Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka

Curriculum
2026/2027

For course

Social Medicine

Study program:	**Medical Studies in English (R)** University integrated undergraduate and graduate study
Department:	**Department of Social Medicine and Epidemiology**
Course coordinator:	**doc. dr. sc. Roviš Darko, prof.**
Year of study:	**1**
ECTS:	**2**
Incentive ECTS:	**0 (0.00%)**
Foreign language:	**Possibility of teaching in a foreign language**

Course information:

The course Social Medicine is a first year compulsory course of Medical Studies in English. The course consists of 15 hours of lectures and 20 hours of seminars, leading to a total of 35 hours (2 ECTS). The course is conducted in the lecture rooms of the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Medicine.

The goals of the course are introducing the students to the basic development of social medicine, the promotion of health and prevention of diseases. Lectures and seminars will explore the determinants of health and health inequalities between populations, how social factors influence medical knowledge, health care, health promotion and disease prevention. Students will learn about basic communication skills and the creation of population based preventive programs. They will get an overview of specific features of of healthcare of special population groups, the basics of health care and social care organization.

Course content: This course will introduce students to the theory and practice of social medicine to enable them to recognize social influence on population health, organization of health and social care, most important health risks, ways of preventive action and health improvement.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

I. COGNITIVE DOMAIN - KNOWLEDGE

- Understand how social medicine can contribute to care by recognizing how social and economic forces influence who gets sick, what disease afflict them, which treatments are available to them
- Appreciate how knowledge of a community can enhance their ability to provide care to people from that community, recognize the social factors influence to health and the influence of population health on the society
- Understand and describe the meanings of health and disease, risk factors and evaluation of population health
- Understand the complex origins of global health problems and how specific strategies can be implemented to change both global health policy and health care delivery
- Recognize the types of disparities that exist according to race, gender, geography, and other parameters

II. PSYCHOMOTORIC DOMAIN – SKILLS

- Apply the insights of social meicine to develop solutions that could improve the delivery of health care on local, national and global scales.
- Imagine system of medicine and public health that might best eclipse the burden of disease
- Examine the influence of the determinants of health as well as ways and possibilities for population preventive actions.

The way the classes are organized: Classes are organized in form of lectures and seminars. Students will actively participate in the course through seminars, which they will prepare in collaboration with the instructors. The lectures will engage students by actively reflecting on various issues. Seminars will prepare students for independent problem solving and integrative thinking. Through seminars, students will be introduced to the impacts of social determinants and their negative influence on health as well as preventive measures. Active participation of students throughout the course will be encouraged through independent reading and seminars. Students need to prepare the reading, which will be discussed in lectures and seminars. The final grade will be the sum of acquired points throughout the course and the final exam. Each student will be assessed on class participation during seminars (demonstrated knowledge, understanding, problem solving, concluding, etc.).

[Ishodi učenja]:

Lectures:

Lecture 1: Definition and Tasks of Social Medicine
Learning outcomes: Understand basic terminology and concepts of social medicine. Describe historical overview. Present the most important roles and tasks of social medicine.
Lecture 2: Determinants of Health
Learning outcomes: Identify and describe the most important factors that affect health.
Lecture 3: Health Inequalities

Learning outcomes: Recognize social inequalities and their impact on health.
Lecture 4: Special Populations and Their Specifics I
Learning outcomes: Define special population groups. Recognize health needs and health care of special population groups.
Lecture 5: Special Populations and Their Specifics II
Learning outcomes: Define special population groups. Recognize health needs and health care of special population groups.
Lecture 6: Health Promotion and Prevention of Diseases
Learning outcomes: Present and list organized activities health promotion and disease prevention at population level.
Lecture 7: Health Education
Learning outcomes: Define and describe basic health education concepts in terms of improving the health status of the population.
Lecture 8: Communication Skills
Learning outcomes: Learn basic communication skills for health professionals.
Lecture 9: Health in the Community - "Healthy Cities", "Healthy Counties"
Learning outcomes: Describe the basics of maintaining and improving health in community. Outline the features of local and regional projects in the organization of public health projects and their impact on community health. Recognize current trends in health promotion at the local and regional level.
Lecture 10: Health and Health Indicators
Learning outcomes: Define health indicators. List the most important indicators and measures of population health.
Lecture 11: International Health Organizations
Learning outcomes: Describe the organization and understand the tasks of the most important international health organizations.
Lecture 12: Leading Health Challenges of the 21. Century
Learning outcomes: Identify the most significant risks for the health of the population. Describe the most important leading causes of mortality and morbidity. Recognize selected health statistics data of population and health condition (Croatia, world). List the main causes of global and local morbidity.
Lecture 13: Health Care
Learning outcomes: Understand and describe the organization of health care.
Lecture 14: Social Care
Learning outcomes: Define and describe legal frameworks of social welfare.
Lecture 15: Globalization and Health
Learning outcomes: Recognize the influence of the modern world and globalization on the health status.

