MIT SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

GLOBAL**HEALTH** LAB

COURSE OVERVIEW AND FAQS FOR INTERESTED STUDENTS

October 2012
for Spring 2013 class

GlobalHealth Lab
offers students the opportunity to learn, collaborate, and take action. Class sessions set the stage for teams to work side-by-side with enterprise leaders on real-world problems on the front lines of health care delivery in resource-limited settings. This overview presents the course design and timing for interested students and addresses some common questions.

We have excellent projects under development. A measure of our success is the deep, ongoing relationships we have built with hosts over the years—some of our partners have worked with us over the entire five years of our existence. Over 150 students have participated in GlobalHealth Lab's previous iterations (G-Lab GHD and ghdLAB); only one person has ever dropped the class, and we aim to keep it that way! Students who have taken the class tell us it has built their skills and knowledge, shaped their outlook, and even influenced their career choices and job opportunities.

Each project is carefully developed over the course of months and is specifically designed to address a pressing organizational or business need identified by a host organization. The course is built around our projects. Each student team works full-time with its hosts on site for two weeks in March.

GlobalHealth Lab is open to graduate students only. Admission is by application and interview in November. The class is offered for a letter grade. Students get 12 units of academic credit plus 2 SIP credits. Enrolled students must be able to spend SIP and Spring break in the field, on site in sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia, and attend class sessions in both H1 and H2, as well as an early December event to form teams and assign projects.

Spring 2013 field projects

As in the past, GlobalHealth Lab pairs faculty-mentored student teams with host enterprises on the front lines of health care delivery in low-resource settings. Partners set the focus for each project. This year's projects will likely be in Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa, Bangladesh, and India, but other countries in the regions are also possible. Most partners are clinics, hospitals, community programs, or service providers, although we work with device and technology companies too. Projects address strategy; finances and business models; operations and process improvement; marketing; and technology adoption decisions.

Projects are collaborative. In every case, we aim to make a real contribution to our partner's ability to deliver more or better healthcare. And by taking on multiple projects every year that explore how efficiency, reach, and organizational sustainability may be advanced, we also hope to contribute to the wider dialog about the emerging field of global health delivery and to generate practical, useful material to share with others in the field.

Partnering host organizations benefit most from committed teams who combine practical skills and business insights and are willing to learn as much as they are willing to share. Students are responsible for some costs related to travel (see below), but we do not need students to pay the major expenses. All teams are expected to work with us and the hosts to make travel and logistics arrangements.

The course is designed to make the most of the field projects. To set the stage for a successful Spring, teams are expected to immediately respond to our email introductions to their assigned partners (this takes place by mid-December). Before the first day of class, we expect all teams to have reviewed the materials we provide and to have started researching the host organization and kicked off a discussion of project plans and deliverables with hosts. The work starts in earnest in early February, with the initial phase running from then until teams depart for their sites in mid-March: during this phase most teams have weekly calls with their partnering host organization. The on-site work phase is two full weeks in the second half of March. Teams use April to complete their field project deliverables.

Class content also covers the basics of global health delivery and explores tools and skills relevant to our projects, together with examples of their application. We also plan a rewarding series of class discussions after the field portion when students share insights and experiences with each other and with thought leaders and experts.

Documenting, reflecting on, and generating useful advice from the projects

Each GlobalHealth Lab project offers a unique learning experience. How will you connect your own experiences with the pressing issues related to healthcare delivery in general, and to your own development as a management professional and leader? We use the course structure to enable these valuable forms of learning and personal development, building on the notion that effective leadership involves a combination of capabilities. Not only do you need to get things done by working with and through others, but you also need to assess your experiences to distill and make meaningful to others the most relevant insights—both for yourself and for others.

Important Dates for GlobalHealth Lab

Application deadline: Tuesday November 6th GlobalHealth Lab student applications due online
Interview week: Week of November 12th Applicant Interviews
Round one notification date: Wed Nov 21st: Admission notifications to initial round accepted students
Round one student response deadline: Wed Nov 28th: Acceptance due from initial round students
Round two notification date: Thur Nov 29th: Round 2 admission for waitlisted students
Round two student response deadline: Sun Dec 2nd: Round 2 Acceptance due from students
Match week: Between 3rd to 12th December (includes mandatory mixer; timing set by student availability)
Deadline for student first contact with partnering host organization: 19th December.
First day of class: Tuesday 5th February
On-site work: between 16th and 31st March
Deadline for finalizing project deliverables: 26th April
Spring Poster Session: to be determined—likely in April
Last day of our class: to be determined—early May

For more information, applications, and updates

Sign up for our **mailing list** by visiting http://mailman.mit.edu/mailman/listinfo/globalhealth.lab.students.

