How do concerns about Ebola differ depending on the perspective from which it is viewed? What are the relevant facts from these perspectives?

- People have many misconceptions about Ebola. People who are diagnosed early can be treated successfully.
- The Ebola outbreak became problematic because it occurred in countries that did not have public health infrastructure to respond adequately.
- If there were an unknown virus (as was the case when HIV was initially discovered), the U.S. would not be prepared to respond effectively.
- We had the ability to prepare a response to Ebola if we had thought about prevention. There was some question about the role of the CDC reactive and how much is preventative. Some say the CDC is not preventative but rather, a reactive, research agency.
- What are the preventative strategies in place?—There should not be just one prevention directed at specific diseases, but prevention that enables countries and regions that are less well-off to administer health care effectively.
- Globalization makes any health concern a worldwide concern, and health threats cannot be limited to any one nation.
- The perception of the truth is a function of how information is generated and distributed in the media. One challenge is that sometimes the people that get a media voice are not subject area experts.
How should we balance the concerns from different perspectives, especially in light of the ideals of a free, democratic society?

- The measles issues gets at the heart of the debate between mandatory regulation and free choice.

- In Monrovia it was mandated that all people who died of Ebola would be cremated, and this violated cultural norms.

- We tend to want our families to be protected, and this may mean restricting the liberty of others.

- The sentiment of desiring protection is often not backed up with economic and other resources. The attitude of prevention must accompany this, but it is often not until there is a pandemic or some other terrifying outbreak that we are motivated to invest.

- Large private organizations are not responsive to public concerns, and we should think about this as it drives the priorities of privatized medicine.

Should we view pandemics as nature taking its course? Why or why not? And what do our answers to these questions say about our place in the environment?

- It is likely to continue especially as we encroach on natural environments.

- These considerations are not unlike those surrounding questions of climate change. A changing environment will mean different conditions and different health (and other) challenges.

- Especially with climate change there is a constant threat of diseases moving from non-human animal populations to animal populations.

- With regard to our risk, but also our care for others, we need to think globally—in terms of climate, environment, and personal health. Thinking globally from a human point of view, may still not be thinking globally from a point of view of all life on earth.

- From someone who has experience, action was the impetus of optimism and healing.