Introduction to Medical Anthropology
ANTH 162

Fall 2014
M,W 5:30-6:50pm
207 Chapman Hall

Professor: Dr. Sara Lewis
Office Hours: Tues, 11-12 and by appointment
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GTF: Alexis Yalon
Office Hours: Weds, 3-5
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Course Description:

This course asks: how is health at once a biological, social, and historical fact? The field of medical anthropology aims to understand concepts of health and illness across cultures and over time. We will focus on contemporary issues in the United States as well as across the globe, and in particular how social inequality impacts health across populations. To better understand how social factors shape health and illness the course explores a variety of topics related to body and mind. The course pays special attention to how rapidly growing population changes and new technologies in an age of globalization shifts the burden of disease and generates new ethical quandaries. We will also investigate how different sorts of practitioners, including doctors, healers, shamans and mystics approach health and illness. This introductory course is highly interactive and is appropriate for anyone interested in medicine, culture, politics and society.

By the end of this course, student will be able to:

- Explain the role of culture in the experience and conceptualization of health and illness.
- Interpret how social factors shape the incidence and diagnosis of illness.
- Evaluate contemporary ethical quandaries related to medicine, technology and the body.
- Interrogate how social inequality produces health disparities.
- Explain how social theory generates new understandings of health and illness.

Course Expectations and Grades:

Quizzes (end of week 3 and 8), 5% each for a total of 10%
Midterm Exam (In Class, end of week 5), 25%
Final Exam (Take Home, due December 8), 30%
Discussion Section Exercises (5 total, pass/fail), 20%
Discussion Section Participation, 15%
Grades

Below is a rubric to help you understand grading in the Department of Anthropology. There is no extra credit.

A+: Quality of student’s performance significantly exceeds all requirements and expectations required for an A grade. Very few, if any, students receive this grade in a given course.

A: Quality of performance is outstanding relative to that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates mastery of course content at the highest level.

B: Quality of performance is significantly above that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates mastery of course content at a high level.

C: Quality of performance meets the course requirements in every respect; demonstrates adequate understanding of course content.

D: Quality of performance is at the minimal level necessary to pass the course, but does not fully meet the course requirements; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content.

F: Quality of performance in the course is unacceptable and does not meet the course requirements; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of course content.

Late and Incomplete Work

Please notify Professor Lewis in advance if you are unable to take an exam or submit an assignment. **Make-up exams and extensions will not be granted without a documented excuse, such as a written note from your doctor.**

Accommodations

Please contact Professor Lewis **during the first week of the term** should you require accommodations.

Class Culture

The culture of this class is based on mutual respect, decorum, and a sense of openness and curiosity. You may use laptop computers and tablets as you see fit, however please be sure to bring a pencil and paper to every class, which we will use for in-class exercises. Lectures will be highly interactive and students will be called upon at random. Members of the class are welcome and encouraged to email the professor and the GTF with questions. However, you may be redirected to attend office hours should your question require a more involved response.
Academic Honesty

The following actions may result in disciplinary action according to the university’s academic honesty policies:
--Evidence of collusion when expected to submit individual work (working with someone else).
--Evidence of plagiarism (using someone else’s work without proper citation).
--Multiple submissions (submitting the same paper for more than one class).

Course Readings:

Course Packets and books can be purchased at the UO Bookstore:


WEEK ONE: Introduction to Medical Anthropology
Sept 29, Oct 1

READING:


DUE: Exercise #1: Defining key concepts

WEEK TWO: Illness Narratives and Idioms of Distress
Oct 6, 8

READING:


**DUE:** Exercise #2 (Film critic-style review)

**WEEK THREE:** *Health, Race and Inequality*
Oct 13, 15

**READING:**

Bourgois, Philippe (*Righteous Dopefiend*, Introduction and Chapters 1-4)


**Guest lecture: Dr. Heather McClure, University of Oregon**

**In-Class Quiz, Wednesday Oct 15**

**WEEK FOUR:** *Drugs as Cure, Drugs as Despair*
Oct 20, 22

**READING:**

Bourgois, Philippe (*Righteous Dopefiend*, Chapters 5-9)


**DUE:** Exercise #3 (Brainstorm questions for mid-term)

**WEEK FIVE:** *Medicine, Technology and Ethics*
Oct 27, 29

**READING:**

Skloot, Rebecca (*The Immortal Life*, Part 1)


**In-Class Midterm, Wednesday Oct 29**

**WEEK SIX: Gender and Bodies**

Nov 3, 5

**READING:**

Skloot, Rebecca (*The Immortal Life*, Part 2)


**DUE:** Exercise #4: Social Media assignment

**WEEK SEVEN: Shamans, Healers and the Practice of Medicine**

Nov 10, 12

**READING:**

Skloot, Rebecca (*The Immortal Life*, Part 3)


**WEEK EIGHT: Global Infection, Race, and Contagion**

Nov 17, 19

**READING:**

**American**, September 3, blog entry.


**Guest lecture: Dr. Brooke West, Department of Global Health, UCSD, Monday Nov 17**

**In-Class Quiz, Wednesday Nov 19**

**WEEK NINE: Aging, Death, and Palliative Care**

**Nov 24, 26**

**READING:**


**DUE: Exercise #5: Physician-Assisted Death assignment**

**Class on Weds, Nov 26 will be in “Virtual Salon” format via Blackboard**

**WEEK TEN: Culture and Madness**

**Dec 1, 3**

**READING:**


**Films:**

Hubert Smith and Neil Reichline’s *The Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamani*.


**Final Exam, Monday December 8, submitted to blackboard by 11:59pm**