GlobalHealth Lab website page has links to much more information plus updates to be posted: http://globalhealth.mit.edu/globalhealth-lab/.

Contact us via global.health.lab@mit.edu; or, learn about the GlobalHealth Lab **courseteam** from the website page link.

In the coming weeks there will be **occasional office hours** for students with questions regarding GlobalHealth Lab. Sign up on https://wikis.mit.edu/confluence/display/sastry/Office+Hours.

Frequently asked questions

Indicated dates and links are listed on page 2.

1. *How do I apply?*

    Apply by completing an online form which includes several questions. The link to the application will be posted on our website page. Our application deadline is firm. Selected applicants will be interviewed by faculty in the interview week and admission decisions will be made and communicated to students by the round one or round two notification dates. Accepted students will have until the round one or round two student response deadlines respectively to reserve their spot. Teams form and projects are assigned during match week.

2. *Is there an essay question on the application?*

    We will ask for a brief essay along with several short responses on the application. We also ask for your resume (saved as a pdf with the format LASTNAME_Firstname)

3. *What do you look for in applicants?*

    Enrolled MIT graduate students are eligible. There can be no listeners or auditors. First-years and second-years are both welcome. We seek a mix of MBA students, including those in LGO and other dual and joint degree programs, and other MIT Masters' and PhD students with relevant backgrounds.

    We look for dedicated students with a strong commitment to working as partners with the leaders and staff of organizations that aim to reach and serve those in most need of health care. Students need to be self-starters and be able to manage their work, logistics, and planning in an independent and professional manner while collaborating with fellow students, the course team, and everyone from volunteers and administrative staff to the CEO.

    A medical or global health background is not required. That said, students taking 15.So2, Business Models for Scale and Sustainability, this Fall H2 are encouraged to apply as we seek to include those who have had exposure to this important background material. Students with this background are likely to gain preferential admission to GlobalHealth Lab, but to enable a mix of students we encourage everyone who is interested to apply.

4. *What are my chances of getting in?*

    We won't know until the application deadline. For your information, the last time this course was offered at scale, 80 students applied for the 36 seats we had planned to offer.

5. *Tell me more about the timing of course assignments.*

    Teams get going in December and initiate contact with hosts right away. Before the first day of class, we expect all teams to have reviewed the materials we provide on their project and to have started researching the host organization and kicked off a discussion of project plans and deliverables with their hosts. There is an assignment due the first week of class.

    Draft workplans are early in the semester. From the start of February to mid-March, most teams have weekly calls with their partnering host organization, checking in with mentors at several points. The on-site work phase is two full weeks in the second half of March. Teams use April to complete their field project deliverables. The last day of our class is some two weeks before the end of the spring semester. We'll use the final weeks leading up to that day to wrap up class deliverables, including our late April deadline for finalizing project deliverables.

    A syllabus overview will be available from our website.

6. *How are teams formed?*

   Subject to our requirements, students form their own teams, with advice and guidance from us. In a required early December meeting during match week, we assist you in getting to know others in the class and facilitate team formation and project selection. Teams must include a mix of backgrounds and interests.

   We seek the right mix of students for each project based on our conversations with hosts in which we discuss the tasks, project requirements, and student backgrounds they seek. Foreign language skills may come into play, but usually are not a key factor. The right team mix also helps ensure you benefit the most from this learning opportunity.

7. *Is the early December meeting mandatory?*

   Yes. We are planning this match week session with all admitted students to facilitate team formation and project selection.

8. *How many credits will I receive?*

   For the academic coursework you will receive 12 credits and 2 SIP credits for onsite work.

9. *Will I receive preference in course bidding?*

   There is no bidding for GlobalHealth Lab. Students will be selected by application and interview.

10. *Do I have to attend class sessions? Do I have to travel?*

    Both the H1 and H2 class sessions and the two-week on site project are essential parts of the course and all are required.

11. *When will we have a list of projects and hosts?*

    We are working with hosts between now and the end of November to finalize projects. This means the full list of projects and hosts will not be available before you apply for GlobalHealth Lab, but we will share what we know as our projects get sorted out. You can find out about past projects from a link on our website.

