

EXP 091-AF

INQUIRY Teaching Group

Fall 2012 and Spring 2013
(half credit each semester)

For the last 21 years, the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University has run an intensive, academic secondary school program that focuses on global issues -- Inquiry. Working with more than 400 students in 25 schools in six states annually, Inquiry's goal is to facilitate the understanding of complex and compelling issues of global concern through investigative methods and role-playing techniques. An important emphasis of this program is preparing students for global citizenship. It is one of the university's most diverse outreach initiatives, intentionally mixing public and private, urban and suburban schools.

Students in this yearlong course will learn about global health issues and then design and enact a role-playing simulation for the high school students on the outbreak of a pandemic.

According to a declassified 2009 US Department of Defense report, the US Government likens a "severe pandemic" to a "global war." Nearly half of all deaths in the United States in 1918 were flu related. Some 675,000 Americans -- about 0.6 percent of the population of 105 million and the equivalent of 2 million American deaths today -- perished from the Spanish flu. The average life expectancy for Americans born in 1918 was just 37 years, down from 55 in 1917. Globally, the Spanish flu is said to have caused 50 million deaths in 18 months. According to Council on Foreign Relations global health specialist Laurie Garrett, "Scientists have long forecast the appearance of an influenza virus capable of infecting 40 percent of the world's human population and killing unimaginable numbers. Recently, a new strain, H5N1 avian influenza, has shown all the earmarks of becoming that disease. Until now, it has largely been confined to certain bird species, but that may be changing." This summer, after a six-month controversy, *Science* published the details of a series of experiments in which virologists genetically engineered the H5N1 virus, making it jump easily from host to host. The publication of the research was initially suppressed by a US government biosecurity group over the potential resulting bioterror risk.

Students will each mentor a high school delegation and prepare them for the simulation — helping them understand all the materials and issues involved. The simulation will be held April 4-7, 2013.

