



ENVG350

Geographies of Health

S1 External 2015

Department of Geography and Planning

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Kristian Ruming

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Contact via kristian.ruming@mq.edu.au

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit explores the relationships between population, human health and the environment. Taking an ecological approach it investigates the impacts of the biophysical, social, economic and political environments on health, and the resulting geographies of infectious and degenerative disease in both developed and developing societies.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Appreciate how most aspects of human health and disease have important geographical dimensions and of the multiple factors that affect health levels in populations. (Learning Outcome 1)

Understand the basic concepts, definitions, datasets and measures used in health geography. (Learning Outcome 2)

Be familiar and competent with the key research methods used in health geography (e.g. bibliographic searching, accessing population and health databases, research design, quantitative data analysis, statistical mapping, report writing and presentations, etc.) (Learning Outcome 3)

Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Group Tutorial Paper</u>	10%	Tutorial Week 5 (26 March)
<u>Written Assignment</u>	30%	21 April OR 5 May
<u>Individual Tutorial Paper</u>	15%	Tutorials Weeks 10 or 11
<u>Tutorial Participation</u>	5%	Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 9
<u>Examination</u>	40%	Examination Period

Group Tutorial Paper

Due: **Tutorial Week 5 (26 March)**

Weighting: **10%**

Word length:

Internal: 10 pages per group (including tables/graphs, approx 2,000 words) plus presentation

External: 4 pages (approx 1000 words)

Submission (internal students):

Hard copy of reports submitted in tutorials (no Turnitin)

PowerPoints to be emailed to Kristian by 9am on morning of tutorial

Submission (external students):

Email report to Kristian by 5pm Thursday 26 March

Internal Students will form small groups (3-4 people) in the tutorials in Week 2.

External Students are expected to write smaller individual reports and not expected to present their findings.

Scenario: Your team has been tasked with identifying and evaluating health related data available on the internet. You are required to write a short report for your managers. In your report you should include:

- Outline of organisation and research area
- Overview of relevant data sources and data
- Examples of data relevant to work area
- Brief analysis of data and outline of policy implications

- Issues associated with data from the internet

Organisation: As a group you should agree what organisation you will work for. Example organisations/departments include:

- Local Councils
- NSW Department of Health
- NSW Department of Health, Area Health Services
- Other State Government Agencies (Department of Planning)
- Federal Department of Health and Ageing
- Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
- Health Promotion Groups (eg Diabetes Australia)
- Local Community Groups
- Non-Government Organisation / Advocacy group

Note: each group will be interested in a **different type/scale of data** and your report should reflect this.

Note: DO NOT select the Cancer Council. In previous years the Cancer Council has been selected by a high proportion of students and this limits the amount/type of data covered in the tutorial presentations. If you want to explore cancer, focus on a particular type of cancer and use the Cancer Council as one (of many) sources of data.

Research area: If you like you can narrow your data review to a specific health issue. Examples include:

- Hospital admissions
- Smoking
- Life expectancy
- Many, many others!

Each member of the group will receive the same mark for this assessment.

Groups are to present their findings/report to their tutorial class in Week 5. If you have concerns over the contribution of individual group members please contact Kristian (the earlier the better!)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the basic concepts, definitions, datasets and measures used in health geography. (Learning Outcome 2)
- Be familiar and competent with the key research methods used in health geography (e.g. bibliographic searching, accessing population and health databases, research design,

quantitative data analysis, statistical mapping, report writing and presentations, etc.)
(Learning Outcome 3)

- Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Written Assignment

Due: **21 April OR 5 May**

Weighting: **30%**

Students have two options to choose from. Students must indicate which written assignment they intend to complete in the tutorial in Week 3. External students should email their selection to Kristian.

Option 1: Essay Assignment – Urban and rural/remote health

Date due: 3pm Tuesday 21 April (Week 7)

Word length: 3,000 words

Submission (internal and external students):

Reports (including coversheet) must be submitted to Turnitin before 3pm (link available on ENVG350 ilearn page). Late submissions should be submitted to the "late submissions" link.

Topic: *“People who live in rural and remote areas generally have poorer health than their major city counterparts, reflected in their higher levels of mortality, disease and health risk factors.”*

Critically discuss this statement with reference to contemporary geographical variations in health status in Australia. What are the **drivers** and **outcomes** of these geographical variations? What interventions or programs have been/could be initiated to **address** these contrasting health profiles?

