**SOC 493-01**

**The Social Life of Epidemics:**

**How Culture Plays a Role in the Transmission of Infectious Diseases**

**Professor: Deon Claiborne**

**Tuesday and Thursday**

**11:00 AM-12:15 PM**

**Room L-231**

**Office: Delp 123**

**Office Hours: By appointment Tuesday and Thursdays**

**August 31-December 17, 2016**

**Course Description:**

Why did Ebola explode in African countries, but contained in the U.S.? How did the US government play a role in the mismanagement of the AIDS crisis? How can the spread of Zika be prevented? What do we need to know about the role culture plays in the spread, treatment, and aftermath of infectious diseases to avoid the next big pandemic?

In this course, we will ask and answer these questions and more by examining the role that culture, institutions, and human behavior have and have had in current and past pandemics (world-wide epidemics). You will use theories and ideas from anthropology and social medicine to critically think about how diseases spread; what the social consequences of epidemics are; what methods work or do not work in preventing or treating them; and how clashes within and between cultures, institutional negligence, and individual human behavior can impact prevention and treatment.

**Course Requirements:**

You are responsible for all material covered during class and your assigned readings. Class readings on the syllabus should be completed *before* each class period. Class attendance is required. Unexcused absences will lower your final grade.

**Required Textbooks:**

● *Plagues and Epidemics: Infected Spaces Past and Present* Edited by D. Ann Herring and Alan C. Swedlund

● *Pandemic* by Sonia Shah

● *The Plague* by Albert Camus

These will be supplemented by electronic versions of other readings as well as films. **Grading:**

There is a total of 135 points available throughout the course which will be converted into a percentage for your final grade. Points can be achieved via the following methods:

*Reflections (Total: 30 points):* Reflections are based on prompt questions found in the McKee and Stone text or as instructed in the syllabus. There are twelve reflections during the semester. Each reflection is worth 2.5 points and is an all or nothing grading system. Either you turned in your reflection and received full points or you did not turn in your reflection and will not receive any points. Reflections are short, but thoughtful reflections on the ideas presented during that week. Some reflections are directly prompted by the readings, while others require you to search out current articles that pertain to the topic of the week and use the weekly readings to critically evaluate the article. These paragraphs are an opportunity to think critically about the ideas and concepts presented during the lectures and through the readings.

*Reading Presentations (Total: 20 points):* Students will sign up to lead discussion on a particular article twice over the course of the semester. The student will write a short paper summarizing the key points, arguments, and/or facts presented in the article, chapter, or paper concluding with at least three discussion questions. This summary will be provided to each of the other students and the professor. The student will then facilitate a critical discussion about the article in class. Each presentation is worth ten points.

*Assignment (5 points):* Create two essay questions from any of the material between Week 2 and Week 6

*Final Paper and Presentation (30 points):* In the final paper and presentation, you will use one of the theoretical models, which you learned about throughout the course, to investigate, critically, an epidemic of your choice. It can be a historical epidemic or a current epidemic. You will delve more deeply into the social, cultural, political (including global politics), and economic factors that led to the growth of the epidemic, the treatment of the epidemic (and of the people infected and affected), and the aftermath of the epidemic. Cite any sources that you use with the author, the title of the source, the date, pages, and, if a website, the link. You will present your paper to the class (see schedule).

*Midterm (20 points):* The mid-term will consist of an in class essay which answers one question out of a selection of questions based on materials presented from Week 2 through Week 6.

*Final Exam (30 points):* The Final Exam is cumulative and will focus primarily on the larger concepts we have discussed over the semester. The Final Exam will include: true and false; multiple choice; short answer; and an in class essay. More information will be provided prior to the exam.

**A word about my policies and your responsibilities:**

1. Because of the small class size, this class will be conducted like a graduate seminar. Unlike undergraduate courses, in which grading expectations usually start at a “C” and grade up to an “A,” graduate course grading starts at an “A” and grades down from there. The expectation is that students do their best work because they have an interest and passion in the subject matter. I will start from the expectation that you want to be in this class and are eager to learn the subject matter.

2. The exams and your final paper and presentation comprise the major portion of your grade. The midterm will consist of a selection of essay questions to choose from and will be a take home. The other exam will have a selection of the different exam questions listed above. These exams are noted on your syllabus. FAILURE to take one of these exams will probably lead to failure in the course. Failure to take the final exam WILL equal a failure in the course. More information regarding the types of exams will be presented in the coming weeks as we discuss the material and how you would best like your knowledge of the material tested.

3. As noted above, reflections are graded as all or no points. Attention to detail is important here, as is critical thinking. I am looking for your effort in working with and through the concepts presented. All reflections should be supported by source material and cited properly. For class readings, the author and date is fine. For any outside sources you use, you’ll need full bibliographic information posted at the bottom of your reflection post. 4. All assignments except the final project are worth five points.

