

FYSM 1506A: Health, Culture, and Society

Course Outline

Fall-Winter, 2006-2007

Dr. Jen Pylypa

Class location: Loeb Building, Room A720

Office: Loeb C772

Class time: Monday and Wednesday 10:05-11:25

Office phone: 520-2600 Extension 6329

Office hours: Mon 12:30-2:00, or by appointment

Email and course info: use WebCT

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR OBJECTIVES:

A first year seminar is different from other courses that you will take at Carleton. While you will learn about a particular subject matter during this course, an additional focus of the course is to develop, in a small class setting, the intellectual skills required for success at the university level in general. Some of the goals of first year seminars are:

- to improve critical reading, thinking, and writing skills through the close analysis of readings and writing about them
- to develop both self-directed and interactive learning skills
- to provide early and regular constructive feedback to help you improve your work
- to provide opportunities to engage in projects that will apply skills learned
- to provide opportunities for group discussion and collaboration
- to provide mentoring and advice that will help you to be a successful student at Carleton

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to medical anthropology – the study of conditions, perceptions, and behaviours that affect human health in various cultures and societies. People's ideas about the body as well as the prevention, causes, and treatment of illness are influenced by culture.

The causes of illness and the ability to treat it are also influenced by society—for example, by the working and living conditions of people in different socioeconomic groups, or the availability of health care. This course will explore all of these cultural and social dimensions of health and illness. Topics will include cultural ideas about the body, social and environmental causes of illness, the effects of poverty on health, traditional healing systems in different cultures, the roles of doctors and healers in society, cultural clashes and ethical issues in health care delivery, and the cultural dimensions of our own perceptions of the body and illness in Western societies.

In addition to shorter readings, the course will involve reading four engaging books (two per semester) on particular topics of interest, including: 1) teenagers, dieting and body image, 2) the experiences of a researcher studying malnutrition in Africa, 3) the difficulties faced by a Hmong refugee family in a U.S. hospital, and 4) the impact of the fast food industry on society and on our health.

****PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE COURSE SYLLABUS CAREFULLY. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THESE PAGES****

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Fall and Winter Semesters:

Joralemon, Donald

2006 Exploring Medical Anthropology. Second Edition. Boston: Pearson Education.

Fall Semester:

Nichter, Mimi

2000 Fat Talk: What Girls and Their Parents Say about Dieting. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Dettwyler, Katherine A.

1994 Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa. Long Grove: Waveland Press.

Winter Semester:

Fadiman, Anne

1997 *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors,*

and *the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: The Noonday Press.

Schlosser, Eric

2002 *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. New York: Perennial.

Books are available for purchase at the Carleton campus bookstore.

OTHER REQUIRED READINGS:

A package of additional readings is also required. It is on reserve at the library under the course/instructor name.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**Fall Semester:**

Writing assignment #1	10 %	Due October 4
Writing assignment #2	10 %	Due November 8
Writing assignment #3	15 %	Due December 4
In-class writing	10 %	approximately one per week

Winter Semester:

Writing assignment #4	10 %	Due January 31
Writing assignment #5	10 %	Due March 21
Take-home exam	15 %	Due April 28
In-class writing	10 %	approximately one per week

Class participation (both semesters) 10 %

(includes a 'unique contribution' – see below)

Writing assignments: Writing assignments will incorporate analytical, research, library, and writing skills. Details will be provided well in advance of each assignment due date (see schedule, below).

Take-home exam: The take-home exam will be handed out on the last day of class in April, and is due on April 28, the last day of the exam period. **LATE EXAMS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT A FORMAL DEFERRAL FROM THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE.** The exam will consist of essay questions that are to be answered using class concepts, readings and videos from the entire course. Thus, keeping up on the readings and writing notes or summaries for them, as well as taking notes in class and on videos (where appropriate), will be important in order to prepare you for the take home exam.

In-class writing: In addition to the take-home assignments, 20% of your grade is assigned to in-class writing assignments. These will occur at random throughout the year, most frequently in the first 15-20 minutes of class periods. They will not be announced in advance, but you can expect approximately one per week. You will be given a question, often based on the assigned reading for that day, and asked to write a paragraph or two reflecting upon that question. The purpose of these assignments is primarily to ensure that you do the readings on time and take the time to understand their key points and arguments. They also provide an opportunity to practice your in-class writing skills. These assignments are not designed to be long or difficult; if you are properly prepared for class and write a short, clear commentary answering the question, you should score well on them. Please bring loose-leaf paper to class to use for these assignments.

