

## ANT3478 Global Health Culture

Semester: Summer 2014

### Instructor

Joshua A. Crosby

Email: [jacrosby@ufl.edu](mailto:jacrosby@ufl.edu)

### Required Books:

*A Reader in Medical Anthropology: Theoretical Trajectories, Emergent Realities*, by Byron J. Good, Michael M. J. Fischer, Sarah S. Willen, Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good (eds).

*Patient Citizens, Immigrant Mothers: Mexican Women, Public Prenatal Care, and the Birth Weight Paradox*, by Alyshia Galvaz

*Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*, by Paul Farmer

*The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, by Anne Fadiman

*Death Without Weeping*, by Nancy Scheper-Hughes

### Course Description:

Examination of the ways in which diverse societies in the United States and abroad construct illness and health experiences, balance healing traditions with multiple forms of medical practice and integrate the human experiences of illness, recovery and death with the technical world of biomedicine.

### Overview:

Everyone has had a fever at some time. What do *you* do when you get a fever? Do you wrap up in a blanket? Or do you turn on a fan with a cool cloth on your forehead? Do you rest, to let your body heal? Or do you go for run, and sweat out the infection? How you answer these questions reflects not on the disease that is causing your fever, but rather your *cultural ideas* about illness.

This class examines both the biological and cultural realities of health and healing systems globally. While Western/American society has come to view health through an increasingly biological lens, understanding the cultural influence is critical to the process. Cultural ideas of illness, health, and healing play major roles in the way we understand, address, and treat disease. Throughout the human life cycle culture influence every aspect of health and healing. From approaches to birth, treatment of disease, exposure to and evaluation of harm, and ultimately dealing with death; humans understand and engage with these milestone through a cultural mediated lens. In short, to understand health, we must understand culture.

In this class we will engage with the work of anthropologists and other scholars to understand health in a global perspective. We will reflect on our own cultural assumptions about health in order to gain a more comprehensive perspective. We will engage with the issues of racism, classes, and structural inequalities that lead to many of the health disparities that we see globally. Human beings are complex organisms, biological in nature, but strongly influenced by the learned behavior and ideas of culture. As such, we will examine this topic with a biocultural perspective. As anthropologists our approach to the study of human beings is both holistic and comparative.

### **Assessment:**

Students are expected to attend every class and engage with the readings and the discussion. Part of your grade is participation. Participation is not showing up and Facebooking in the back of the room. It's offering insight on the topic and demonstrating that you have done the readings with engaged comments. Simply attending class will not earn you participation credit. If your phone or your laptop becomes a distraction, I will ask you to not bring it to class.

Each student will select a reading to present on (a list will be passed out the first week of class). You will be expected to facilitate discussion on the readings (you do not need a formal presentation). You should come to class with a thorough knowledge of the material, background information as needed, and some questions/ideas to help students engage and get the conversation flowing. You will also write a 5 page summary of the reading section you present on. I will assist in fleshing out ideas from the readings, and connecting them in the broader scope of Anthropology and Health. You may be presenting alone, or you may be presenting with a partner. Students will not present every day. Some days will be more lecture-based, to allow me to discuss other research, explain concepts, and bring other ideas into the class.

There will be a short quiz at the end of every week. There are not meant to be "tricky", rather they ensure that you understood the fundamental concepts presented in the readings. I promise I will not be quizzing you on footnotes or obscure references. Instead major themes and core ideas. If you do the readings, they will not be a problem for you.

You will also do a poster for this class. You may choose any topic that fits within the framework of Global Health Culture. You must have 10 peer-reviewed sources (as a minimum) for your poster. Making poster presentations is a valuable skill to learn, and this is an excellent opportunity to do so. You must turn in a short (about 200 words) summary of your topic at the end of the second week. Feel free to pick a topic that engages you, or that fits your interests, so long as it relates to our theme. Please feel free to discuss with me ideas or concerns about the poster or your research. I am here to help.

Student will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Reading Summary: 25%

Presentation: 25%

Poster: 25%

Quiz: 15%

Participation: 10%

As a note: This is a summer class. It moves very quickly. I urge you to stay on top of your readings and assignments. Time will get away from you in 6 weeks.

### **Class Schedule**

Week of:	Topic	Readings (author)	Important Dates
May 12 <sup>th</sup>	Anthropology, Health, Global Perspectives	None	Sign up for discussion May 16 <sup>th</sup>
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Foundations of Medical Anthropology	Good et al. (the reader)	Poster Topic Due Friday May 23 <sup>rd</sup>
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Pregnancy, Reproduction, and Birth	Galvez	(No class May 26 <sup>th</sup> – Memorial Day)
June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Social Justice, Inequality, and Health	Farmer	
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Cultural Ideas of Health and Healing	Fadiman	
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	The Final Passage; Cultural Ideas on Death and Dying.	Nancy Scheper-Hughes	Poster Due June 16 <sup>th</sup> Last Day of classes June 20 <sup>th</sup>