5. I reserve the right to alter this schedule if it becomes necessary, so pay attention to reading assignments and updates given in class.

6. If you have any questions, please email me or come see me asap. I would be glad to meet with you!

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| **Week**  | **Topic**  | **Tuesday Thursday Assignments Due** |
| **Week 1** Classes begin on 08/31/16 09/01/16 (Th) | Course Over-vie w | No Class Course, Syllabus, Reflection: Write a Textbook review one paragraph No Readings introduction of Video: “5 Tips to yourself. In this Improve your reflection, share one Critical Thinking” thing people do not Various Logical know about you; one Fallacy videos goal you have for the class; one goal you have in life; and one |

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|  |  | hobby you like to engage in. |
| **Week 2** 09/06/16 (T) 09/08/16 (Th) **Week 3** 09/13/16 (T) 09/15/16 (Th) | Thinking about Plagues and Epidemics Setting the stage for understanding epidemics as cultural phenomena | Herring/Swedlund: Shah: Introduction Reflection: In two Ch. 1, Ch. 2 pages, discuss the Joralemon: major theoretical “Recognizing perspectives Foucault: “The Biological, Social, presented in the Right of Death and and Cultural readings with which Power over Life” Interconnections” we can consider the social life of Agamben: *Homo* Kopytoff: “The epidemics. Finally, *Sacer* Introduction Cultural select one Biography of perspective and Inhorn: “Medical Things” argue why you think Anthropology and it is the best Epidemiology Moosavinia *et al*: perspective to use in “Edward Said’s understanding the *Orientalism* and interaction between the Study of the culture and biology Self and the before, during and Other… (Intro after epidemics. only)” Herring/Swedlund: Shah: Ch. 1, Ch. 2 Reflection: What do Ch. 8 you think of the Farmer (1999): concept of health as *Pathologies of* a human right? Are *Power* there other concepts –Introduction only not addressed in the articles that you think could work? “After the End of “Manufactured Identify some of the Disease” Neglect” larger processes, both historically in http://goo.gl/GM7DQ http://goo.gl/cCNm 0 Ol the Herring and Swedlund chapter and currently in the *Film*: “Epidemics” (1st *Film*: “Epidemics” other articles, that half) (2nd half) enhance or inhibit this idea of health as a human right. |

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| **Week 4** 09/20/16 (T) O9/22/16 (Th) | Transmission and Culture | Herring/Swedlund: Shah: Ch. 3, Ch. 4 Reflection: Find an Ch. 3, Ch. 9, Ch. 18 article online, in a Briggs and magazine, or Nichter: newspaper (print it “Biocommunica-bi and include it with lity and the your reflection) that Biopolitics of relates to this week’s Pandemic Threats” topic and readings. Identify the “social McCloskey: life” of the pathogen “Monitoring or other element that Disease Outbreaks is causing dis-ease in at the Games” a population. Reading Presentation |
| **Week 5** 09/27/16 (T) 09/29/16 (Th) | Vector borne Illnesses and Zoonotic Disease | Herring/Swedlund Shah: Ch. 5 and Reflection: Find an Ch. 13, Ch. 15, Ch. Ch. 6 article online, in a 16 magazine, or newspaper (print it Dyer *et al*: and include it with “Deforestation, your reflection) that Dogs, and Zoonotic relates to this week’s Disease” topic and readings. Identify the “social Porter: “Of Farmers life” of the pathogen and Fowl” or other element that is causing dis-ease in Karaim: “Not So a population. Fast with the DDT” Reading Presentation |

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| **Week 6** 10/04/16 (T) 10/06/16 (Th) | Modern Plagues: Zika and Ebola | Shah: Ch. 7 and 8 Shah: Ch. 9 and 10 Reflection: Find an article online, in a Bolten: magazine, or Nading: “Diseases “Circulating Ebola newspaper (print it that don’t Fit” in the and include it with Anthropocene” your reflection) that Valle: “How the relates to this week’s Zika Narrative Frankfurter: “The topic and readings. About Puerto Rico Danger in Losing Identify the “social Explains US Sight of Ebola life” of the pathogen Colonialism” Victims’ or other element that Humanity” is causing dis-ease in “Awakenings” a population. “After the End of http://goo.gl/KhBDfX Ebola” Reading http://goo.gl/x9iA0G Presentation Assignment: Create two essay questions from any of the material between Week 2 and Week 6 (Due Tuesday) |
| **Week 7** 10/11/16 (T) 10/13/16 (Th) | **Mid-Term** **Exam** | **Mid-Term** Mid-Semester No Assignments **Exam**— Break: No Class Due |
| **Week 8** 10/18/16 (T) 10/20/16 (Th) | Sexually Transmitted | Herring/Swedlund: Camus: Part 1 Reflection: Find an Ch. 11, Ch. 17 article online, in a Parker: “Sexuality, magazine, or Fleck: “How the Culture, and newspaper (print it Modern Concept of Power in and include it with Syphilis HIV/AIDS your reflection) that Originated” Research” relates to this week’s topic and readings. Reverby: “’Normal Decosas and Identify the “social Exposure’ and Pedneault: life” of the pathogen Inoculation “Preventing or other element thatSyphilis” Sexually  |