Seminars:

1. Lifestyle as a Socially Shaped Determinant of Health

Students will be able to explain how lifestyle behaviours are shaped by social conditions, not only by individual choices.
They will be able to identify examples of how income, education, family, work and living environment influence health behaviours.

2. Healthy Ageing, Functional Ability and Social Participation

Students will be able to describe healthy ageing as preservation of functional ability, independence and social participation.
They will be able to recognize key social and health challenges of ageing, such as loneliness, multimorbidity, caregiving and access to care.

3. Quality of Life in Health, Chronic Disease and Disability

Students will be able to explain quality of life as an important outcome of health, illness and disability.
They will be able to describe how disease affects everyday functioning, family life, work, social relationships and patient dignity.

4. Poverty, Social Exclusion and Health Outcomes

Students will be able to explain poverty and social exclusion as important determinants of health.
They will be able to identify how low income, unemployment, poor housing, food insecurity and limited access to care influence health outcomes.

5. Access to Health Care and the Patient’s Pathway Through the Health System

Students will be able to describe the patient’s pathway through the health care system, from first symptoms to treatment and follow-up.
They will be able to identify common barriers to access, such as waiting lists, costs, distance, administrative obstacles and low health literacy.

6. Health Promotion Across Sectors

Students will be able to explain health promotion as a shared responsibility of different sectors, not only the health care system.
They will be able to give examples of health promotion in schools, workplaces, families, communities, media, urban planning and social care.

7. Communication Skills in Medicine: Building Trust Between Doctor and Patient

Students will be able to describe key elements of effective doctor–patient communication, such as empathy, active listening and clear explanation.
They will be able to explain why trust, health literacy and shared decision-making are important for patient care.

List of assigned reading:

1. Social medicine (the script). University of Rijeka, Faculty of Medicine, Rijeka, 2017.
2. A Conceptual Framework for Action on the Social Determinants of Health. Social Determinants of Health Discussion Paper 2 (Policy and Practice). World Health Organization, Geneva, 2010. (Available at: http://www.who.int/sdhconference/resources/ConceptualframeworkforactiononSDH_eng.pdf)

List of optional reading:

1. Selected articles from relevant journals and books available on the Internet

Method of examination.:

II. Final exam (30 credits)

Specific competences are assessed on the final exam. The final exam consists of a test with 30 multiple-choice questions. Credits are awarded only if the student scores at least 50% on the test.

The students who CAN take the final exam are:

Students who acquired min 50% credits during the course (35 credits)

The students who CANNOT take the final exam:

Students who achieved 0 to 49.9 % credits during the course or who have 30% and more absences from classes. That student is **insufficient (1) F** and can not take the final exam, i.e. the course must be re-enrolled in the next academic year.

III. The final grade is the sum of the credits obtained during the course and on the final exam.

Curriculum:

Lectures list (with titles and explanation):

L1: : Definition and Tasks of Social Medicine

Understand basic terminology and concepts of social medicine. Describe historical overview. Present the most important roles and tasks of social medicine.

L2: Determinants of Health

Identify and describe the most important factors that affect health.

L 3: Health Inequalities

Recognize social inequalities and their impact on health.

L4: Special Populations and Their Specifics I

Define special population groups. Recognize health needs and health care of special population groups.

L5: Special Populations and Their Specifics II

Present and list organized ways of population – wide health promotion and disease prevention at the population level

L6: Health Promotion and Prevention of Diseases

Present and list organized activities health promotion and disease prevention at population level.