Participation and unique contribution: Finally, 10% of your grade is reserved for class attendance and participation. As part of your participation grade, each student will be asked to make one, small 'unique contribution' to class discussion at some point during the year. I will request volunteers for particular tasks on a regular basis (e.g., interviewing a friend on a particular topic and reporting back to the class, looking up some information on the Internet,

etc.), giving everyone in the class the opportunity to fulfill this requirement once over the course of the year.

Please keep in mind that a substantial portion of your grade depends on **doing the readings on time** and **attending class**. Missed classes have a significant impact on your in-class writing and participation grades, which together make up 30% of your grade. **Students who do poorly in this class are usually those with poor attendance and/or those who turn in assignments late.**

****Minimum course requirements:** Students who do not meet the following minimum requirements will automatically receive an F in the course: 1) submission of 4 out of 5 major writing assignments, 2) submission of the take-home exam, 3) completion of at least 40% of in-class writing assignments, and 4) attendance at a minimum of 40% of classes.

Assignments and grades will be handed back in class, and grades will also be posted on WebCT.

Final grades are subject to the approval of the Dean.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND TOPICS:

FALL SEMESTER

WEEK 1: Introduction to the First Year Seminar, anthropology, and each other

Monday, September 11

introduction to the course; no reading

Wednesday, September 13

course outline: read in detail!

Miner, Horace

1956 Body Ritual among the Nacirema. *American Anthropologist* 58(3):503-507.

WEEK 2: The field of medical anthropology

Monday, September 18

Joralemon: Chapter 1: What's So Cultural about Disease?

Wednesday, September 20

Joralemon: Chapter 2: Anthropological Questions and Methods in the Study of Sickness and Healing

discussion of assignment #1: mini-ethnography

WEEK 3: The body: Teenagers and body image in North American culture

Monday, September 25

Nichter: Preface, Introduction, & Appendix A

Wednesday, September 27

Nichter: Chapter 1

WEEK 4: Body image in North American culture, cont.

Monday, October 2

Nichter: Chapters 2 & 3

Wednesday, October 4

Nichter: Chapter 4

assignment #1 due

discussion of assignment #2: annotated bibliography

WEEK 5: Body image in North American culture, cont.

Monday, October 9: Thanksgiving Day – no class

Wednesday, October 11

Nichter: Chapter 5

library orientation session for assignment #2 – GO DIRECTLY TO LIBRARY ROOM 102

WEEK 6: Body image in North American culture, cont.

Body image in cross-cultural perspective

Monday, October 16

Nichter: Chapters 6 & 7

Wednesday, October 18

Popenoe, Rebecca

2005 Ideal. *In Fat: The Anthropology of an Obsession*. Don Kulick and Anne Meneley, eds. Pp. 9-28. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin.

WEEK 7: Bodies and cultural perceptions of race

Social stigma and disability

Monday, October 23

Kaw, Eugenia

1993 Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 7(1):74-89.

Wednesday, October 25

Murphy, Robert

1995 Encounters: The Body Silent in America. *In Disability and Culture*. Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte, eds. Pp. 140-158. Berkeley: University of California Press.

WEEK 8: Social stigma and illness

Cultural perspectives on malnutrition

Monday, October 30

Waxler, Nancy E.

1998 Learning to be a Leper: A Case Study in the Social Construction of Illness. *In Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. Peter J. Brown, ed. Pp. 147-157.

Mountain View: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Wednesday, November 1

Dettwyler: Chapters 1-3

WEEK 9: Cultural perspectives on malnutrition, cont.

Monday, November 6

Dettwyler: Chapters 4-6

Wednesday, November 8

Dettwyler: Chapters 7-9

assignment #2 due

discussion of assignment #3: term paper

WEEK 10: Cultural perspectives on malnutrition, cont.

Political-economic perspectives on malnutrition

Monday, November 13

Dettwyler: Chapters 10-14

Wednesday, November 15

Robbins, Richard H.

2005 Chapter 6: Hunger, Poverty, and Economic Development. *In* Global Problems and

the Culture of Capitalism. Third Edition. Pp. 175-205. Boston: Pearson.

