

Tkach, Colleen

From: Inform
Subject: EM: A course on public health and health policy (Aseema Sinha Gov 145).

From: Mosqueda, Maria

Government 145

**THE SOCIAL AND GLOBAL PANDEMICS:
PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE US AND AROUND THE WORLD**

Professor Aseema Sinha

asinha@cmc.edu

Fall 2026

MW: 2:45-4:00pm

COURSE THEMES

Pandemics are global and social, spreading through unequal networks but also rooted in a society's class, race, and gender inequalities. This course analyses the idea that pandemics and public health challenges **mirror fault lines of society**, exposing biased beliefs about social groups, preexisting health challenges and systemic inequities. Further, health system's responses—**a matter of political action, public policies, and agency by powerful actors**-- mirror and may complicate existing socio-economic health inequities. We study these persistent inequalities through analysis of **race, class and gender's effects on health-life chances**. Even as social power affects the transmission, exposure and disease outcomes, this course also studies **movements and agency** in how societies and people respond faced with challenging circumstances. Social structures and political aspects of contagions are shaped as much by power structures as by the **agency and resistance of people**. Global power structures, connections and networks are also important to study in how diseases spread and the various connections between peoples' situations and pandemics. Such **a global approach is revealed through comparative politics and health policy case studies** exploring how a variety of countries manage emerging pandemics and whether they addressed the socio-economic roots of public health crises. This global and comparative perspective reveals how health systems help and hinder people's desire for health and wellbeing in the US and around the world. This course will work as an elective for Government, International relations and public policy majors.