Good illustrative data and analysis on geographical variations in population health are available from:

- Public Health Information Development Unit <http://www.publichealth.gov.au>
- NSW Ministry of Health, *2012 Chief Health Officer’s Report: The Health of Aboriginal People of New South Wales* <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publications/Publications/Aboriginal-Health-CHO-report.pdf>
- Health Statistics NSW: <http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/>
- The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare <http://www.aihw.gov.au>

Students should read widely to inform their discussion. The readings provided for Week 7 provide a good starting point.

A grading rubric is provided on the ENVG350 ilearn page.

Option 2: Research Project – World Health Organisation

Date due: 3pm Tuesday 5 May (Week 9)

Word length: 3,000 words (plus tables, maps and graphs)

Submission (internal and external students):

Reports (including coversheet) must be submitted to Turnitin before 3pm (link available on ENVG350 ilearn page). Late submissions should be submitted to the "late submissions" link.

Project Brief

You have been employed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a consultant to prepare a report looking at the health characteristics and drivers of health differentials in parts of the Developing World. The WHO is interested in looking in detail at a series of countries from each of Asia/Pacific, Africa and Latin America. The WHO has requested that national health profiles be placed within the context of the demographic/economic/social/cultural/political/ environmental characteristics of the case study countries and their region. Finally, the WHO want a review of some of the current policies addressing the poor health of the case study countries and suggestions for new policy and health initiatives at a number of scales.

Countries of interest identified by the WHO are:

Africa

Latin America

Asia/Pacific

- Sierra Leone
- Dominican Republic
- Myanmar
- Central African Republic
- Guatemala
- Pakistan
- Botswana
- Bolivia
- Papua New Guinea

Report

For your report you need to **select two case study countries from different continents** identified by the WHO (e.g. Papua New Guinea and Guatemala, Dominican Republic and Botswana, or Sierra Leone and Pakistan).

Your report should contain the following (the exact structure of the report is up to you):

1) Country Profiles

Provide a brief demographic, social, cultural, economic overview of each country. This section should identify similarities and differences between the case study country and its regional (e.g. continent) and global context. Similarities and differences between the case study countries should also be identified. Data covered in this section should be used to highlight issues related to the health characteristics of the case study countries (part 3). This section should include relevant graphs, tables and maps.

2) Overview of Major Health Issues

Drawing on data from a variety of global organisations your report should identify and define the major health issues and their causes. It will be impossible to cover all health issues. Choose the data related to health issues where there is a significant difference between the case study countries or where there is a significant difference between the case study countries and other countries in their region. This section should include relevant graphs, tables and maps.

3) Analysis of Determinants of Major Health Issues

For each of the case study countries provide a brief analysis/discussion of the **causes** of the major health issues. This section should draw together the data covered in sections 1 and 2. This section should draw on academic literature surrounding social determinants of health and health issues in developing countries (see ENVG350 reference list).

4) Responses and Programs Addressing Major Health Issues

Outline any programmes, policies or services that have been, or are being, implemented by government and/or non-government organisations to address health issues. Building on your analysis of the major health issues this section could suggest new policies/programs/initiatives which could be introduced address the major health issues experienced by these countries. Such suggestions should be realistic.

The report should also have a clear introduction and conclusion outlining the purpose and findings of the report. Academic/journal references are required for this report (do not just use reports from international organisations). Do not "cut-and-paste" from internet sources.

Data

Data for this report can be collected from a number of online sources including (but not limited to):

- The US Global Health Policy web page: <http://www.globalhealthfacts.org/> (the 'create a custom data set' option is particularly useful)
- The WHO data and statistics web page: <http://www.who.int/research/en/>
- Population Reference Bureau, Data Finder web page: <http://www.prb.org/DataFinder.aspx>
- 2014 World Population Data Sheet (ilearn)

Assessment of the report will take into account:

- the organisation of the report (i.e. physical presentation, structure and style, use of

supporting information in tables, graphs and statistical maps)

- demonstration of your understanding of how spatial dimensions of populations and environments interact to produce distributions and patterns of morbidity and mortality.
- depth in research beyond the obvious WHO/UN reports and websites - use additional supporting research material, journal articles and reports.
- evidence of your knowledge of the concepts of health and disease as well as health geography materials and methods (such as the nature of statistical data collections, uses and presentations).

Intended Learning Outcomes of Essay Assignment and Research Project:

- improved ability to locate printed and electronic material relevant to the topics
- improved problem solving ability
- improved ability to evaluate competing arguments
- enhanced written communication and presentation skills
- familiarity and critical understanding of contemporary population health issues

A grading rubric is provided on the ENVG350 ilearn page.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appreciate how most aspects of human health and disease have important geographical dimensions and of the multiple factors that affect health levels in populations. (Learning Outcome 1)
- Understand the basic concepts, definitions, datasets and measures used in health geography. (Learning Outcome 2)
- Be familiar and competent with the key research methods used in health geography (e.g. bibliographic searching, accessing population and health databases, research design, quantitative data analysis, statistical mapping, report writing and presentations, etc.) (Learning Outcome 3)
- Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Individual Tutorial Paper

Due: **Tutorials Weeks 10 or 11**

Weighting: **15%**

Students have two options to choose from. Students must indicate which individual tutorial paper they intend to complete in the tutorial in Week 3. External students should email their selection to Kristian.