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|  |  | Transmitted is causing dis-ease in Diseases…” a population. *Film:* “And the Band Played On” Koon: “Ruth Reading (1/2) Coker Burks, the Presentationcemetery angel” *Film:* “And the Band Played On” (1/2)  |
| **Week 9** 10/25/16 (T) 10/27/16 (Th) **Week 10** 11/01/16 (T) 11/03/16 | Prions Airborne  | Herring/Swedlund: Camus: Part 2 Reflection: Find an Ch. 14, Ch. 18 article online, in a magazine, or Costandi: newspaper (print it “Cannibalism and and include it with the Shaking Death” your reflection) that relates to this week’s http://goo.gl/PGYYdN topic and readings. Identify the “social life” of the pathogen or other element that is causing dis-ease in a population. Reading Presentation Herring/Swedlund: Camus: Part 3 Reflection: Find an Ch. 5, Ch. 7, Ch. 10 article online, in a magazine, or Singer: “Pathogens “Storage and newspaper (print it Gone Wild” Stockpiling as and include it with techniques of your reflection) that “Where Has SARS preparedness” relates to this week’s Gone?” topic and readings. http://goo.gl/4ZU3Yi Identify the “social http://goo.gl/Ji0mgY Untiimely Ends and life” of the pathogen the Pandemic or other element that Imaginary” is causing dis-ease in http://goo.gl/0DO2F a population. T Reading Presentation |

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| **Week 11** 11/08/16 (T) 11/10/16 (Th) **Week 12** 11/15/16 (T) 11/17/16 (Th) | Bacterial Other epidemics | Herring/Swedlund: Camus: Part 4 Reflection: Find an Ch. 6 article online, in a Quigley: “Haiti’s magazine, or Fisher and Kramer: Earthquake was newspaper (print it “An Epidemic after Devastating: The and include it with an Earthquake” (Pt. Cholera Epidemic your reflection) that 1 and 2) was Worse” relates to this week’s topic and readings. “Never Ending Identify the “social Stories” life” of the pathogen or other element that http://goo.gl/UCIY4i is causing dis-ease in a population. Reading Presentation Herring/Swedlund: Camus: Part 5 Reflection: Find an Ch. 4 article online, in a magazine, or LA Times: “Are the Suarez: “The newspaper (print it Media Complicit in Silent, Deadly and include it with Mass Shootings?” Epidemic of your reflection) that Non-Communicab relates to this week’s Leonard: “Should le Disease” topic and readings. Gun Violence Be Identify the “social Treated Like Car life” of the pathogen Accidents?” WHO: *Global* or other element that *Status Report on* is causing dis-ease in http://goo.gl/GorvxA *Non-communicabl* a population. WHO: *Global* *e Diseases, 2010)* *Status Report on* (Read from the *Violence Prevention* Executive *2014* (Read from Summary through Reading pg. vii through the Ch. 2 and then all Presentationend of Part II) of Ch. 7) Novella: “AMA Decides Gun Violence is a Public Health Issue”  |
| **Week 13** 11/22/16 (T) | Institutional Failures and Solutions? | Herring/Swedlund **Happy** No AssignmentsCh. 12 **Thanksgiving**  |

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| 11/24/16 (Th) |  | Bates *et al*: “Vulnerability to malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS…Pt. 1” Bates *et al*: “Vulnerability to malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS…Pt. 2” Bayer: “AIDS, Ethics, and Activism” Beaubien: “Critics say Ebola Crisis was WHO’s Big Failure” WHO: “WHO Leadership Statement on the Ebola Response” Kaiser Family Foundation: “The U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)” “Diagnosing Failure” http://goo.gl/Ou5G16 |
| **Week 14** 11/29/16 (T) 12/01/16 (Th) | **Presentations** | Garrett: “The Reflection: Find an Challenge of Presentations article online, in a Global Health” magazine, or newspaper (print it “Messianic and include it with Medicine…” your reflection) that relates to this week’shttp://goo.gl/sDmK0 9  |

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|  |  | topic and readings. Stoller: “Global Identify the “social Politics, Global life” of the pathogen Health and the or other element that Anthropological is causing dis-ease in Moment” a population. Final Paper Due Faye: “How Beginning of Class Anthropologists help Thursdaymedics fight Ebola in Guinea”  |

**Week 15** 12/06/16 (T)

12/08/16 (Th)

**Review and Catch up**

Review of materials from Course

Review and questions

**Week 16** 12/12/16 -12/17/1 6

**Exam Week Final Exam: Thursday,**

**December 15,**

**10:30 AM**