

IDIS 293
Culture, Health, and Disease in the Developing World

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Spring semester 2007
Course meetings: Mon. & Wed. 11:30am-12:40pm
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Course overview:

This course draws on anthropological and international health perspectives to explore challenges in promoting health and treating disease in the developing world. Students will consider how factors such as geography, poverty, race, ethnicity, and gender influence disease susceptibility and access to health care. Drawing on case studies from Latin America to Africa, the class will examine health problems such as malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, cervical cancer, and other “diseases of poverty” that are particularly pernicious in developing countries. We will explore the role that economic development plays in promoting or undermining health and the impacts of international health policies and public health interventions on the health of local populations. As we broaden our understanding of global health, we will examine the issue of health as a human right.

Required texts:

Dettwyler, Katherine A. 1994. *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Farmer, Paul. 2001. *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Gregg, Jessica L. 2003. *Virtually Virgins: Sexual Strategies and Cervical Cancer in Recife, Brazil*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Additional articles are on reserve at Reeves Library or are posted on Blackboard. Articles available at Reeves Library are marked on the course schedule below with an (“RL”).

Course requirements:

Midterm exam (20%): There will be an in-class midterm exam on Feb. 26. This exam will consist of short and long essay questions that require critical reflection on course readings and class discussions. I will provide you with a review guide one week prior to the exam.

Critical reading paper (20%): This paper will reflect on issues pertaining to culture, health, and disease in the context of Gregg’s book *Virtually Virgins*. I will provide you with a set of analytical questions around which you will organize a 4-5 page essay. Detailed instructions will be provided on March 14 and the paper is due on March 21.

International health research project (30%): You will be assigned 3-4 group members for this project. You will collectively select a current international health problem and prepare a report that examines the problem historically and anthropologically. You may consider its sociocultural, economic, political, and ecological causes and/or impacts on a population or region. You are to consider possible solutions to the health problem. You will be provided with a list of potential topics to write about and specific directions for your research project. An abstract and bibliography are due on March 12 and your final draft is due on April 25. Each group will give a brief (10-15 minute) presentation of their project. Your presentation is worth 10% of your project grade and your written report is worth 20%. The project is worth 30% of your final grade.

Critical health issues journal (20%): The journal is a collection of short writing assignments on issues pertaining to international health. You will be required to submit six journal entries during the course of the semester. These assignments will relate to class discussions, reading material, films, newspaper articles, op-ed pieces, and scholarly debates. Your entries must be typed and organized by date and title in a writing folder. I will randomly select and review a portion of your folders every date that a journal entry is due. While you may use informal writing techniques such as exploratory or expressive writing, you must edit your work and demonstrate that you have seriously thought about the questions or issues posed. Your journal will be graded based upon the quality of your completion of six entries. The completed journals will be turned in on April 25.

Attendance and participation (10%): This course will entail discussion, short lectures, and group activities. Your regular class attendance and active participation in discussion and group work are required. You will be required to bring a brief, typed summary of your assigned readings and two questions to each class. I will periodically collect these summaries and they will be graded on a check system (✓, ✓+, ✓-). I will not accept handwritten summaries. The combination of your attendance, active participation, group work, and response papers will amount to 10% of your grade.

Grading:

Midterm exam	20%
Critical reading paper	20%
International health research project	30%
Critical health issues journal	20%
Class participation	10%

Course Guidelines

1. All assignments must be typed and double-spaced with 12 point Times New Roman font. Please number and staple your pages. No handwritten assignments will be accepted. Please edit your work carefully and correct your grammar, spelling, and punctuation. All assignments must be handed to the instructor. No e-mailed assignments will be accepted except in the case of emergencies or with prior permission of the instructor.

2. Regular attendance is required. Absences will be excused only in the case of appropriately documented emergencies, extended leave, or school-sponsored commitments. If an emergency should arise, please notify me prior to an assignment's due date and not after it is due. If you need to miss a class, please notify me in advance. Two late arrivals to class will be counted as an absence. Multiple absences from class will negatively affect your grade.

