

Should you enrol as a student, you can look forward to interacting with classmates whose diverse backgrounds and perspectives will greatly enhance your learning. Your classmates will be women and men from all corners of the globe who are excited about exchanging ideas and about learning health policy and economics theories and skills that will help them become outstanding leaders in government, business and other organisations.

International Health Policy, 2000-1

Tom Aslan, UK

I have worked as a general practitioner in London for the last 4 years. Having always been interested in how health systems worked, the course seemed ideal for me. Generally the course is very well run. A common thread is found in most of the modules and towards the end the different parts all come together and interconnect; this is always a great feeling. As a doctor I am now able to understand health policy and finance much better and have the option of working in this field. The demand for this expertise is great with many exciting job opportunities.

Elizabeth Edsall, USA

The MSc in International Health Policy was originally not part of my graduate school plans. In fact, I only found out about this programme after completing the application process for law school and a master's degree in public health. The acceptance letter from the LSE forced me to think long and hard about my future objectives and what option for continuing education would fit best with my career aspirations.

Simply put, I intend to work toward: improving the way the American public is educated about health issues; upgrading the management and quality of health care; and strengthening health policies. Research during my first degree (including a six month study abroad at the University College London) highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts between nations in disciplines such as health care and health policy. Despite any one nation's demographic variations, a free flow of information and lessons-learned

inevitably leads to better policy, administration, delivery and assessment of services, and, in the case of health care, healthier populations. I soon realised that my career goals were going to remain narrowly focused unless I was able to gain a global perspective on health and social policy in general. LSE is not only the world's premier social science institution but it also collaborates with distinguished international organisations such as the World Health Organisation and the World Bank. I felt this programme would allow me to become part of an interdisciplinary unit where scholars possessing a wide variety of backgrounds and interests come together to share knowledge and conduct research.

This past October, I walked into a very international student community and challenging learning environment. The course has exceeded my expectations on every level – from the involvement of the faculty to the intellectually stimulating seminars and opportunities for research at LSE Health & Social Care. While it is a young programme, the “newness” of the course and its objectives brings with it a rather invigorating sense of energy and excitement that is noticeable in both the tutors and the students. The lessons learned arise from an even balance of theory and practical case studies. Metaphorically speaking, this programme outfits its students with a well-equipped tool kit for tackling international health issues. If I hope to be successful in my endeavours to play an influential role in the betterment of public health, I will need to keep these tools by my side.

Henrik Finnern, Germany

With a background in political science and a strong interest in medicine, the MSc in International Health Policy allowed me to bring both fields together and learn more about

health systems around the world - their implementation, financing their difficulties and how to improve them.

The course has been exciting both because of the diversity of guest lectures who gave up to date 'inside stories' on the current changes in their specific field of research and the faculty who are prominent in their health research and engaged with major organisations such as WHO and the World Bank . This gave the course a vibrating actuality. Due to the small course size, close contact with the faculty was always possible.

Future career opportunities seem to be in various multinational organisations, the pharmaceutical industry and academia. The internship at the end of the course offers both a unique experience and future career opportunities.

Levan Jugeli, Georgia

My interests have shifted from being a practising physician to working in health care reform and the pharmaceutical sector. My recent experience working in the health care and pharmaceutical sectors strengthened my belief in the necessity of getting an adequate education and encouraged me to apply for the MSc in International Health Policy at LSE.

I was fascinated by this program due to the wide diversity of courses offered and which exposed me to the international experience in health care reform.

The Social Policy department is excellent at providing a platform to understand complexities surrounding health care issues, to analyse, assess and plan the reform process, evaluate health systems at both macro and micro level, to grasp how international organisations operate and to understand health policy formation and processes in different socio-economic, political and cultural environments. Moreover, a compulsory summer internship, within major international organisations, private companies or the government sector is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable work experience.

I would say that LSE, with outstanding teachers, library, language centre and IT is the study laboratory of the 21st century and I would highly recommend the intricacies of the MSc in IHP with to any future students

Jennifer Neuwelt, USA

I came to the LSE after completing a US bachelor's degree in political science, German studies and pre-medical studies and after a Fulbright Fellowship in Austria. I hoped that the LSE would give me a good foundation in health policy taught through an international

lens. Indeed, since I hoped to do research eventually comparing systems of care for the elderly, the expertise available at the LSE was very attractive.

Coming from a town in the US, with a university degree from middle America, and then having gone on to teach in rural Austria, the urbanism of the LSE was a welcome change. It has been my experience that the dynamism of this place -- its professors, internationally renowned speakers, and a vibrant and intellectually engaged student body hailing from around the globe -- are the LSE's most unique assets. At the LSE, one finds a top notch education in a context in which the contents of a curriculum are real. As an example: in my course in international health policy, students hail from most countries whose health systems we study. Professors have extensive experience helping to form and reform those health systems. The discourse between native students and our professors has been invaluable, and makes issues ring not merely as theoretical, but as real and dynamic.

