# ANT 4462 Culture & Medicine: An Intro to Biocultural Anthropology

### **COURSE INFORMATION:**

#### INSTRUCTOR: Shreemoyee Sil (s.sil@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; 11:30am- 12:30pm, via zoom by appointment.

COURSE TEACHING ASSISTANTS (TAs): TA NAME: Siobhan Summers (<u>ssummers11@ufl.edu</u>) Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:00pm-3:00pm, via zoom by appointment.

### **COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

The instructor and TAs can all be reached by email and through the messaging ("inbox") tool in Canvas. Please use your UF email address and allow 24 hours for a response (not including weekends or holidays). The instructor and TAs will use email to make general class announcements or to contact students directly about their work. Regular course information will be sent as "announcements" on the course website. Students are responsible for checking their official UF email and the Canvas page regularly to be aware of communication from their instructors. There are no allowances for students who fail to read their email announcements or whose inboxes are full at the time an announcement is sent.

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

2021 Wiley, A., and J. Allen. Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach. 4thEdition. Oxford University Press, New York.

Additional readings available on Canvas.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course provides an introduction to biocultural medical anthropology, a specific approach to medical anthropology that includes attention to human-environment interactions, evolutionary processes and their effects on present day health and illness, and the influences of political economic and sociocultural forces. A biocultural perspective on health considers the social, ecological, and biological health issues and how they interact within and across populations. Throughout the course, we apply this perspective to pressing health issues ranging from mental health to aging, pandemics to the influence of racism on health. We cover foundational concepts and terms from medical anthropology, making this course suitable for anyone with an interest in these topics. We will also explore how a medical anthropological approach to studying health, illness, and disease differs from a biomedical approach to the same and how medical anthropologists can work together with other fields to improve health for all.

# PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

There are no specific prerequisites or skills for this course. The following resources may be helpful to students who wish to gain more information about Anthropology before/while taking this course:

- Living Anthropologically: This website/blog provides links to additional resources and up-to-date information.
- American Anthropological Association: Official website for the American Anthropological Association.
- Anthropology Department at UF offers a wide variety of courses every semester. See this site for additional information on course offerings.

# **COURSE OBJECTIVES (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**

# **PURPOSE OF COURSE:**

This course is designed to help you develop a better appreciation for the complex relationship between culture, human biology, the environment, and health, and how it varies over space and time. The course will help you understand:

- 1. Different concepts of health and illness across cultures
- 2. How social and environmental factors influence health outcomes
- 3. How culture and biology interact to shape individual- and population-level health outcomes

This course will also help you develop a better appreciation for the ways that you yourself conceive of health and the different factors that influence your own health beliefs and healthcare decisions.

# **COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- 1. Describe the scope of medical anthropology and give examples of the key theoretical and empirical areas
- 2. Analyze the biocultural factors that shape the distribution of health
- 3. Evaluate cultural influences and assumptions about healing practices

4. Apply an anthropological perspective to public health problems both in the U.S. and globally

This course is also designed to develop your learning skills, including:

- 1. Analytical thinking and critical reading skills
- 2. Holistic learning skills and the ability to integrate ideas from many different perspectives

# **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:**

This is an entirely online course. The course material is divided into 13 modules that include lectures, readings, videos, discussions, and assignments. These activities are designed to help students engage with the material and facilitate learning and interaction with their peers in the class. There is no set order to complete the material within a module, however students must pass each module quiz to continue to the next module.

# **GRADING POLICIES:**

We will assess student performance in class through reflection journals, Perusall activities, quizzes, infographic assignments, and midterm and final exams:

### **Reflection Journals:**

In this course you will have two reflection journals, one in the first week of class and one at the end of the course. The purpose of these journals is to have a space where you can reflect on your current understandings of health, illness, and disease to establish a baseline to which you will return to at the end of the semester and see how your ideas might have changed or grown. While your instructor and TAs will read your journals and provide comments, these are ultimately for you to be able to see and reflect on how the course knowledge has impacted your experiences and ideas. They will be graded for completeness.