Option 1: Climate Change Tutorial Paper

Date due: Tutorial – Week 10 (Thursday 14 May)

Word length: 1,500 words (plus copy of PowerPoint presentation for internal students)

Submission (internal students):

Hard copy of reports submitted in tutorials (no Turnitin)

PowerPoints to be emailed to Kristian by 9am on morning of tutorial

Submission (external students):

Email report to Kristian by 5pm Thursday 14 May

Topic: Climate change is arguably the biggest issue facing modern society. Climate change is expected to have a significant impact on number of different sectors of our society: economic, social, political, environmental and cultural. One of the major areas of concern is associated with human health in both the developed and developing regions.

You are required to prepare a short report outlining recent media coverage of the health impacts of climate change. Your report should have a clear theme. Examples include:

- Climate change and health in developing countries
- Climate change and health in cities
- Climate change and the impact of vector borne diseases
- Climate change and infectious disease
- Climate change and international policy responses (emphasis on human health)
- Geography of climate change and health risk (are some areas more vulnerable than others?)
- Climate change and health in ... the Pacific, South East Asia, Europe, Africa
- Many more.

In writing your report you should identify at least 5 newspaper articles outlining health issues influenced by climate change. Try and use articles published in the last 3 years. Your report should include the following:

- i. a short summary of each newspaper article
- ii. a synthesis of how the articles relate together and to other material you are familiar with (e.g. lecture material/government reports/etc.)
- iii. an outline of how policy (at various levels) can respond to the issues raised.

Students should supplement their newspaper analysis with academic publications, government and non-government organisation publications where appropriate.

Students will be required to present a short – 3 minute – overview of their findings/position in the tutorial in Week 10. The tutorial discussions will synthesise the main issues. Students should

prepare 4 or 5 bullet points to help their presentation.

All **presentations** need to be emailed to Kristian prior to **9am** on the day of your tutorial to facilitate a smooth transition between presentations in the tutorial. A hard copy of your paper is to be submitted in your tutorial.

Option 2: Health and Ageing Tutorial Paper

Date due: Tutorial – Week 11 (Thursday 21 May)

Word length: 1,500 words (plus copy of PowerPoint presentation for internal students)

Submission (internal students):

Hard copy of reports submitted in tutorials (no Turnitin)

PowerPoints to be emailed to Kristian by 9am on morning of tutorial

Submission (external students):

Email report to Kristian by 5pm Thursday 21 May

Topic: In Week 4 each student (who chooses to complete this paper) will be allocated to a side of the ageing priorities debate:

- Health Issues facing young people are the most important in Australia
- Health Issues facing older people are the most important in Australia

Importantly, the position you are allocated may not align with your own personal beliefs!

You will be required to prepare a short report supporting your position. In writing your report you should identify at least 5 newspaper articles outlining health issues associated with either older or youth sections of the community. Try and use articles published in the last 3 years. You should consider looking for issues at a variety of *scales* (nation, state, local). Your report should include the following:

- i. a short summary of each newspaper article
- ii. a synthesis of how the articles relate together and to other material you are familiar with (e.g. lecture material/government reports/etc.)
- iii. an outline of how policy (at various levels) can respond to the issues raised.

Students should supplement their newspaper analysis with academic publications, government and non-government organisation publications where appropriate.

Students will be required to present a short – 3 minute – overview of their findings/position in the tutorial in Week 11. The tutorial will centre on prioritising health planning and budgeting. Students should prepare 4 or 5 bullet points to help their presentation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appreciate how most aspects of human health and disease have important geographical dimensions and of the multiple factors that affect health levels in populations. (Learning Outcome 1)
- Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Tutorial Participation

Due: **Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 9**

Weighting: **5%**

A series of tasks will be completed in tutorials in Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 9. Students who complete these tasks will receive 1 mark per week.

Internal students are required to submit their task in their tutorial in these weeks.

External students are required to email their tasks to Kristian by the Thursdays of Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 9. The tutorial tasks will be posted on ilearn 1 week before they are due.

