

Systematic Reviews and Evidence Synthesis

Facilitators

Prof. Dr. Arnaud Chiolero, MD PhD

Population Health Laboratory (#PopHealthLab), University of Fribourg & Institute of Primary Health Care (BIHAM), Bern (Switzerland); School of Population & Global Health, McGill University, Montreal (Canada)

Prof. Dr. Cinzia Del Giovane, PhD

Department of Medical and Surgical Sciences for Children and Adults, University-Hospital of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Modena & Cochrane Italy (Italy); Institute of Primary Health Care (BIHAM), Bern & Population Health Laboratory (#PopHealthLab), University of Fribourg (Switzerland)

Description

A systematic review (SR) is a review of the scientific literature on a specific research question that adopts explicit and standardized methods to minimize potential biases and thus provide more reliable findings to support decision-making and to guide future research. It is a key element for evidence-based medicine and public health (EBM&PH). Our course is designed for PhD students and researchers who want to know how SRs can be used within healthcare and public health to inform decisions making within an EBM&PH framework.

The participants will learn how to conduct a SR and synthesize evidence and the process from the initial research question to best practice reporting results. They will apply statistical methods and tools to conduct SR and meta-analysis (MA) (risk of bias tool to assess the methodological quality of studies; meta-analytic methods to quantitatively summarize evidence; GRADE framework to assess the confidence in the results). Examples will be taken from experimental and observational research.

Objectives

To know the principles of EBM&PH and how to conduct a SR and MA.

In particular, able to:

- Understand what is EBM&PH and why it matters for healthcare provision and public health decision making
- Recognize the different types of review and know their strengths and limitations for decision making

- Describe the key steps in undertaking a SR and evidence synthesis, including development of a review protocol
- Formulate a clear research question that can be addressed by a SR
- Identify the relevant literature
- Appraise the methodological quality of studies included in a SR
- Conduct basic MA and interpret the results
- Assess the confidence in the evidence using the GRADE framework

Dates **15 – 19 March 2027**

Eligibility SSPH+ IGC students. External participants are welcome to apply.

Course Structure Lectures and group work

Assessment In-class assignments and presentations

Credits **2 ECTS**

Preliminary Work: 10h; Contact time: 30h; Assignment: 10h

(1 ECTS corresponds to appr. 25-30 hours workload)

Location University of Fribourg, room TBA

Course Fees

	2 ECTS
SSPH+ IGC PhD and MD Students	30 CHF
Postdocs from SSPH+ partner institutes with a SSPH+ Faculty Member as line manager	30 CHF
External PhD students, external MD Students, postdocs from SSPH+ partner institutes without a SSPH+ Faculty Member as line manager and Swiss Public Health Doctors in training	600 CHF
Others	1'600 CHF

Registration <https://www.conftool.com/ssph-phd-courses2027/>

Deadline for registration 15 February 2027