3. The grade scale for this class is as follows: 93-100=A; 90-92.9=A-; 87-89.9=B+; 83-86.9=B; 80-82.9=B-; 77-79.9=C+; 73-76.9=C; 70-72.9=C-; 67-69.9=D+; 63-66.9=D; 60-62.9=D-; less than 60=F. Note that it is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignment and for the final course grade.

4. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course should contact Learning Services (x 1510). Accommodations will be provided once authorization is received from the appropriate disability support provider on campus.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is passing off others' work as your own. The Moravian handbook states, "All work that students submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be their own original work unless otherwise expressly permitted by the instructors" (p. 26). Plagiarism can involve directly quoting passages from a text, the web, or any other document. It can also involve having a student write a paper for you or purchasing a paper from a writing service. Any case of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Affairs Office. Plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the college policy on academic honesty (see Moravian handbook).

Course schedule:

Jan. 15: Introduction to the course

Module 1: Theoretical frameworks

Jan. 17: Population and Disease

(Handout) Janzen, Population and disease: The changing indicators of health (83-114)

Jan. 22: Disease and Ecology

(RL) Brown et al., Disease, ecology and human behavior (183-218)

Jan. 24: Political Economy of Health

(RL) McElroy and Townsend, Costs and benefits of development (327-374)

Jan. 29: Medical Knowledge

(RL) Janzen, Medical knowledge (187-210)

Journal entry 1

Module 2: Scarcity, Hunger and Health

Jan. 31: The Medical Anthropologist
Dettwyler, Chaps 1-3 (1-36)

Feb. 5: Malian Society and Disease Interpretations
Dettwyler, Chaps 4-6 (37-74)

Feb. 7: Children's Health and Malnutrition
Dettwyler, Chaps 7-10 (75-130)

Feb. 12: Health Projects and Mother's Love
Dettwyler, Chaps 11-14 (131-164)
Journal entry 2

Feb. 14: Nerves and Sickness
(RL) Scheper-Hughes, *Nervosa: Medicine, Sickness and Human Needs* (167-215)

Feb. 19: Coping with Disease
(RL) Scheper-Hughes, (M)other Love: Culture, Scarcity, and Maternal Thinking (340-399)

Feb. 21: Film: TBA
Journal entry 3

Feb. 26: *Exam 1*

Module 3: Gender, Culture, and Cervical Cancer

Feb. 28: Culture and Gender in a Brazilian Shantytown
Gregg, Chaps. 1-3 (1-39)

Mar. 5: SPRING RECESS

Mar. 7: SPRING RECESS

Mar. 12: Cervical Cancer and Risk
Gregg, Chaps. 4 & 5 (40-75)
Film: *India: The Sex Workers*
Research project abstracts and bibliographies due

Mar. 14: Social Roles and Sexuality
Gregg, Chaps. 6 -8 (76-117)
Journal entry 4

Mar. 19: Living and Dying with Cancer
Gregg, Chaps. 9-11 (118-159)

Mar. 21: NGOs and Cancer Screening
(RL) Schneider, On the Periphery of Midwifery
Critical reading paper due

Module 4: The Health Effects of Inequality

Mar. 26: How Economic Inequality Affects Health
(RL) Bezruchka and Mercer, The Lethal Divide (11-18)
(RL) Turshen, The Collapse of Public Health (1-22)

Mar. 28: TBA

April 2: Rethinking “Emerging Infectious Diseases”
Farmer, Intro and Chap. 1& 2 (1-58)

April 4: Women, Poverty, and HIV
Farmer, Chap 3 (59-93)
Journal entry 5 due

April 9: EASTER RECESS

April 11: Culture, Poverty, and HIV
Farmer, Chaps 4 & 5 (94-149)

April 16: Sorcery, Politics and AIDS
Farmer, Interlude & Chap. 6 (150-183)

April 18: Film: Frontline: The Age of AIDS

April 23: Poverty and Tuberculosis
Farmer, Chap. 7 & 8 (184-227)
Journal entry 6 due

April 25: Social Inequalities and Health
Farmer, Chap. 9 & 10 (228-282)
Research paper due

Final exams: April 30-May 4