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ANTY 426.01: Culture, Health and Healing

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Anthropology 426: Culture, Health and Healing

Undergraduate Syllabus

Instructor Information

Instructor: Gilbert Quintero, Ph.D.

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Office: Social Sciences 225

Office hours: TR 8:00-8:30am, 2:00-3:00pm and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the field of medical anthropology – the study of human health, disease and curing from a cross-cultural, historical, archeological, and evolutionary perspective. Societies throughout the world recognize certain bodily, emotional, and mental conditions as undesirable and in need of change. Individual and societal definitions of disease and responses to illness are shaped by biological characteristics, social dynamics, cultural values, and collective expectations. In this course we will examine various theories, methods, and frameworks in order to explore how health, illness, and healing are conceptualized and experienced in different cultures. Topics will include: shamanism, medical ecology, cultural and political ecologies of disease, medical systems as cultural systems, global health issues, mental illness, and sociocultural definitions of health and illness.

After successfully completing this course the student should be able to:

1. Describe the interrelationships between human biological and sociocultural systems and diseases in several different sociocultural settings;
2. Compare core components of health systems, including etiology, diagnosis, help-seeking, treatment, evaluation of efficacy and effectiveness, and health care traditions and sectors in several different sociocultural settings;
3. Recognize major theoretical and methodological approaches to health in anthropology;
4. Identify several major contemporary issues in the anthropology of health and illness; and
5. Understand the contributions of applied anthropology in addressing health issues.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation	10 %	
Exams (best 3 of 4)	60 %	(Dates: 2/22, 3/22, 5/1, 5/8)
Critical book review	30 %	(Due in class on 5/3)

Plus/minus grades will be assigned for this course at the instructor's discretion. Final cumulative grades will be based upon the point totals for each of the requirements outlined above.

Attendance and participation

Students are responsible for attending class on time on a regular basis and participating in class activities. If a student does not attend class or participate in an activity they generally will not receive points. Students are allowed to miss one in-class assignment due to an excused absence, at the discretion of the instructor, without penalty. There will be approximately five of these assignments during the course of the semester. They are unannounced.

Exams

A portion of each student's grade will be based upon the best scores from three out of four exams. This means that if you take the first three exams the last exam is optional if you are satisfied with the scores on the previous three exams. Exams will consist of objective, multiple choice questions and will cover material from lectures and readings. Formal reviews or study guides for these exams will **not** be provided.

Critical book review

Students are required to write a single integrated critical review of two books, "Unimagined Community" (Thornton) and "AIDS and Accusation" (Farmer). Details regarding the structure and content of the review is available on the course Moodle site.

Policies

Electronic devices

Cell phones should be turned off and out of sight for the duration of class. Laptop users must sit in the first two rows of the classroom.

Attendance

Please be on time for class and notify me if you intend to leave early. Irregular attendance will result in a lower grade. The instructor will not provide "catch-up" sessions.

Lecture notes and materials

The instructor will not provide students with notes or other lecture materials (e.g., slides). If you miss class ask a fellow student for notes (and return the favor!).

Make-up exams

All students must take at least two out of the three exams. If an exam is missed, the student will receive no points. Because a student can miss one exam without penalty there will generally be no make-up exams. **The only exceptions to this are those situations that fall under University policy** which states that a make-up will be allowed in circumstances where a student can provide documentation that they are missing a scheduled exam because of their participation in a University sponsored activity, which includes field trips, ASUM service, music or drama performances, and intercollegiate athletic events. Individuals missing a scheduled exam because of military service or mandatory public service (e.g., jury duty) may also petition for a make-up. Any student requiring a make-up must notify the instructor in writing no less than a week before the scheduled exam and must provide official documentation regarding the reason for the absence in advance. If a make-up exam is approved it must be completed within one week of the original exam.

Accommodations

University policy states that it is the responsibility of students with documented disabilities to contact instructors during the first week of the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations to ensure equity in grading, classroom experiences, and outside assignments. Please notify the instructor via email. He will work with the student and the staff of the Disability Services for Students (DSS) to make accommodations. Please contact DSS (243.2373, Lommasson Center 154) for more information.

