

ANT 4462: Culture & Medicine

MWF, 3rd Period: 9:35-10:25 am

Little Hall (LIT)0109

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30 am-12:30 pm

Course Overview

This course offers a broad examination of health and disease in a cross-cultural context. As part of this course, we explore the relationship of anthropology to the art and science of medicine through cross-cultural comparisons and specific ethnographic examples. Given the time constraints of this class, we are not able to examine everything related to medical anthropology. Instead we use literature, film, and discussion to examine the cultural construction and organization of diverse health systems, world economic development/political economy of health, and the role of the anthropologist in transformations of contemporary Western health systems.

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 internationally.

This course is also designed to develop your learning skills, including: 1) Analytical thinking and research abilities (including information acquisition and critical reading and writing skills); 2) Holistic learning skills and the ability to integrate ideas from many different perspectives.

Required Books

- 2010 Good, B., Fischer, M., Willen, S., and M. DelVecchio-Good (eds.) *A Reader in Medical Anthropology*. Wiley Blackwell, New York.
- 2009 Wiley, A. and J. Allen. *Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- 2008 Nichter, M. *Global Health: Why Cultural Perceptions, Social Representations, and Biopolitics Matter*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- 2005 Kulick, D. and A. Meneley (eds.) *Fat: The Anthropology of An Obsession*. Penguin Books, New York.

Course Format

This course consists of lectures, class discussion and group activities. The purpose of lectures will be to review the concepts associated with each topic and integrate the material in the readings. Advance preparation is important for this class because we will cover a wide array of material.

Course Requirements and Grading

Final grades are based on a total of 425 points. Point totals are calculated based on three components:

Class Participation (50 pts.): Though the number of students in this course is large, I expect students to attend each class meeting and to take an active part in class discussions and activities. Active participation includes attendance but also requires that you read all assigned readings and prepare thoughtful questions and critical discussion points in advance of class meetings. I will evaluate your participation based on the *quality* of your contributions and not simply on how often you speak in class. The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage you to prepare for class and to promote thoughtful analysis and discussion. On occasion, there will be short in-class writing exercises (5-10 minutes) in which you will be asked to summarize or analyze assigned readings, to suggest questions or topics for discussion, or to express your point of view on a topic discussed in class. These exercises are designed to sharpen your ability to summarize your thoughts, and they help me to assess your comprehension of readings, lectures, and discussion. Such activities will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will count only toward your participation grade.

Exams (200 pts): There will be two exams designed to test your comprehension of the concepts and readings introduced in this course. The first exam will be on **Wednesday, February 23rd**, and the second exam will be on **Wednesday, April 27th**. The exams will include a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, and brief essay questions.

Research Poster (175 pts) You will be required to present a research project on a topic of your choice that relates to medical anthropology; in lieu of the typical research paper, you will present a poster detailing the results of your research during the last week of classes. Development of the research project will occur throughout the semester. You are required to submit a poster proposal outlining the topic of your research project by **Friday, February 11th**; this proposal should describe the topic, including why the topic is important, and should identify some of the key questions or issues your project will explore (25 pts). A 250-300 word proposal abstract (25 pts.), and an annotated bibliography (25 pts.) with at least 10 carefully selected references from scholarly literature is due Friday, **March 25th**. You must submit a draft copy (50 pts.) of your final poster – in electronic format – by **Friday, April 16th**. The final poster (also 50 pts.) will be presented on either **Monday or Wednesday, April 18 -20**. Grading rubrics for each part of the poster project will be provided.

Extra Credit: Over the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to earn extra credit points toward your final grade by attending public lectures and other activities. Additional information will be provided at the beginning of the semester (5 pts).

Grades

Final grades will be based on the following scale: A (90-100), A- (87-89), B+ (84-86), B (80-83), B- (77-79), C+ (74-76), C (70-76), C- (67-69), D+ (64-66), D (60-63), D- (57-59), E (<57).

Policy on Late Assignments

You are required to complete all assignments by the stated due dates. Late assignments will lose one half-letter grade for each day past the deadline. There are no make-up opportunities for any assignment, as you will have ample time to complete each requirement. I will not assign grades of “incomplete” except in the most unusual, extreme circumstances (i.e. alien abduction). You must provide documentation of such circumstances from an appropriate authority.

Academic Honor Code

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code of the University of Florida. The Academic Honor Code is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the University community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and responsibility on the part of the University community. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Code: www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific modifications. Students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office and then provide documentation to the instructor. For more information about services available to University of Florida students:

Dean of Students Office Disability Resource Center
202 Peabody Hall or 0020 Reid Hall
Phone: (352) 392-1261 Phone: (352) 392-8570

University of Florida Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students that feel like they are struggling in their personal or academic life. These resources include:

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

Course Schedule and Readings

This is a preliminary schedule of topics and readings. The syllabus is a guide for the course and may be subject to change with advance notice.

(W&A: Wiley and Allen, K&M: Kulick and Meneley)

Week 1 (Jan 5-7): Introduction to Medical Anthropology

W&A: Ch. 1

Nichter: Introduction

Week 2 (Jan 10-14): Anthropology of Health and Disease

W&A: Ch. 2

Good et al.: Essays 2, 7, 8, 13

***Public Lecture: Jan 11th at 7:30 pm Dr. Robert Sapolsky, “Why Zebras Don’t Get Ulcers”**

Week 3 (Jan 19-21): Healers & Healing

W&A: Ch. 3

Good et al.: Essays 9, 10, 18, 27

Nichter: Ch. 1-4

*** No class Jan. 17th.**

Week 4 (Jan 24-28): Diet & Nutrition

W&A: Ch 4

Start K&M book

Week 5 (Jan 31-Feb 4): Obesity & Image

Finish K&M

Good et al.: Essays 21, 29

Week 6 (Feb 7-11): Growth & Development

W&A: Ch 5

***Poster proposal due Feb 11th**

Week 7 (Feb 14-18): Reproductive Health

W&A: Ch 6

Good et al.: Essays 19, 24, 33

Week 8 (Feb 21-25): Aging

W&A: Ch 7

Good et al.: Essay 28

***Midterm: Weds. Feb 23rd**

Week 9 (Feb 28-Mar 4): Infectious Disease

W&A: Ch 8 & 10

Good et al.: Essays 6, 25

***Public lecture: “Haiti: Public health and Structural Change”**

Week 10 (Mar 7-11): **SPRING BREAK**

Week 11 (Mar 14-18): Demography & Health

W&A: Ch 9

Good et al. Essays 17

Week 12 (Mar 21-25): Stress

W&A: Ch 11

***Poster abstract and annotated bibliography due March 25**

Week 13 (Mar 28-Apr 1): Social Inequality & Health

W&A: Ch 11 cont.

Nichter: Ch. 5-7

Good et al.: Essays 5, 20, 34, 37,

Week 14: (Apr 4-8) Mental Health

W&A: Chapter 12

Good et al.: Essays 11, 14-16, 36

Week 15: (Apr 10-16) Global Health

Nichter: Ch 8

Good et al.: Essays 31-32, 35

Week 16 (Apr 18-20): Student Poster Sessions

*** No class April 22nd**

Final Exam: Wednesday April 27th, 2011