In addition to an invaluable degree in terms of gained knowledge and perspective, I add to my portfolio a degree which will give me the credibility to pursue intellectual and professional pursuits about which I feel passionate. I am grateful to the LSE and to the department of Social Policy for giving me the tools with which to pursue to a fulfilling future in the health sector and to make a difference.

Soritia Papanicolaou, Greece

During the last year of my undergraduate studies in chemistry and biotechnology at Imperial College I found myself at the point where I had to decide on my options and preferences for postgraduate studies. After seeking advice from field experts I became excited about the field of Health Policy and Health Economics and I decided to leave the area of biochemical research and do the MSc in International Health Policy at LSE.

In this course I have gained up-to-date knowledge on comparative European health policy, hospital economics and management and the use of health and pharmaceutical economics in decision making through the high quality lectures on offer. But for me the most valuable experience was to be part of the multicultural environment of this course, which came alive during the interactive seminars where people could share experiences from the health systems of their countries. In addition, the requirement to do a summer placement during this course allowed me to come into contact with a number of major organisations and companies in the field of health.

I would strongly recommend the International Health Policy course to everyone who is interested in either health policy or health economics in terms of academic excellence, supervision and support.

MSc Health Policy, Planning and Financing 2000-1**Dr. Tetsuo Hirako, Japan**

I joined the MSc in HPPF after I had worked as a clinical doctor in a hospital and as an officer in the Japanese central government. During my working days, whenever I had to tackle a new problem we had never experienced, I often wondered how, how wide, and how deep I should think about it.

My experience at LSE has been much more wonderful than I expected. Interactions between lecturers and students, and between students, are essential and indispensable. My classmates, who have a lot of experience and are from different backgrounds and different countries, often argue about unexpected important points within different contexts. How did the lectures and classmates capture and formulate these points 'instinctively'; based on what? The discussions often involved referring to important philosophical and theoretical concepts. This way of thinking and processes influenced me very much. It is not always possible to approach problems in this way partly because of their complexity and partly due to time limitations. However, at least now I can be aware of several approaches in dealing with problems.

LSE has given me greater confidence, and has contributed to a deeper and wider understanding of health and policy. I do believe I will cope with future, new and difficult problems better than before I came to LSE. I love the following words that one of our lecturers often says: "Think, Think, Think. Let's think about it!"

Jennifer Dargan, USA

My work in pharmaceutical public affairs involved developing educational programmes with public health authorities and health interest groups. This program gave me technical skills for a more critical understanding of the evolution of policies and programmes that impact on health. In future, I hope to help companies develop social enterprise partnerships directed at improving access to health care. I feel grateful to have had this challenging year and the rich exposure to lecturers and guest speakers who are really changing the health worldwide

Mary Greipp, USA

Prior to attending LSE, I worked as a health care organiser and project director for a grassroots non-profit coalition in the United States, with the primary goal of making health care universally accessible in the U.S.

The Health Policy, Planning, and Financing (HPPF) programme was appealing for many

reasons, the foremost of which was the opportunity to develop a broader world view around the organisation and finance of health care. I had been reluctant to study health policy in the U.S. for fear that it would amount to studying U.S. health policy, rather than giving me a critical comparative framework.

Once here, I quickly learned that, in health policy, there are often more questions than answers. I discovered how dynamic and evolving all health care systems are, and how every policy decision involves difficult tradeoffs. Most importantly, I gained a framework for evaluating these tradeoffs, which will prove invaluable in my future work in health care policy/advocacy. What I have learned throughout this course will enable me to broaden and inform the ongoing debate around health care reform in the United States. HPPF is a well-established joint initiative between LSE and another renowned institution, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. MSc students in this programme have access to the resources and strengths of both institutions, as well as a rich diversity of course selection. Apart from the superior expertise of the professors, the greatest resource in this programme is the other students. I could not have imagined a more diverse, international mix. The ongoing opportunities to engage in dialogue with students from all over the world create an unparalleled learning experience

Maurits van Pelt, The Netherlands

In September 2000, after spending more than 11 years in Cambodia with MSF, I took a huge leap and landed in the Health Policy Planning & Financing course, which is run jointly by LSE & LSHTM. What a culture-shock! And what an excellent way to broaden my outlook, rediscover "Academia", exchange with others on their experiences and recharge the old batteries with things I had been longing to learn about for so many years.

LSE offers plenty of learning opportunities and interesting events. There are many initiatives and active student societies. I have greatly appreciated the modern information network, LSE's capacity to communicate, facilitate and provide personal assistance when I needed it.