### **Perusall Activities:**

Each week you will have Perusall activities based on the assigned readings. The goal of these assignments is to improve your reading and critical thinking skills while allowing you to engage in more in-depth analysis of an important scholarly journal article. Working in groups assigned at the beginning of the course, you will collaboratively read, annotate, and discuss each assigned article using the Perusall platform. You will also be able to interact with your peers to break down key concepts and arguments in the text. These exercises are designed to sharpen your ability to summarize your thoughts, and they also help the instructors assess your comprehension of the course material by giving you another venue to share your ideas and connect the readings to course concepts. Perusall is automatically graded. To receive full credit, you should strive for 8 to 10 contributions, including a combination of your own comments or questions and responses to your group members. The highest quality contributions are those that involve thoughtful responses or more in-depth questions, beyond

merely asking for a definition or commenting "that's interesting." The length of your response is a significant factor in determining the quality of your contribution. For your first Perusall assignment in week 1, everyone will receive full credit if completed and you will receive feedback on your contributions so you know what you might need to do to improve for full credit in the following weeks.

**Quizzes:** Each week you will have quizzes based on the module content. Quizzes will be a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. They will test you on your knowledge and understanding of the assigned material– including lectures, textbook chapters, and journal articles. To be successful on the quizzes you should prepare to take them *after* you have read and completed all the assignment module work for the week. They will be timed for **20 minutes**.

**Infographic assignments:** In this course you will have the opportunity to make **four** infographics based on important course themes, content, and questions. The purpose of these infographic assignments is to give you a space to think about and convey course information in a visually engaging way, and develop the ability to concisely and clearly communicate new and complex ideas. Remember that teaching or presenting on a subject in a clear and concise manner shows a mastery of knowledge, so your infographics will be an opportunity for you to visually teach your instructors and class about what you have learned and show your higher-level understanding and application of course content. Throughout the course there will be six infographic prompts which are already scheduled and noted on the syllabus. You will be required to complete four, two during the first half of the semester and two in the second half of the semester. Take a look and familiarize yourself with the infographic due dates and topics so you can select the ones that are most interesting to you and work with your schedule. Remember that the infographic prompts are designed to challenge you to critically engage with course material that may be difficult, so make sure you have enough time to really think about the ideas and questions you want to portray in your infographic visuals and text. You will be graded on the accuracy and quality of the information, the clarity of the presentation in the infographic, and creativity in your presentation of the information (TIP: students usually find Canva to be a helpful site for this). You will submit the assignment as a pdf file.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** Your midterm and final exams will be a mixture of short answer and essay questions. **You will complete four of the six short answer prompts and two of the three longer essay prompts.** Your exams will be timed for **90 minutes** on Canvas, open book and open note. The purpose of these exams is to test you on your knowledge and comprehension of course content, including textbook chapters, articles, and lectures. If you are staying up to date and completing all the coursework and assignments, you will do well on the exams.

### **GRADING CRITERIA:**

Assignment	Points/Percentage	

Reflection Journals	10 points each X 2 reflection journals = 20 points (20% of total)
Perusall Activities	10 points each X 11 Perusall activities = 110 points (15% of total)
Quizzes	5 points each X 10 quizzes = 50 points (15% of total)
Infographics	15 points each X 4 infographics = 60 points (15% of total)
Midterm Exam	50 points = 15% of total
Final Exam	50  points = 20%  of total

# **GRADING SCALE:**

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic- regulations/grades-grading-policies/

A	93–100% of possible points	С	73 – 76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70 – 72%
B+	87 - 89%	D+	67 – 69%
В	83 - 86%	D	63 - 66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60 - 62%
C+	77 – 79%	E	<60

Late assignments will be subject to a late penalty of 10% off per day unless I've been notified prior to the due date, and we have agreed on an alternative arrangement and/or it is an excused absence. Please also notify me directly if you will be out.