L7: Health Education

Define and describe basic health education concepts in terms of improving the health status of the population

L8: Communication Skills

Learn basic communication skills for health professionals.

L9: Health in the Community - "Healthy Cities", "Healthy Counties"

Describe the basics of maintaining and improving health in community. Outline the features of local and regional projects in the organization of public health projects and their impact on community health. Recognize current trends in health promotion at the local and regional level.

L10: Health and Health Indicators

Define health indicators. List the most important indicators and measures of population health.

L11: International Health Organizations

Describe the organization and understand the tasks of the most important international health organizations.

L12: Leading Health Challenges of the 21. Century

Identify the most significant risks for the health of the population. Describe the most important leading causes of mortality and morbidity. Recognize selected health statistics data of population and health condition (Croatia, world). List the main causes of global and local morbidity.

L13: Health Care

Understand and describe the organization of health care.

L14: : Social Care

Define and describe legal frameworks of social welfare.

L15: Globalization and Health

Recognize the influence of the modern world and globalization on the health status.

Seminars list (with titles and explanation):

S1: Lifestyle as a Health Determinant

Students will be able to explain how lifestyle behaviours are shaped by social conditions, not only by individual choices.
They will be able to identify examples of how income, education, family, work and living environment influence health behaviours

S2: Healthy Ageing, Functional Ability and Social Participa

Students will be able to describe healthy ageing as preservation of functional ability, independence and social participation.
They will be able to recognize key social and health challenges of ageing, such as loneliness, multimorbidity, caregiving and access to care.

S3: Quality of Life in Health, Chronic Disease and Disability

Students will be able to explain quality of life as an important outcome of health, illness and disability.
They will be able to describe how disease affects everyday functioning, family life, work, social relationships and patient dignity.

S4: Poverty, Social Exclusion and Health Outcomes

Students will be able to explain poverty and social exclusion as important determinants of health.
They will be able to identify how low income, unemployment, poor housing, food insecurity and limited access to care influence health outcomes.

S5: Access to Health Care and the Patient’s Pathway Through the Health System

Students will be able to describe the patient’s pathway through the health care system, from first symptoms to treatment and follow-up.
They will be able to identify common barriers to access, such as waiting lists, costs, distance, administrative obstacles and low health literacy.

S6: Health Promotion Across Sectors

Students will be able to explain health promotion as a shared responsibility of different sectors, not only the health care system.
They will be able to give examples of health promotion in schools, workplaces, families, communities, media, urban planning and social care.

S7: Communication Skills in Medicine: Building Trust Between Doctor and Patient

Students will be able to describe key elements of effective doctor–patient communication, such as empathy, active listening and clear explanation.
They will be able to explain why trust, health literacy and shared decision-making are important for patient care.

Student obligations:

Students have to prepare seminars based on the assigned reading and participate in discussions. The mentor will evaluate students’ participation in and preparation of the seminars (demonstrated knowledge, understanding, conclusions, seminar paper, etc.). The final grade will be the sum of acquired credits throughout the course and the final exam. The final exam is in the form of multiple-choice test.

Exam (exam taking, description of the written/oral/practical part of the exam, point distribution, grading criteria):

Assessment (ECTS credits):

The assessment of students is carried out in accordance to the current **Regulation of studies of the University of Rijeka**, and according to the **Regulation of Student Assessment at the Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka** (adopted by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka).

The students are evaluated during the course and on the final exam (a total of 100 credits).

Of a total of 100 credits, a student can acquire 70 credits during the course and 30 credits on the final exam.

I. **Assessment during the course (max 70 credits):**

a) Active participation in seminars and paper presentation (10 credits)

b) Written seminar paper (20 credits)

c) Short tests during the course (40 credits)

a) Active participation in seminars and paper presentation (max 10 credits):

Point distribution:

excellent	**10 credits**
very good	**8-9 credits**
good	**6-7 credits**
sufficient	**5 credits**

b) Written seminar paper (max 30 credits):

Point distribution:

excellent	**19-20 credits**
very good	**16-18 credits**
good	**13-15 credits**
sufficient	**10-12 credits**

c) Short tests during the course (max 40 credits):

During the course students will have four short tests of 10 questions each (total of 40 questions).

