

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

**Voyage: Fall 2013**

**Discipline: Anthropology**

**ANTH 2280: Medical Anthropology**

**Division: Lower**

**B Days, 1250-1405**

**Faculty Name: Wenda Trevathan**

### **Pre-requisites:**

Introductory anthropology or sociology course.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Medical Anthropology provides an overview of evolutionary, epidemiological, and cross-cultural perspectives on disease, curing, and health care systems. We will discuss such concepts as who gets sick, what causes illness, how cultures vary in what they consider to be illnesses, who are the healers, and how health varies throughout the lifespan. We will also look at alternative medical systems practiced in the United States, noting that several of these are primary medical systems in other parts of the world. Readings and projects will focus on cultures that we will encounter on the voyage. Field trips to health care facilities and meetings with traditional healers will be included in the in-port assignments. Students will also be required to investigate the major causes of illness and death for each country visited and to watch for public health messages or other indicators of concern about health and wellness.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Understand general principles of medical anthropology and ways in which the anthropological approach to health differs from other approaches.
2. Understand health challenges in each of the countries that we visit and traditional ways of dealing with them.
3. Consider that in some ways our evolved bodies (especially dietary needs) and our 21<sup>st</sup> century lives are “mismatched,” resulting in numerous health challenges today.
4. Review the great variability in the definition of health and understand that the view from Western Medicine doesn’t necessarily represent the views of the rest of the world.
5. Know the global health issues that we face today and consider ways of approaching them.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

**AUTHOR:** Wiley, A. S. and J. S. Allen

**TITLE:** *Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach, Second Edition*

**PUBLISHER:** Oxford University Press

**ISBN #:** 978-0-19-979708-0

**DATE/EDITION:** 2013

**AUTHOR:** Kidder, Tracy

**TITLE:** *Mountains Beyond Mountains*

**PUBLISHER:** Random House Trade Paperbacks

**ISBN #:** 978-0812973013

**DATE/EDITION:** 2004, paper

**TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE** (note that the chapters assigned are not necessarily in consecutive order)

**B1- August 27:** Introduction to the course and to medical anthropology

- W&A Chapter  
*Overview of health in Russia and the USSR*

August 29-September 1: St. Petersburg

**B2-September 2:** Anthropological Perspectives on Health and Disease

- W&A Chapter 2

**B3- September 4:** QUIZ #1 (W&A 1, 2)

Evolutionary medicine  
*Overview of health in Germany*

September 5-8: Hamburg

**B4- September 10:** Diet and Health

- W&A Chapter 4
- *Overview of health in Western Europe*

September 12-16: Antwerp/Le Havre

**B5- September 17:** Diet and health continued; Growth and Development

- W&A Ch 5

**B6- September 19:** QUIZ #2 (W&A 4, 5, 6)

- Gender and health; reproductive health
- W&A Ch 6
- Caring for infibulated women giving birth in Norway. (Lavenda and Schultz, pp. 393-394)  
*Overview of health in the Ireland and the United Kingdom*

September 20-23: Dublin

**B7- September 25:** Birth and breastfeeding; aging

- W&A Ch 7  
*Overview of health in the Iberian Peninsula, Morocco and North Africa*

September 27-28: Lisbon

September 30-October 1: Cadiz

October 3-6: Casablanca

**B8- October 7:**

Healing and Healers

- W&A Ch 3
- Agudelo-Suárez et al. (2009) Discrimination, work and health in immigrant populations in Spain. *Social Science and Medicine* 68:1866-1874.
- Bakker, Jogien (1992) The rise of women healers in the Middle Atlas, Morocco. *Social Science and Medicine* 35:819-829.

**B9- October 9:** QUIZ # 3 (W&A 7, 3; 3 articles)

Paleopathology; disease evolution

Catch up and review for exam

**B10- October 12**      **ESSAY EXAM #1 (covers Chapters 1-7; lectures 1-9)**

**B11- October 14:**      Film: *Healers of Ghana*

*Overview of health in Ghana and West Africa*

- Tsey, Komla. (1997) Traditional medicine in contemporary Ghana: A public policy analysis. *Social Science and Medicine* 45:1065-1074.
- Inhorn, Marcia. 2006. Introduction to Medical Anthropology in the Muslim World. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 20, pp. 1-11.