**GRADING POLICY:** If you have a question regarding a grade you receive for an assignment or quiz, you must first discuss the grade with one of the TAs. If you still have concerns, you may email the instructor to request that your assignment be reviewed. This request must be made within 1 week of the grade posting.

	RSE SCHEDULE (May	,	
Week	Modules	Readings	Assigned Work Due
Week 1 [May 13-17]	Module 1 Introduction to Biocultural Anthropology: In this module you will learn about anthropology and its four subfields. Then you will explore the discipline of medical anthropology and a biocultural approach to studying health, illness, disease, and well-being.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 1: Introduction: A Biocultural Approach to Medical Anthropology (pp. 1-13).</li> <li>Lock, Margaret. (1998). Menopause: lessons from anthropology. <i>Psychosomatic Medicine</i>, 60(4),410-419</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Reflection Journal 1</li> <li>Perusall 1</li> <li>Quiz 1</li> </ul>
	Module 2:Anthropological Perspectives on Health and Disease – In this module you will explore the concept of health and the challenge of defining it as a universal concept. Then you will distinguish among disease, illness, and sickness, and learn about the concepts of adaptation and medicalization.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 2: Anthropological Perspectives on Health and Disease (pp. 14-39).</li> <li>Kleinman, Eisenberg, and Good. 1978. Culture, illness, and care: Clinical lessons from anthropologic and crosscultural research. Annals of Internal Medicine 88, 251-258.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 2</li> <li>Quiz 2</li> </ul>

# COURSE SCHEDULE (May 13 – June 21)

Week 2 [May 20-24]	Module 3: Healers and Healing – In this module you will explore different ethnomedical systems to identify the differences between biomedicine and alternative and complementary medicine. You will learn about the differences between placebo/nocebo and explain the relationship between culture and healing systems.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 3: Healers and Healing (pp. 40-78).</li> <li>Nichols-Belo, A. 2018. "Witchdoctors" in white coats: Politics and healing knowledge in Tanzania. <i>Medical</i> <i>Anthropology</i> 37(8), 722-736.</li> <li>Portraits of Shamans from Around the World <u>link</u></li> <li>Moer man, D. E. &amp; Jonas, W. B. (2002). Deconstructing the placebo effect and finding the meaning response. Annals of Internal Medicine, 136(6), 471-476.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Quiz 3</li> <li>Infographic 3</li> </ul>
	Module 4: Diet and Nutrition – In this module you will take a biocultural approach to human nutrition to identify why an evolutionary perspective is important for understanding contemporary diseases. You will look at the links between nutrition,	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 4: Diet and Nutrition in Health and Disease (pp. 79-116).</li> <li>West-Eberhard. 2019. Nutrition, the visceral immune system, and the evolutionary origins of pathogenic obesity Link</li> <li>Cordain et al. 2005. Origins and evolution of the Western diet: health implications for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Am J Clin Nut 81: 341-54</li> <li>Carmody et al. 2016. Genetic Evidence of Human Adaptation to a Cooked Diet.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 4</li> <li>Quiz 4</li> <li>Infographic 4</li> </ul>
	diet transitions and human health.	Genome Biol. Evol. 8(4):1091–1103. doi:10.1093/gbe/evw059	

