Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron (The Black Death)
6.	Instructions on plague prevention (19 th century)
7.	Amatus Lusitanus and Syphilis treatment in 16 th century Dubrovnik
8.	James Gillray's cartoon on vaccination against smallpox
9.	Generale normativum in re sanitatis 1770.
10.	School of Public Health – publications on tuberculosis prevention
11.	Instructions for cholera control (1849)
12.	Causes of death in 19 th century – parish records
13.	Article on the Spanish flu (1919)
14.	Article on the AIDS (1980s)
15.	Examples from art, propaganda, and everyday life