The schedule and the contents included in the short tests can be found in the following table:

October 20, 2025	**Lectures 1, 2, 3**
October 27, 2025	**Lectures 4, 5, 6**
November 03, 2025	**Lectures 8, 10, 11**

November 17, 2025	**Lectures 7, 9**

The sum of the results of all four tests will be graded . The results of all test will be summarized and graded as follows:

Point distribution:

excellent	**36-40 credits**
very good	**31-35 credits**
good	**25-30 credits**
sufficient	**20-24 credits**

Other notes (related to the course) important for students:

Seminars are held during the course. For each class students should be prepared for discussion. It is mandatory to consult with the mentors. Mentors follow the progress of a group and of individual students. The seminar papers will be presented in the final seminar. Students are required to submit their seminar paper (based on the instructions for writing seminar papers) and PowerPoint presentation not later than November 13, 2025. (one week before the seminar presentation). Materials and all notices related to the course are on the platform Merlin.

COURSE HOURS 2026/2027

Social Medicine

Lectures (Place and time or group)	**Seminars** (Place and time or group)
12.10.2026	

L1: : Definition and Tasks of Social Medicine:
• P15 - TOWN HALL (08:00 - 10:00) [336]
  ○ SMed
 	
L2: Determinants of Health:
• P15 - TOWN HALL (08:00 - 10:00) [336]
  ○ SMed
 	
L 3: Health Inequalities:
• P15 - TOWN HALL (10:00 - 11:00) [335]
  ○ SMed	

izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · doc. dr. sc. Roviš Darko, prof. [336]	
13.10.2026	

	S1: Lifestyle as a Health Determinant:
	• P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (13:00 - 16:00) [333]
	  ○ SM_A
	
	S5: Access to Health Care and the Patient’s Pathway Through the Health System:
	• P07 (13:30 - 16:00) [334]
	  ○ SM_B

dr.sc. Juraga Denis, mag. sanit. ing. [334] · prof. dr. sc. Vasiljev Vanja, dipl. sanit. ing. [333]	
19.10.2026	

L4: Special Populations and Their Specifics I:
• ONLINE (08:00 - 09:00) [3327]
  ○ SMed
 	
L5: Special Populations and Their Specifics II:
• ONLINE (09:00 - 10:00) [3305]
  ○ SMed
 	
L6: Health Promotion and Prevention of Diseases:
• P15 - TOWN HALL (10:00 - 11:00) [333]
  ○ SMed	

doc. dr. sc. Benjak Tomislav [3305] · nasl. izv.prof. dr. sc. Racz Aleksandar, dr.med. [3327] · prof. dr. sc. Vasiljev Vanja, dipl. sanit. ing. [333]	
20.10.2026	

	S5: Access to Health Care and the Patient’s Pathway Through the Health System:
	• P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (13:00 - 16:00) [334]
	  ○ SM_A
	
	S1: Lifestyle as a Health Determinant:
	• v (13:00 - 16:00) [333]
	  ○ SM_B

dr.sc. Juraga Denis, mag. sanit. ing. [334] · prof. dr. sc. Vasiljev Vanja, dipl. sanit. ing. [333]	
26.10.2026	

L13: Health Care: • P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (08:00 - 09:00) [169] ◦ SMed L7: Health Education: • P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (09:00 - 10:00) [336] ◦ SMed L9: Health in the Community - "Healthy Cities", "Healthy Counties": • P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (10:00 - 11:00) [336] ◦ SMed	
doc. dr. sc. Roviš Darko, prof. [336] · prof. dr. sc. Rukavina Tomislav, dr. med. [169]	
27.10.2026	
	S2: Healthy Ageing, Functional Ability and Social Participa: • P15 - TOWN HALL (13:00 - 16:00) [335] ◦ SM_A S3: Quality of Life in Health, Chronic Disease and Disability: • P07 (13:00 - 16:00) [3648] ◦ SM_B
izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · Sadiku Dalila, mag.sanit. ing. [3648]	
02.11.2026	
L10: Health and Health Indicators: • P08 (08:00 - 10:00) [336] ◦ SMed L11: International Health Organizations: • P08 (08:00 - 10:00) [336] ◦ SMed	
doc. dr. sc. Roviš Darko, prof. [336]	
03.11.2026	
	S3: Quality of Life in Health, Chronic Disease and Disability: • P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH (13:00 - 16:00) [333] ◦ SM_A S2: Healthy Ageing, Functional Ability and Social Participa: • P15 - TOWN HALL (13:00 - 16:00) [335] ◦ SM_B
izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · prof. dr. sc. Vasiljev Vanja, dipl. sanit. ing. [333]	
09.11.2026	
L12: Leading Health Challenges of the 21. Century: • P08 (08:00 - 09:00) [169] ◦ SMed L8: Communication Skills: • P08 (09:00 - 10:00) [335] ◦ SMed	
izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · prof. dr. sc. Rukavina Tomislav, dr. med. [169]	
10.11.2026	