October 15-18: Takoradi/Tema

**B12- October 21:**      Health and Social Justice

- W&A Ch 10
- Farmer, Paul. 1996. Social Inequalities and Emerging Infectious Diseases. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 2(4):259–269

**B13- October 24:**      QUIZ #4 (W&A 8, 10; 4 readings, film)

“Race” and health; ethnicity and health

*Overview of health in South Africa*

- McIntyre, Di and Lucy Gilson. (2002). Putting equity in health back on the social policy agenda: experience from South Africa. *Social Science and Medicine* 54:1637-1656.

October 26-30: Cape Town

**B14-November 1:**      Infectious disease

- W&A Ch 8

**B15- November 3:**      Globalization, poverty and infectious disease

- W&A Ch 9

**B16- November 6:**      QUIZ #5 (W&A 8, 9)

Epidemiological transitions and collisions

**B17- November 9:** Mental health and Illness

- W&A Ch 11

**B18- November 11:** Poverty and health

*Overview of health in Argentina*

- Mazzafero, Vicente E., Diego F. Wyszynski and Hebe Giacomini. (1995) Health conditions in Argentina: facing the twenty-first century. *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 18:234-237.

November 12-16: Buenos Aires

**B19- November 18:** QUIZ #6 (W&A 11, 1 reading)

**Presentations of student research projects**

*Overview of health in Brazil*

November 20-22: Rio de Janeiro

**B20- November 24:** Presentations of student research projects

**B21- November 26:** Presentations of student research projects

- W&A epilogue

**B22- November 29:** Presentations of student research projects

December 2-5: Manaus

**B23-December 7: Global Health; discuss Kidder**

QUIZ #7 (student reports)

*Overview of tropical health challenges*

- Wayland, Coral. (2008) Gendering Local Knowledge: Medicinal Plant Use and Primary Health Care in the Amazon. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 15:171-188.
- Kidder first half

**Field research project due (written portion)**

**B24- December 9:** World health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

- Kidder second half

**December 13: B Day Finals: Essay Exam #2**

**Example questions to be considered in the course:**

1. How do cultural ideas about disease causation influence healing practices?
2. Are the boundaries between Western biomedicine and traditional medical systems always clearly demarcated?
3. What does it mean to say that our bodies are mismatched with our contemporary lives? What are the health consequences of that mismatch?
4. Why is birthweight such a critical measure of health? What factors influence it?

5. How do infants who are breastfed compare with those who are bottlefed?
6. How do cultural factors influence the health of males and females?
7. Is overpopulation an issue today?
8. What is the anthropological debate about female genital cutting?
9. Discuss worldwide variation in the treatment of the aged.
10. Provide examples of cultural variation in the definition of good health.
11. What are some of the major infectious diseases that affect people in the world today? What is being done to control, cure, and prevent these diseases?
12. What are “emerging infectious diseases”? Where are they emerging from and why?
13. What is the relationship between development and disease?
14. What was the relationship between European expansion/colonialism and disease?
15. What is the relationship between social inequalities and disease?
16. Discuss the worldwide impact and response of HIV/AIDS.
17. Can we eliminate infectious diseases without eliminating poverty?
18. What is “race” and how does it relate to health in the US and South Africa?

## **FIELD COMPONENT**

A portion of your grade will come from field trips and activities in each port that we visit.

1. **Fieldwork Assignment.** Each student will select a topic related to health and make observations on the subject in each of the countries we visit. You may conduct your research through observations, interviews with local people, and information gained during field trips, including FDPs. Your observations should be recorded in journal form that will then be consolidated into a final paper. In your final written report, you should include information obtained from books, journals, and reputable websites (e.g., epidemiological data). You should also be prepared to present a summary of your findings to the class in a 5-minute report toward the end of the semester (to be scheduled). Example topics include smoking, alcohol consumption, HIV/AIDS prevention efforts, women’s health, men’s health, children’s health, infant health, prenatal care, childbirth, breastfeeding promotion, immunization efforts, diabetes, medical specialists, clinics, domestic violence/violence against women, pregnancy prevention in teens, unsafe sexual behavior, wealth disparities and health, traditional medicine, herbal medicines, mental health, health of the elderly, exercise, pharmacies or other sources of medicines, infectious disease prevention, definitions of good health, occupational hazards to health, disabilities, hunger and malnutrition, healers, obesity, environmental toxins and pollutants, concerns about fertility and childbearing, STDs, cancer, tuberculosis, malaria, asthma and allergies, use and overuse of antibiotics, dental health. For example, if a student selects smoking, he or she will look for evidence of smoking in each country, considering the price of cigarettes, gender ratio of smokers, prohibitions against smoking, and advertising. Additional information should come from written information about smoking rates, etc. For some topics, it may be possible to do this as a joint project with another student. Value of written and oral report: 100 points (25%); **Due B-22.**