12. *How will our projects stay on track?*

    Each team will check in with Prof. Sastry and the course team at regular intervals to make sure everything is on track in the weeks before the onsite work, and again through April as they wrap up. We check in via email before class starts, and also during the onsite phase when Prof Sastry or her colleagues plan to visit each site. And at MIT, we use selected class sessions for spotlight discussions to focus on each project. Each team also provides useful brief weekly status updates to us.

13. *Who is involved in running the course?*

    The course team is listed on the website and includes the instructor, mentors, a specialist who is developing and refining projects and building a great library of content from our dozens of past projects, a Teaching Assistant, and our course administrator. The MIT Sloan Action Learning team also helps support this class.

14. *I am non-resident this semester. May I still take the class if I cannot interview in person or attend the early December meeting?*

    Yes. You'll need to work out a plan with Prof. Sastry, but remote participation is feasible provided you prepare in advance.

15. *I expect to be interviewing or out of the country for most of January. Will I still be able to do*

GlobalHealth Lab?

Yes. You'll need to work out communication with the host and your team, but you can do that electronically. Recall that teams are expected to initiate contact with host (and to start discussing deliverables and collecting relevant materials) prior to the start of class.

16. *What happens if I drop the class?*

We do our best to line up amazing projects and opportunities and to ensure that teams are well-balanced and matched to needs. Dropping the class is highly discouraged, and in the past has happened less than 1% of the time. Students who drop at any point receive no credit whatsoever.

17. *Where do the projects come from and how committed are the partners?*

GlobalHealth Lab partners are diverse. They include for-profit companies, charitable organizations, international medical device developers, and rural health clinics. We find partner organizations in two ways. First, to identify innovative, potentially high-impact organizations, we conduct our own research, tap into a great network of colleagues at MIT and the greater Boston area, consult with global health experts, and attend conferences related to GlobalHealth Lab topics. Second, we invest in building long term relationships, which we believe lead to deeper, broader-reaching, and more impactful projects. Thus, when possible and appropriate, we are happy to continue to work with past partners.

Every organization completes a detailed application for each proposed GlobalHealth Lab project. The GlobalHealth Lab course team collaborates with prospective partners to refine their proposals, setting the stage for them to work closely with students throughout the course and particularly during on-site time. We also seek their commitment to share certain costs of the program with Sloan. We interact with every partner multiple times throughout the process, and often visit sites ourselves, so we get to know them well.

18. *Who pays for the on-site team project?*

Major expenses, including point-to-point travel, accommodations, and project-related expenses during the two-week onsite project, are covered by MIT (thanks to our generous supporters) with contributions from our hosts as well. Each host's contributions are individually negotiated by the course team.

The program and hosts pay for:
* Economy-class, round-trip airfare between Boston and your host location, with no layovers
* Safe, clean lodgings during your time on site
* Translation services and other office services as needed on site (as feasible)
* Transportation for work-related travel (e.g. to visit patient homes for interviews)

You pay for and arrange:
* Food
* Visas
* Local travel, including getting to and from worksite for day, in many cases
* Vaccinations and immunizations, malaria prophylaxis, and other medications
* Recreation
* Communications before, during, and after your trip (phone, fax, FedEx, etc.)
* Office supplies that may be needed, including posters.

In some cases, hosts provide food—you may get a subsidized lunch, or some free meals, depending on the site. We ask every partner organization to contribute something to each project, so if the best is that some partners can feed you, that's fine; we work to raise the funds that allow us to take care of the rest.

19. *What kind of visa should I get?*

We suggest tourist visas, as we are not "working" at all–no pay in involved. Do check with your partner organization.

20. *Who arranges travel and accommodations?*

You start by developing an overall travel plan, then work with our team and MIT Sloan's Action Learning staff to make long haul travel arrangements. It is crucial that you coordinate with hosts to finalize their accommodations and logistical details—not only the arrival and departure dates, which you need in order to specify your air travel—but also for local transport, lodging, and work arrangements, as we'll explain. To get to their project sites, some teams may travel overland to the destination if flying from the point of international arrival is inconvenient or costly; long-distance ground travel is covered in the same manner as air travel.

Know that host organizations have committed to helping you arrange your local travel (both point of arrival to lodging and lodging to place of work) and the lodging itself, regardless of who is paying for it, so you will have assistance when it comes to arranging the ground transport and accommodations. This will therefore be an early topic of conversation with your hosts.

Students must arrange their own vaccinations, immunizations, advance prescriptions, and visas. All students are covered by MIT's blanket travel assistance program in case of emergency. You must register online for this service by entering travel and lodging details into an online form, and share some contact information with us. The travel assistance service is free of charge to enrolled students.