	Module 5: Child Growth and Health – In this module you will explore the biological and environmental conditions that shape human growth and health from gestation through adolescence.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 5: Child Growth and Health (pp. 117-153).</li> <li>Gluckman PD, Hanson MA, Low FM. (2019). Evolutionary and developmental mismatches are consequences of adaptive developmental plasticity in humans and have implications for later disease risk. Philosophical Transactions B 374, 1- 8.http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2018.0109</li> <li>Sellen, D.W. 2009. Chapter 6 Family structure and child growth in sub- Saharan Africa: Assessing "hidden risk" in Health, Risk, and Adversity pp.150-172. C. PanterBrick &amp; A. Fuentes, eds. Berghan Books.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 5</li> <li>Quiz 5</li> </ul>
Week 3 [May 27-31]	Module 6: Reproductive Health in Biocultural Context Part I – This module provides an introductory overview of reproductive health from an anthropological and biocultural lens. You will learn about the biocultural elements of menstruation, fertility, and infertility globally with consideration of both biological processes and social meanings of these processes. You will also identify and reflect on main issues surrounding the topic of female genital cutting	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 6: Reproductive Health in Biocultural Context (pp. 154-181).</li> <li>To Breed or Not to Breed? https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/2 0/style/breed-children-climate- change.html</li> <li>Gottlieb, Alma. Ch. 14 Menstrual Taboos: Moving Beyond the Curse in <i>The</i> <i>Palgrave Handbook of Critical</i> <i>Menstruation Studies</i>, Bobel et al., eds. pp. 143-162</li> <li>Gerrits, Trudie. 2016. Assisted reproductive technologies in Ghana: Transnational undertakings, local practices, and "more affordable" IVF. <i>Reproductive</i> <i>Biomedicine and Society Online</i> 2, 32-38.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Quiz 6</li> <li>Infographic 6</li> </ul>

Module 7	• Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 6:	• Perusall 7
Reproductive H	ealth Reproductive Health in Biocultural	
in Biocultural	Context (pp. 181-207).	
Context Part II		

In this module you will	How Men's Bodies Change When They Become Fathers,     https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/1     5/naranting/haby/fatherbood mens	
learn about pregnancy, birth, and parenting from a biocultural perspective. You will explore the biocultural perspective on fetal programming as it affects health status later in life and understand the effects of the medicalization of birth on the work and role of local midwives	<ul> <li>5/parenting/baby/fatherhood-mensbodies.html</li> <li>Fathers' cortisol and testosterone in the days around infants' births predict later paternal involvement</li> <li>Kuzawa, C. (2005) Fetal Origins of Developmental Plasticity: Are Fetal Cues Reliable Predictors of Future Nutritional Environments? <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i>, 17:5-21.</li> </ul>	

	Module 8 : Aging – In this module you will explore how biology and culture shapes the way we think about aging and the elderly. You will also learn about the cultural and environmental factors that are important in extending longevity and achieving successful aging and prep for your midterm by review concepts and material from Module 1 to Module 7.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 7: Aging (pp. 206-239).</li> <li>Lamb S. Permanent personhood or meaningful decline? Toward a critical anthropology of successful aging. J Aging Stud. 2014 Apr;29:41-52. doi: 10.1016/j.jaging.2013.12.006. Epub 2014 Jan 31. PMID: 24655672</li> <li>To Save on Rent, Some Dutch College Students are Living in Nursing Homes https://www.theatlantic.com/busines s/archive/2015/10/dutch-nursing- homecollege-students/408976/.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 8</li> <li>MIDTERM EXAM</li> </ul>
Week 4 [June 3-7]	Module 9: Infec&ous Diseases: Pathogens, Hosts, and Evolu&onary Interplay – In this module you will study the biocultural rela4onship between pathogens, humans, and infec4ous diseases. You will explain how and why pathogens change over 4me and how infec4ous diseases	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 8: Infectious Diseases: Pathogens, Hosts, and Evolutionary Interplay (pp. 240-280).</li> <li>Acevedo et al. 2019 Virulence- driven trade- offs in disease transmission: A metaanalysis. Evolution 73-4: 636–647 doi:10.1111/evo.13692</li> <li>Pal, R.; Bhadada, S.J. 2020. COVID- 19 and diabetes mellietus: An unholy interaction of two pandemics. Diabetes &amp; Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research &amp;</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 9</li> <li>Quiz 9</li> <li>Infographic 9</li> </ul>
	such as malaria have affected human biological evolu4on.	Reviews, 14: 513-517. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dsx.2020.04.049	

