

Department of Anthropology

ANTH 2290B-650- Cultures of Health, Illness, Disability and Healing

COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2023

Version date: February 8, 2023

Instructor:

Dr. Pamela Block (she/her)

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Office Hours: By Appointment. [Weekly Synchronous Zoom Q&A Wednesdays at 2pm](#). This will be recorded and posted on OWL each week.

Classes:

This course will be conducted online. It is *asynchronous*, meaning that students will be provided with a variety of lesson materials and activities that can be done throughout the week, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

Credit Value: 0.5 credit

Requisites:

Antirequisites: the former 2290F/G.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Description:

The goal of this course is to introduce you to medical anthropology, the role that anthropologists play in helping us understand global beliefs about illness and disability. We will learn about how anthropologists influence and work with systems of health, healing, wellness for policy, research, and activism. The course will include an emphasis on how health, illness, disability and healing are understood globally and cross-culturally, and will examine the relationship between biological, social and cultural understandings of these concepts.

Weekly schedule of activities

Week	Date	Details
Week 1	Jan 9 – 15	Orientation: An Introduction to the Course (2.5% of grade)
Week 2	Jan 16 - 22	Jan 17 – Add deadline Read pp. 1-35: 1-2.3
Week 3	Jan 23 - 29	Read pp 36-71: 2.4-3.4 – Material Culture Topic Due Jan 29
Week 4	Jan 30 – Feb 5	Read pp 72-115: 4-5.3

Week	Date	Details
Week 5	Feb 6 - 12	Read pp. 115-155: 6-7.3 Material Culture Assignment Due Feb 12
Week 6	Feb 13 - 17	Read pp. 155-192: 7.4-9.1 Weeks 1-6 Weekly Discussion Posts and OWL Lesson Activities Due Feb 17
Reading Week	Feb 18 - 26	READING WEEK
Week 7	Feb 27 - Mar 5	Read pp. 193-235: 9.2-10.4 Final Assignment Topic Due March 5
Week 8	Mar 6 - 12	March 7, 11:59pm Last day to Drop Add Read pp. 236-273: 11-12.2
Week 9	Mar 13 - 19	Read pp. 274-307: 12.3-13.4
Week 10	Mar 20 - 26	Read pp. 308-344: 14-15.1 Final Assignment Due March 26
Week 11	Mar 27 - April 2	Read pp. 345-382: 15.2-16 Weeks 7-11 Weekly Discussion Posts and OWL Lesson Activities Due April 2
Week 12	April 3 - 9	Final Projects: A Virtual Poster Session
Week 13	April 10 - 16 (excluding April 11-12)	Final Projects: A Virtual Poster Session continues through April 16th, 11:55pm. April 11-12- Study Days Peer Reviews Due April 13

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the historically-contingent social, cultural, political and economic influences on the interpretation, treatment and management of health, illness, disability and healing
- Identify the relationship between broad level social forces and their influence on individual biography and the lived experience health, illness, disability and healing
- Recognize that ethnographic fieldwork can reveal the limitations of standard biomedical understandings and practices relevant to health, illness, disability and healing.
- Apply emerging understandings of health, illness, disability and healing to the COVID pandemic.

Course Materials:

The textbook for this course is *The Routledge Handbook of Medical Anthropology*. By Lenore Manderson, Elizabeth Cartwright, Anita Hardon (first edition 2018). An electronic version of this book is available for free through the library or for sale via the bookstore. Supplemental readings will be included in weekly lessons in OWL.

Registered students will be able to access additional course readings through the course site in OWL before the first day of class.

Evaluation:

Group Activities

Small Group Discussion Posts (20%). During orientation you will select an area of thematic interest and join a small discussion group of people who share your interests. Each week from weeks 2-11 you will discuss the readings and OWL lessons in relation to your chosen them. Each week from week 2 forward you are expected to post 1 Discussion Question (DQ) and 1 Real World Example (RWE) every Wednesday 11:59pm and make two posts responding to others' DQs and RWEs by Friday 11:59pm. [See Small Group Discussion FAQs](#) available clicking the link or through the Assignments tab. These posts are worth up to .5% each.