We also ask students to check the US Department of State and MIT travel sites (all these resources are reachable from http://informit.mit.edu/epr/3.1travel_risk.html) to make sure you are informed about any recent developments that may affect safety and feasibility of travel.

21. *May I bring my Significant Other or friend on the trip?*

Unfortunately, no.

22. *How much do I have to work?*

A 12-unit class accounts for 12 hours of work per week. After allocating time for class sessions, some planning and logistics, and other assignments, each student should plan on at least 6 hours per week for field projects while working from MIT from mid-February to mid-March and in April. On site, you are expected to work full time, and likely will need to put in some after-hours work, too. We appreciate that you are devoting SIP and Spring Break to this effort, and make sure that our partners and others recognize that your time and effort is an invaluable contribution to the project. We also inform hosts that you will finalize the entire project by the late April deadline for finalizing project deliverables.

Speaking of working hours, note that in many countries, Saturday is a working day—often, it's a half-day. Check with your hosts on expectations for "full time" work.

In H2, we cancel selected class sessions to enable you to devote the time and attention necessary to completing the project and preparing for our final class sessions.

23. *Can I include additional travel before or after the onsite work period?*

In theory you may add on travel before or after your project's on-site work period, but you may only do so if you don't miss any classes or commitments at MIT. If the resulting fare is higher than it would otherwise have been for the specified point-to-point travel, you must pay the difference. In addition, you must arrive on site at least one full day before your first working day. You need at least a day to orient yourselves, get your SIM card, figure out transport and food, recover from jet lag, and meet hosts informally.

24. How are travel costs managed?

Working with an MIT-approved travel agent, we set allowable airfare totals, then ask you to plan a trip that is less than or equal to this total.

25. Why do any work on field projects after our return?

Partners tell us that they value the thought, insights, and, above all, the useful content that is only possible once students have had a chance to reflect on their field experience and have access to more resources, along with additional feedback from peers, faculty, and others, once they have returned to Boston. An action learning class like GlobalHealth Lab is not just about the field work—it's also about reflecting on and integrating all that you learn in the field, connecting to other themes and ideas within MIT and broader communities, and coming up with creative and helpful products that are designed to be as useful as possible to the organization you've worked with. This is a crucial point of differentiation for GlobalHealth Lab. So make the most of your time in April to complete your field project!

26. Do we have to find our own research resources?

We have amassed a vast library of useful reports and resources, which we can share with you via a USB drive, Dropbox, Confluence, or Stellar; we also have an excellent set of contacts for many domains related to your projects and great connections to expert researchers, implementers, and business and other leaders in the area.

Some materials may also be found online. We aim to enable all of us to share content via such apps as Zotero or Evernote—something we will discuss in class.

We also will line up specialized help from the experts at the MIT Libraries in case it's needed.

27. What are the deliverables?

The syllabus will describe deliverables and grading. Your major deliverables include bookend individual assignments and two sets of team products: various components of your field project, and a shareable work product that others may download and use for projects similar to yours.

We require five blog posts from each team that we designed with specific goals in mind, including to generate content you will use for your contribution to our required spring poster session. A selection of blog posts about your experience will also be uploaded to our website and used to generate course-related materials. So these blog posts are extremely valuable.

28. How do I keep track of all the things I need to do in the coming weeks?

This FAQ should cover most of the things you need to know in order to decide if you want to apply for a seat in GlobalHealth Lab; please contact us if you have any other questions.

Once class starts, you'll get more information. Last year, a select set of 11 MBA students helped to revamp GlobalHealth Lab and streamline processes, materials, and deliverables. The result is an integrated set of assignments that allows you to plan and manage your work as effectively as possible.

Our resources also include practical things. Useful resources include a comprehensive packing list, project-related checklists, procedural guides, and weekly emails from us.

We designed our mentor check-in meetings to go over the key steps for each team. At the end of each of these meetings, you will have your own to-do task list to guide your next steps. So our meetings are very practical, too.

Please let us know how we can help, if there's something else that would be useful. Know that we designed the deliverables to be as useful to you as possible—to enable the work on your projects to

proceed as smoothly and efficiently as possible. If anything we are doing is not aligned with this goal, please let us know and we'll see what we can do to fix it!

29. *How can I learn more about global health, local events, GlobalHealth Lab's past work, and more?*

Sign up for office hours with Prof Sastry; and learn more from our website. We are happy to connect you with past students too.