Overall attendance at/contribution to tutorials will be taken into consideration when allocating final grades.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appreciate how most aspects of human health and disease have important geographical dimensions and of the multiple factors that affect health levels in populations. (Learning Outcome 1)
- Understand the basic concepts, definitions, datasets and measures used in health geography. (Learning Outcome 2)
- Be familiar and competent with the key research methods used in health geography (e.g. bibliographic searching, accessing population and health databases, research design, quantitative data analysis, statistical mapping, report writing and presentations, etc.) (Learning Outcome 3)
- Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Examination

Due: **Examination Period**

Weighting: **40%**

A two hour examination will be held in the examination period at the end of session. Students will be required to complete **two essays** based on the lecture and tutorial program. Students will be given the opportunity to select the essay topics from six options. Previous examination papers are available from the Library.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appreciate how most aspects of human health and disease have important geographical dimensions and of the multiple factors that affect health levels in populations. (Learning Outcome 1)
- Understand the basic concepts, definitions, datasets and measures used in health geography. (Learning Outcome 2)
- Be familiar and competent with the key research methods used in health geography (e.g. bibliographic searching, accessing population and health databases, research design, quantitative data analysis, statistical mapping, report writing and presentations, etc.) (Learning Outcome 3)
- Be aware of the complex political and policy drivers of health and responses to issues operating at multiple scales. (Learning Outcome 4)

Delivery and Resources

Submitting your assignments

Your **written assignment** (Essay Assignment or Research Project) must be submitted on (or before) 3pm on the due date listed. **All written assignments (not tutorial papers) must be submitted to Turnitin.** A link for each written assignment is available on the ENVG350 ilearn page. Your assignment must be submitted with a Cover Sheet (available from ENVG350 ilearn page). Students must complete all the details on the Cover Sheet and sign the declaration regarding academic honesty that is part of the cover sheet.

For Internal students, tutorial papers must be submitted in your tutorial.

For External students, tutorial papers are to be emailed to Kristian (Kristian.ruming@mq.edu.au).

All students must keep a clean electronic copy of their assignments.

Late penalties: Please note that the penalty for late submission of assignments is 10% per day.

Extension requests: Circumstances that affect your ability to complete assignments by the due date must be discussed with Kristian. Appropriate supporting documentation may be required. Ensure that this is done before the due date.

Written style

All assignments should be written in 12 point font with 1.5 spacing. All work must be appropriately referenced. You can use any referencing style you like, however, it must be correct!

Technology used and required

ENVG350 makes extensive use of web-based teaching support using the ilearn online Learning System. Access to the Internet and regular access to the unit's ilearn website is essential in

ENVG350.

Unit Schedule

Wk	Date	Lecture Topic	Date	Tutorial	Assessment
1	24 Feb	Introduction to the unit and overview of health geography	26 Feb	No tutorial	
Module One: Theorising Geography and Health					
2	3 March	Data used in health geography / Measuring population health	5 March	Discussion - Overview of medical/health geography (1 mark tutorial participation)	- Students form groups for tutorial paper
3	10 March	Evolving concepts of health and disease	12 March	Using Health Data - Web resources and group work	- Students to indicate assignment preferences
4	17 March	Social determinants of health	19 March	Group Work – The social determinants of health (1 mark tutorial participation)	- Kristian to allocate side of debate for Tutorial Paper 2 (Age & Health)
5	24 March	Strategies to reduce social inequalities in health	26 March	Tutorial Presentations	Assessment One: Group tutorial Paper (10%)
6	31 March	Place and Health	2 April	Discussion – “Place” effects on health (1 mark tutorial participation)	
Module Two: Geographies of Health					
7	21 April	Rural Health Issues / Health of Cities	23 April	Discussion - Urban / Rural Health	Assessment Two, Option 1: Essay assignment (30%)
8	28 April	Planning for Healthy Cities	30 April	Group Work - Place based responses to health (1 mark tutorial participation)	
9	5 May	Health in the Developing World and Health in the Developed World	7 May	Group Work - Global Health Issues (1 mark tutorial participation)	Assessment Two, Option 2: Research Project report (30%)
Module Three: International Health Geographies					
10	12 May	The Environment, Climate Change and Health	14 May	Tutorial Presentations – Climate Change and Health	Assessment Three, Option 1: Climate Change Tutorial Paper (20%)

11	19 May	Age and Health	21 May	Tutorial Presentations / Class debate – Youth vs Aged Health Priorities	Assessment Three, Option 2: Health and Ageing Tutorial Paper (20%)
12	26 May	Indigenous Health	28 May	Discussion – Indigenous Health	
13	2 June	Drawing together Geographies of Health (& exam review)	4 June	Subject review	

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study

strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.