Email

Please conduct any class related email communications with me through your UM account.

Code of Conduct

All students are expected to act in accordance with the Student Conduct Code (available through the UM webpage).

Course Supplement

A web-based supplement for this class is available on Moodle: <http://umonline.umt.edu/>. Technical support is provided at: <http://umonline.umt.edu/studentsupport/default.php>.

Required Texts

- Farmer, Paul. *AIDS and Accusation Haiti and the Geography of Blame*, 2nd edition. University of California Press. ISBN: 0520248392. 2006.
- Thornton, Robert J. *Unimagined Community: Sex, Networks, and AIDS in Uganda and South Africa*. University of California Press. ISBN: 0520255534. 2008.
- Brown, P.J. and S. Closser. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. Third edition. Routledge. ISBN: 978-1-62958-291-7. 2016. Reading assignments from this volume are denoted by an asterisk (*) in the schedule below.
- Other assigned materials as detailed in class.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1/Jan 23 – What is Medical Anthropology?

Required:

- Brown et al., *Medical Anthropology* (p. 11-24)*
- Helman, *Why Medical Anthropology Matters*
- Young & Rees, *Medical Anthropology Enters the 21st Century*

Recommended:

- Bhasin, *Medical Anthropology: A Review*

Week 2/Jan 30 – Defining Health; Disease and Human Evolution

Required:

- Crawford, *A Cultural Account of "Health"*
- d'Houtaud and Field, *The Image of Health*
- Izquierdo, *When "Health" is Not Enough*
- Eaton, Konner & Shostak, *Stone Agers in the Fast Lane* (p. 25-38)*
- Armelagos, *Health and Disease* (p. 85-98)*
- McKeown, *Determinants of Health* (p. 99-115)*

Recommended:

- Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events*

Week 3/Feb 6 – Theories of Etiology; Medical & Political Ecologies of Health

Required:

- Brown, *Cultural Adaptations* (p. 73-84)*
- Farmer, *Social Inequalities* (p. 116-126)*
- Scheper-Hughes, *Culture, Scarcity & Maternal Thinking* (p. 127-139)*
- Erickson, *What Causes Disease?*
- Foster, *Disease Etiologies* (p. 177-187)*

Recommended:

- Chiou, *Fundamentals* (p. 39-46)*
- Holmes, *Oaxacans* (p. 140-154)*
- Young, *Pica: A Biocultural Approach* (p. 58-72)*
- Fabrega, *Earliest Phases in the Evolution of Sickness and Healing*

Week 4/Feb 13 – Theories of Healing

Required:

- Blumhagen, *The Doctor's White Coat*
- Erickson, *Healing Lessons* (p. 188-196)*
- Konner, *Transcendental Medication*
- Finkler, *Sacred Healing and Biomedicine Compared*
- Frank, *Nonmedical Healing*
- Turner, *A Ndembu Doctor in Practice*

Recommended:

- Moerman, *Doctors and Patients* (p. 213-221)*
- Salhi, *Beyond the Doctor's White Coat* (p. 204-212)*
- Waldram, *Efficacy*

Week 5/Feb 20 – Symbolic Healing

Required:

- Gill, *Classification and Hierarchy*
- Reichard, *Theory of Curing*
- Wyman, *Navajo Ceremonial System*

Exam 1 (2/22)

Week 6/Feb 27 – Shamanism; Placebo & Nocebo

Required:

- Lèvi-Strauss, *The Sorcerer's Magic* (p. 197-203)*

- Hahn, *The Nocebo* (p. 222-227)*
- Moerman, *Cultural Variations in the Placebo Effect*

Recommended:

- Joralemon, *The Selling of the Shaman*
- Kleinman & Sung, *Why Do Indigenous Practitioners Successfully Heal?*

Week 7/Mar 6 – Disease Taxonomies & Semantic Illness Networks

Required:

- Good, *The Heart of What's the Matter*
- Kleinman, *Culture, Illness & Care*
- Nichter, *Idioms of Distress*

Recommended:

- Chavez et al., *Beliefs Matter*
- CDC, *Health Beliefs* (p. 350-352)*

Week 8/Mar 13 – Social Constructions of Illness; Mind, Culture & Society

Required:

- Ablon, *Nature of Stigma* (p. 363-371)*
- Finley, "I Came Back for This?" (p. 302-332)*
- Grinker, *What in the World is Autism?* (p. 311-319)*
- Hunt, *Strategic Suffering* (p. 241-148)*
- Kleinman, *Do Psychiatric Disorders Differ?* (p. 298-310)*
- Murphy, *The Damaged Self* (p. 249-260)*
- Waxler, *Learning to be a Leper* (p. 228-240)*

Recommended:

- Barrett and Brown, *Stigma* (p. 377-381)*
- Becker, *Coping with Stigma* (p.373-376)*
- Martin, *Medical Metaphors* (p. 261-273)*
- Obeyesekere, *Depression, Buddhism, and the Work of Culture in Sri Lanka*

Week 9/Mar 20 – Culture Bound Syndromes

Required:

- Brewis, *Expanding Bodies* (p. 400-407)*
- O'Connor and Van Esterik, *De-Medicalizing Anorexia* (p. 394-399)*
- Rubel, *Epidemiology of a Folk Illness*
- Swartz, *Anorexia Nervosa as a Culture-Bound Syndrome*

Recommended:

- Ritenbaugh, *Obesity as a Culture-Bound Syndrome*

Exam 2 (3/22)

Week 10/Mar 26 – Spring Break

Week 11/Apr 3 – Medicalization, Pharmaceuticalization & Disease Mongering: Trend Theory

Required:

- Conrad, *Medicalization and Social Control*
- Williams et al., *Waking Up to Sleepiness*
- Woloshin & Schwartz, *Giving Legs to Restless Legs*
- Agar & Reisinger, *A Tale of Two Policies*

Recommended:

- Talbot, [Brain Gain](#) (link)

Week 12/Apr 10 – Pharmaceutical Use Dynamics; Race & Health

Required:

- Quintero, *Problematizing “Drugs”*
- Armelagos & Goodman, *Race, Racism and Anthropology*
- Goodman, *Disease and Dying While Black*, (p. 52-57)*
- Gravlee, *How Race Becomes Biology*
- Jablonski and Chaplin, *Skin Deep* (p. 47-51)*

Recommended:

- Hahn & Stroup, *Race and Ethnicity in Public Health Surveillance*
- Singer, *Does America* (p. 155-163)*

Week 13/Apr 17 – Anthropology & Global Health

Required:

- Closser, *Polio Eradication* (p. 428-435)*
- Kalofonos, *“All I Eat Is ARVs”* (p. 436-446)*
- Singer & Erickson, *Global Health and the Anthropological Paradigm*
- Singer & Baer, *Applied Medical Anthropology* (p. 105-115)*

Recommended:

- Nichter & Cartwright, *Saving the Children*
- Singer & Erickson, *A Brighter or Bleaker Future?*

Week 14/Apr 24 – Global Health and the Anthropocene

Required:

- Gruenbaum, *Sociocultural Dynamics* (p. 418-427)*
- Mendenhall, *Syndemic Suffering* (p. 164-176)*
- Moniruzzaman, *Spare Parts* (p. 277-285)*
- Steinglass, *It Takes a Village* (p. 408-417)*
- Hadley et al., *What Happens?* (p. 382-393)*
- McMichael, *Population Health in the Anthropocene*
- Steffen et al., *The Anthropocene: Conceptual and Historical Perspectives*

Recommended:

- McMichael & Butler, *Promoting Global Population Health*

Week 15/May 1 – Wrap Up

Exam 3 (5/1)

Book reviews due (5/3)

Week 16/Final Exam

Exam 4 8:00-10:00am, May 8th

Reading assignments should be completed by the first class meeting of the week.

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Changes may be necessary and will be announced in class.