2. Class Field Lab Assignment: (**Attendance and participation in the Field Lab is MANDATORY.**) Value: 80 points (18%); Written discussion, due B-24. Visit to a floating clinic on the Amazon or a clinic in a Favela in Manaus. TBD

## METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

**GRADES.** You will have the opportunity to earn up to 450 points during the semester, based on the following class assignments. Final grades will be determined by the number of points earned:

405-450	A
360-404	B
315-359	C
270-314	D
<270	F

- A. **60 points** from six quizzes over the assigned chapters in the textbooks and lectures. Each quiz will cover the assigned material and lectures since the previous quiz and will include multiple choice and true-false questions, each worth 1 point.  
**140 points** from two exams. These exams will be short answer and short essay. They will cover material from lectures, discussions, student presentations, and readings. They are not cumulative. Study guides will be given 2 classes before each exam.
- B. **100 points** from a short written (7-8 pages) and oral presentation (5-7 minutes) of “research results” as described in #1 above and based primarily on in-port observations and fieldwork.
- C. **50 points** from contributions to class discussions following each port and a brief (3 minute) oral presentation on health in one of the countries we visit or a selected disease (e.g., schistosomiasis, dengue, yellow fever, or leishmaniasis) that is common in one or more of the countries we visit
- D. **80 points** from the assigned class field lab.
- E. **20 points** for reflection questions from Kidder

\*\*\*\***ATTENDANCE** is mandatory unless you have an excused illness. I will keep attendance and each unexcused absence beyond one will cost you 10 points.\*\*\*\*

## RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

Access to the World Health Organization Statistics for 2012.

AUTHOR: Brown, Peter and Ron Barrett  
TITLE: Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology  
PUBLISHER: McGraw Hill  
ISBN #: **13**: 978-0073405384  
DATE/EDITION: 2009

AUTHOR: Farmer, Paul  
TITLE: Pathologies of Power  
PUBLISHER: California  
ISBN #: 978-0520243262  
DATE/EDITION 2004

AUTHOR: Scientific American  
TITLE: Infectious Disease  
PUBLISHER: U. Chicago  
ISBN #: 978-0226742649  
DATE/EDITION 2008

AUTHOR: Wortheim, Horby and Woodall  
TITLE: Atlas of Human Infectious Diseases  
PUBLISHER: Wiley-Blackwell  
ISBN #: 978-1405184403  
DATE/EDITION 2012

### **HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."

Medical Anthropology: a Biocultural Approach. Add to My Books. Documents (2). Students (2). Summaries. Date. Rating. year. Module 1 - Summary Medical Anthropology: a Biocultural Approach. Biocultural anthropology has long represented an important approach in the study of human biology. However, despite demonstrated utility, its somewhat amorphous identity leaves some scholars questioning just what it means to be biocultural. In this article, rather than providing prescriptive doctrine, we contribute to these conversations about the nature of biocultural anthropology by considering what biocultural research does. We begin with a consideration of some of the foundational themes of biocultural work including recognition of the dialectical nature of sociocultural and biological for 2009. Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach. New York: Oxford University Press. Worthman, C. and Costello, E. 2009. Tracking Biocultural Pathways to Health Disparities: The Value of Biomarkers. *Annals of Human Biology* 36(3):281-297. Worthman, C. and Kohrt, B. 2005. Receding Horizons of Health: Biocultural Approaches to Public Health Paradoxes. *Social Science & Medicine* 61(4):861-878. References. ^ Hruschka, Daniel J., Lende, Daniel H., Worthman, Carol M. 2005. Biocultural Dialogues: Biology and Culture in Psychological Anthropology. *Ethos* 33(1):1-19. ^ Erickson, Paul A. and Murphy, Some biocultural anthropologists are interested in human origins and evolution. Interesting problems include the population of the New World, especially as studied through the different dogs that accompanied each human crossing of the Bering Straits. The most interesting new topic is the interface between people and animals, in which animals are not objects but subjects of a different sort. Continue Reading.Â Whenever I have heard the use of a "biocultural approach to anthropology" it has referred to the study of the relations between human biology and culture. There is one avenue that studies the biological roots of human behavior which impact the phenomenon of culture. Another avenue studies how culture has come to affect humanity's biological capabilities. Working from a Biocultural approach, Medical Anthropology examines the major health issues that affect most human societies, describing and synthesizing the ways in which biology, culture, health, and environment interact. I