	S4: Poverty, Social Exclusion and Health Outcomes:
	• P07 (13:00 - 16:00) [335]
	  ○ SM_A
	
	S6: Health Promotion Across Sectors:
	• P06 (13:00 - 16:00) [169]
	  ○ SM_B

izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · prof. dr. sc. Rukavina Tomislav, dr. med. [169]	
16.11.2026	

L14: : Social Care:
• P08 (08:00 - 09:00) [335]
  ○ SMed
 	
L15: Globalization and Health:
• P08 (09:00 - 10:00) [169]
  ○ SMed	

izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · prof. dr. sc. Rukavina Tomislav, dr. med. [169]	
17.11.2026	

	S6: Health Promotion Across Sectors:
	• P14 - PATHOLOGY of lecture halls (13:00 - 16:00) [169]
	  ○ SM_A
	
	S4: Poverty, Social Exclusion and Health Outcomes:
	• P11 - KBC RI (13:00 - 16:00) [335]
	  ○ SM_B

izv. prof. dr. sc. Bilajac Lovorka, dipl. sanit. ing. [335] · prof. dr. sc. Rukavina Tomislav, dr. med. [169]	
20.11.2026	

	S7: Communication Skills in Medicine: Building Trust Between Doctor and Patient:
	• P15 - TOWN HALL (13:00 - 14:30) [336]
	  ○ SM_B
	• P06 (15:00 - 16:30) [334]
	  ○ SM_A

dr.sc. Juraga Denis, mag. sanit. ing. [334] · doc. dr. sc. Roviš Darko, prof. [336]	

List of lectures, seminars and practicals:

LECTURES (TOPIC)	Number of hours	Location
L1: : Definition and Tasks of Social Medicine	1	P15 - TOWN HALL
L2: Determinants of Health	1	P15 - TOWN HALL
L 3: Health Inequalities	1	P15 - TOWN HALL
L4: Special Populations and Their Specifics I	1	ONLINE
L5: Special Populations and Their Specifics II	1	ONLINE
L6: Health Promotion and Prevention of Diseases	1	P15 - TOWN HALL
L7: Health Education	1	P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH
L8: Communication Skills	1	P08
L9: Health in the Community - "Healthy Cities", "Healthy Counties"	1	P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH
L10: Health and Health Indicators	1	P08

L11: International Health Organizations	1	P08
L12: Leading Health Challenges of the 21. Century	1	P08
L13: Health Care	1	P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH
L14: : Social Care	1	P08
L15: Globalization and Health	1	P08

SEMINARS (TOPIC)	Number of hours	Location
S1: Lifestyle as a Health Determinant	3	P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH v
S2: Healthy Ageing, Functional Ability and Social Participa	3	P15 - TOWN HALL
S3: Quality of Life in Health, Chronic Disease and Disability	3	P07 P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH
S4: Poverty, Social Exclusion and Health Outcomes	3	P07 P11 - KBC RI
S5: Access to Health Care and the Patient’s Pathway Through the Health System	3	P07 P09 - TEACHING IN ENGLISH
S6: Health Promotion Across Sectors	3	P06 P14 - PATHOLOGY of lecture halls
S7: Communication Skills in Medicine: Building Trust Between Doctor and Patient	2	P06 P15 - TOWN HALL

EXAM DATES (final exam):

1.	23.11.2026.
2.	23.02.2027.
3.	06.09.2027.