Module 10:Globalization, Poverty, and Infectious Disease – This module focuses on how infectious diseases "emerge" or "resurge" in populations because of changes in ecological, social, political, and economic forces. You will learn about how historical factors, such as colonialism, have influenced the global distribution of infectious diseases and see how climate change and economic development projects contribute to the spread of disease.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 9: Globalization, Poverty, and Infectious Disease (pp. 281-320).</li> <li>Thompson, R. N., Thompson, C. P., Pelerman, O., Gupta, S., &amp; Obolski, U. (2019). Increased frequency of travel in the presence of cross- immunity may act to decrease the chance of a global pandemic. <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal</i> <i>Society B</i>, 374(1775), 20180274</li> <li>Wu, X., Lu, Y., Zhou, S., Chen, L., &amp; Xu, B. (2016). Impact of climate change on human infectious diseases: Empirical evidence and human adaptation. <i>Environment international</i>, 86, 14-23</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Quiz 10</li> <li>Infographic 10</li> </ul>
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Week 5 [June 10-14]Module 11: Stress, Social Inequality, and Race and Ethnicity: Implica&ons for Health Dispari&es Part I - These next two modules provide an introductory overview of the rela4onship between stress, social inequality, race and ethnicity from an anthropological and biocultural lens. This week you will learn about the biology of the stress response and consider the ways stress and racism worsens health.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 10: Stress, Social Inequality, and Race and Ethnicity: implications for Health Disparities (pp 321-346)</li> <li>Krainc, Talia &amp; Augstin Fuentes. (2022). Genetic ancestry in precision medicine is reshaping the race debaste. <i>PNAS</i>, 119 (4), 1-4.</li> <li>Mulligan, Connie J. (2021) Systematic racism can get under our skin and into our genes. <i>AJPA</i>, 175 (2), 399-405</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 11</li> <li>Quiz 11</li> </ul>
Module 12: Stress, Social Inequality, and Race and Ethnicity: Implications for Health Disparities Part II - In this module you will explore and understand what roles race, ethnicity, and racism play in perpetuating health disparities in the U.S. You will learn that while race is not biological, race can become biology through stress and the embodiment of social inequalities.	Stress, Social inequality and Race and Ethnicity: Implications for Health Disparities (pp. 347-356)	

	Module 13 : Mental Health and Illness- This module explores how a biocultural model of mental health differs from the medical model of mental health and illness. You will learn about emic and e4c perspec4ves in the cross- cultural study of mental illness and Iden4fy examples of different culture bound syndromes.	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Chapter 11: Mental Health and Illness (pp. 357-399).</li> <li>Andrews et al. 2015. Is serotonin an upper or a downer? The evolution of the serotonergic system and its role in depression and the antidepressant response. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev .2015.01.018</li> <li>Blease, C. R. (2015). Too many 'friends,'too few 'likes'? Evolutionary psychology and 'Facebook depression'. <i>Review of General Psychology</i>, 19(1), 113</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall 13</li> <li>Quiz 13</li> <li>Infographic 13</li> </ul>
Week 6 [June 17-21]	Module 14: The Relevance of Medical Anthropology Part I: Over these last two modules you will explore the relevance of medical anthropology to	<ul> <li>Wiley and Allen textbook, Epilogue: The Relevance of Medical Anthropology (pp. 400-406).</li> <li>Ji, R. &amp; Y. Cheng. 2021. Thinking global health from the perspective of anthropology. <i>Global Health Research and Policy</i> 6,47.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Perusall</li> <li>15</li> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Journal 2</li> <li>FINAL</li> <li>EXAM</li> </ul>
	other disciplines and reflect on how this class has impacted the way you think about health and illness.	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/a rticles/PMC8636067/	

ne, F.A., C.C. Gravlee, & M.I. 2021. Systemic and environmental itors to obesity inequities in lized racial and ethnic groups. <i>Clinics of North America</i> 56(4), 4. www.sciencedirect.com/scien e/pii/S0029646521000669?v nub <i>A.</i> 2014. Anthropologist and nent employee: A description of aths to becoming an applied