*read pages 175-194

WEEK 11: Political-economic perspectives on malnutrition, cont.

Cultural and political-economic perspectives on infectious disease: malaria

Monday, November 20

Robbins: Chapter 6: Hunger, cont.

*read pages 194-205

Wednesday, November 22

Helman, Cecil G.

2001 Malaria. Excerpt from Chapter 13: Medical Anthropology and Global Health.
In

Culture, Health and Illness. Fourth Edition. Pp. 255-260. London: Arnold.

WEEK 12: Political-economic perspectives on infectious disease, AIDS

Monday, November 27

Robbins, Richard H.

2005 Chapter 8: Disease. *In* Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism. Third Edition. Pp. 233-261. Boston: Pearson.

*read pages 233-250

Wednesday, November 29

Robbins: Chapter 8: Disease, cont.

*read pages 250-261

WEEK 13: Semester sum up

Monday, December 4

no reading

assignment #3 due

WINTER SEMESTER

WEEK 14: Comparing perspectives in medical anthropology

Wednesday, January 3 – no reading

WEEK 15: Ecological and political-ecological perspectives

Monday, January 8

Stebbins, Kenyon Rainier

1992 Garbage Imperialism: Health Implications of Dumping Hazardous Wastes in Third World Countries. *Medical Anthropology* 15:81-102.

Wednesday, January 10

Stebbins, cont.

discussion of assignment #4: analysis of perspectives on health

WEEK 16: Cultural perspectives on illness and healing

Monday, January 15

Castle, Sarah E.

1994 The (Re)negotiation of Illness Diagnoses and Responsibility for Child Death in Rural Mali. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 8(3):314-335.

Wednesday, January 17

Joralemon: Chapter 6: Healers and the Healing Professions

WEEK 17: Cross-cultural health care

Monday, January 22

Fadiman: Preface, Chapters 1-4

Wednesday, January 24

Fadiman: Chapters 5-6

WEEK 18: Cross-cultural health care, cont.

Monday, January 29

Fadiman: Chapters 7-9

Wednesday, January 31

Fadiman: Chapters 10-12

assignment #4 due

WEEK 19: Cross-cultural health care, cont.

Monday, February 5

Fadiman: Chapters 13-14

Wednesday, February 7

Fadiman: Chapters 15-16

WEEK 20: Cross-cultural health care, cont.

“Collisions” with the health care system in North American culture

Monday, February 12

Fadiman: Chapters 17-19

Wednesday, February 14

no reading

discussion of assignment #5: analysis of a health issue in the media

FEBRUARY 19-23: WINTER BREAK; NO CLASSES

WEEK 21: Fast food: A critical perspective

Monday, February 26

Schlosser: Introduction & Chapter 1

library orientation session for assignment #5 – GO DIRECTLY TO LIBRARY ROOM 102

Wednesday, February 28

Schlosser: Chapter 2

WEEK 22: Fast food, cont.

Monday, March 5

Schlosser: Chapter 3 (Chapter 4 is optional)

Wednesday, March 7

Schlosser: Chapters 5-6

WEEK 23: Fast food, cont.

Monday, March 12

Schlosser: Chapters 7-8: required sections = pages 149-186

Wednesday, March 14

Schlosser: Chapter 9 & Afterword: required sections = pages 193-210; 215-218;
221-222;

271-276; 284-288

WEEK 24: Fast food, cont.

Cultural and political-economic perspectives on tobacco use

Monday, March 19

Schlosser: Chapter 10 & Epilogue: required sections = pages 229-234; 239-249;
255-270

Wednesday, March 21

Amos, Amanda and Margaretha Haglund

2000 From Social Taboo to "Torch of Freedom": The Marketing of Cigarettes to
Women. Tobacco Control 9:3-8.

assignment #5 due

WEEK 25: Applying medical anthropology

Medical ethics

Monday, March 26

Joralemon: Chapter 7: Applying Medical Anthropology

Wednesday, March 28

Joralemon: Chapter 8: Anthropology and Medical Ethics

WEEK 26: Medical ethics, cont.

Semester sum up

Monday, April 2

Joralemon: Chapter 8, cont.

*take home exam distributed

Review Week: No classes are held during review week. Office hours remain as listed.

****Saturday, April 28: Take-home exam is due. Late exams will not be accepted unless a formal deferral is granted from the Registrar's office ****