Virtual Poster Sessions (5%) In weeks 12 and 13 groups of students will share their assignments with each other through OWL Forums and give each other peer feedback. For more information refer to the [Virtual Poster Sessions Peer Review Rubric.docx](#)

Individual Assignments

Owl Lessons and Lesson Activities 25%

You are expected to fully engage in all Lessons on OWL and complete all activities. These include a mixture of items including weekly readings, video, comments, questions to answer, surveys etc. that should take 60-90 minutes and each week. The Orientation is worth 2.5% of your grade. Weeks 2-6 lessons are worth 2% each and will be closed at the end of week 6. Weeks 7-11 are worth 2.5% each and are due at the end of week 11. **To show exceptional participation submit document with a copy (e.g. cut and paste) of all your comments made in the Lessons by Feb 17 (for weeks 1-6) and April 2 (for weeks 7-11).**

Material Culture Assignment 25% [FAQS](#)

Choose an item of relevance to the course topic of health, illness, disability, and healing. It can be a charm, a recipe, a song, an assistive technology, something used in your family that relates to the course topic of health, illness disability and healing. Describe the item, draw it or include photos and create a poster discussing of the item's history and relevance to the course using at least three citations either from the textbook (different chapters and sections of chapters are written by different people and can count as a separate citation), or you may include additional citations from other scholarly sources if you wish. Text in the poster may not exceed the 750 word limit. See due date above and in the OWL Assignments tab. If you want written feedback be sure to submit by the due date and note this in Bold at the top of the first page.

Final Assignments 25% [FAQS](#)

Create a final assignment using a communication modality of your choice (video, painting and artist statement, poster, slide presentation, graphic narrative etc.) on a topic of your choosing related to the textbook readings and class discussions. Video/audio submissions must include a transcript. Text may not exceed the 750 word-limit. See due date above and in the OWL Assignments tab.

Note: You are not required to do any additional research beyond the course readings in order to complete these assignments, though you may do so if you wish for a grade above a B or C.

Examples of possible formats may be to: select a cross-cutting theme and compare different readings approach to it; select an historical event and analyze it using course readings. You may discuss what you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in the readings. You are expected to provide evidence for all your assertions using the texts assigned or in supplemental materials. Use your DQs and RWEs in your discussion posts to explore possible topics. If you want written feedback be sure to submit by the due date and note this in Bold at the top of the first page.

Accommodations and Extensions to Deadlines

Accommodations or extensions to deadlines are always provided (see submit by date in assignments to see when extended submission window closes). Further extensions may be provided on a case-by-case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic counselors but this request must be made before the extended submission window closes. **Extended submission windows are not due dates and cannot be further extended through academic considerations. Any academic considerations must date from the formal due date of any assignment. No extensions of any kind will be granted after April 16.**

All assignments will be evaluated using Turn-It-In in the Assignments portal (video/audio submissions must include a transcript). **All assignments are required to have a Turn-It-In score below 15% and should be free of any plagiarism.**

Academic Statements and Policies:

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

Both the Material Culture and Final Assignments must be submitted and receive passing grades in order to pass this course. **The evaluation methods described in this course outline are essential requirements for the course.**

Learning Community

Just like there are many learning styles there are also many teaching styles. Some courses are structured with information flowing primarily from the instructor to the student and then flowing back from the student to the instructor, perhaps mediated by teaching assistants. This is effective for lower levels of knowledge acquisition: remembering and understanding. This is not how I am teaching this course. For higher levels of knowledge acquisition: applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, we will establish what is called a learning community. Knowledge in a learning community circulates, flowing between all participants through online and small group discussions. The instructor assumes a mentoring role rather than as sole authority and there is recognition of different sorts of knowledge available in the classroom, especially when learners come from many disciplines and backgrounds. Research shows students reach higher levels of understanding when they are actively engaged in the learning process in this way. [Here is a site with some more information.](#) As well as [this PDF article.](#)

This style may not work for everyone, indeed may make even some people uncomfortable. I invite you to review our syllabus carefully and consider if you are prepared for this level of engagement. Your active weekly participation and engagement in this course through direct communication with other students during small group discussions (using text, audio or video) and via a group project is essential to your success here.

Collective Access

In this course we are all “in it” together. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to information and needed supports to be successful this course. This may mean describing images, making sure videos are captioned, taking notes collectively, etc. Collective access needs vary from course to course, so I will let you know of any specific access guidelines that we need for this course. This site discusses some examples of [collective access](#). I would suggest briefly describing any photos you post and make sure any videos you post (including ones you personally make) are captioned. Auto-Captioning is very easy to do on [YouTube](#). If you have access needs or concerns feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to meet to discuss how to best support your success in this course.

Accommodation, Illness Reporting and Academic Considerations

It is important that you please contact me as soon as possible **in advance of any due dates** if you are seeking academic consideration.

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible.

Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. More information can be found on the [Accessible Education site](#), as well as the accommodation policy in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. **Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.** See the Academic Calendar for complete details on [Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students](#).

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current [Academic Policies in the Academic Calendar](#) which include, but is not limited to, academic consideration for medical illness, accommodation for religious holidays, academic appeals, academic accommodation for students with disabilities, as well as scholastic discipline.

~ END ~