**Anthropology 349 Fall 2016**

**Medical Anthropology**

**Croft 204**

**TTh 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM**

**University of Mississippi**

Dr. Kate M. Centellas

**Office:** Lamar 561

**Office Hours:** Tu Th 11-1 PM or by appointment

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**Course Description**

How do people define and understand illness? Causes of disease? Bodily integrity? Belief and healing? How does technology impact our understanding of these issues? These are some of the questions we examine in medical anthropology. During the semester, we develop & apply anthropological concepts to understand health, illness, and medical healing practices in diverse socio-cultural contexts. These concepts include: ideas of the body; personhood; reproduction; illness; deviance; cosmetic surgery; distrust of public health measures like vaccines; the medicalization of healing; “alternative” medicine; and Western biomedicine and biopower.

**Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Understand the diversity socio-cultural beliefs about illness and medicine
2. Relate these beliefs to global trends and processes
3. Use anthropological concepts to analyze social issues relating to medicine and healing practices
4. Read, analyze, and critique ethnographic writing

**Course Units**

This course is structured in seven units:

* Introduction: (Bio)medicine & Medical Anthropology
* Cultures, Controversies, and Medical Traditions
* Illness, Healing, and Medical Pluralism
* Reproduction & the Body
* Biomedicine & Biopower
* Life and Death and Subjectivity
* Body Politics and Perfectibility

**Required Readings**

Course materials include full-length ethnographies, a textbook, a reader containing some classics of medical anthropology, websites, radio programs, and documentary films. You are expected to bring your assigned readings to class for discussion. Links are provided on Blackboard to websites, streaming video, and radio podcasts, as well as any other interesting materials we share and discuss. You can find these in a folder for the unit under “Course Documents.” There will occasionally be powerpoint presentations; these will also be available on Blackboard.

**The following books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore and via Amazon:**

Biss, Eula

2014 On Immunity: An Inoculation. Minneapolis, MN: Greywolf Press.

Dumit, Joseph.

2012 Drugs for Life: How Pharmaceutical Companies Define Our Health. Durham, NC:

Duke University Pres.

Edmonds, Alexander

2010 Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil

Good, Byron, Michael M.J. Fischer, Sarah S. Willen, and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good

2010 A Reader in Medical Anthropology: Theoretical Trajectories, Emergent Realities.

Lock, Margaret and Vinh-Kim Nguyen.

2010 An Anthropology of Biomedicine. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

**Assignments**

1.Response Papers (**3)**

Students will submit **THREE** critical response papers. These should be 2-3 pages each and are in classas indicated on the syllabus. There are no prompts for these. You should focus on developing a particular concept or theme that stands out for you from the unit’s readings, or critiquing an author’s conclusions and argument. You must hand in a hard copy.

2. Analytic Essays **(2)**

There are **TWO** analytic essays throughout the semester. Students are required to select one essay prompt from a list of several and answer it using course readings and concepts. Your essays should be approximately 7 pages long (12 point font, double-spaced, typed, 1 inch margins) and must synthesize concepts and material from different units.

3. Final Examination **(1)**

There is a final examination for this class. I will ask you to think creatively and synthetically about course concepts. It will be **TUESDAY DECEMBER 6TH AT 8 AM.**

4. Participation

Students are expected to be active participants in the classroom. Your participation component is based on discussion and engagement with course materials, for 15% of your final grade.

5. Extra Credit

Extra credit can be earned by writing **ONE** extra response paper based on additional materials. This will replace your lowest response paper grade. As the course proceeds I may add interesting or relevant readings to Blackboard. I will discuss them in class and announce that they have been posted, at which point they are available for an extra-credit response paper. If not, you may choose an additional article, movie, documentary, etc. However, it MUST be relevant to the course and you must tie it in to course themes.

**Grading**

Attendance and Participation: **15%**

Response Papers **3 \* 10%: 30%**

Analytic Essays **2 \* 20%: 40%**

Final Exam **1 \* 15%: 15%**

Please be aware that any instance of plagiarism will result in a 0 for the assignment at minimum.

**This course is graded on the +/- scale. The scale is:**

93-100: A

90-92: A-

87-89: B+

83-86: B

80-82: B-

77-79: C+

73-76: C

70-72: C-

69 and below: D

59 and below: F

If you are borderline, i.e. 79.5, the decision to round up or down will be based primarily upon your participation grade.

**Late Policy**

I do not accept late papers. The only exceptions are if you have a doctor’s note or a note from your advisor. If you miss a response paper, you cannot write an extra credit one to make it up. The extra credit assignment may only replace a **submitted** response paper.

**Participation**

This course is both discussion and lecture based. Your participation in class activities is vital for your understanding (and enjoyment) of the material. A good participation grade is based on **engagement** with course themes in class. I encourage you to bring in examples from your lives, to mention anything that made you think of course themes, and try to expand course ideas to your understanding of the world around you. Evidence for this includes: asking questions about the material; answering questions posed by myself and other students; referencing interesting or puzzling popular examples such as magazine articles or T.V. shows in discussion; and respecting others’ opinions.

**Technology Policy**

I encourage you to use e-readers, digital versions of the texts, and so on. You may take notes in class via iPad, tablet, or laptop. However, the use of technology in class is **for class purposes only**. If I catch you texting, chatting, or watching Netflix in class I will a) ask you to leave and b) request that you do not use your device for the next class period.

**Student Responsibilities**

Along with the course readings, assignments, and class attendance, you are expected to know and understand the material on the syllabus. I **do no respond to** questions that are clearly answered on the syllabus or on Blackboard (e.g. “what’s the reading?”) Always check your syllabus, then Blackboard if you have a question!

In addition, there may be changes to the syllabus as the course proceeds. If this occurs, I will a) post an announcement on Blackboard b) announce the change in class and c) send an email to everyone informing them of the change.

**Statement on Accommodations**

I am happy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities when necessary. It is the responsibility of any student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation to contact the Office of Student Disability Services (915-7128). SDS will then contact the instructor through the student by means of an Instructor Notification of Classroom Accommodations form.

**Office Hours**

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas about the material come and talk to me. I prefer to work with students in person (not over email) whenever possible. I have an open door office hours policy, meaning you can come to my office during these times with no appointment. If you cannot make these times, send me an email and we can arrange an alternate time.

**Blackboard and Email**

You are expected to check your email. I will send reminders and important notices to your Ole Miss account. I have posted the syllabus on Blackboard and additional readings on Blackboard. Anything in the course schedule identified as an article will be on BB in the folder corresponding to the week it is assigned. I will add PowerPoints, additional materials, and handouts as the semester proceeds.

A heads up: I do not keep the late hours many of you do! Therefore, if you email me late at night (after about 8 PM) I will likely not receive or respond to your email until the next day.

**Course Schedule**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week and Unit/Theme | Tuesday | Thursday | Additional Assignments & Materials |
| 1. Introduction  What is medical anthropology? | **8/23**  Introduction, Syllabus Day | **8/25**  Article (BB):  Lock, M and Scheper-Hughes, N. “A Critical-Interpretive Approach in Medical Anthropology.” ; L & N Intro |  |
| 2. Introduction  What is biomedicine? Medical anthropology? | **8/30**  L & N, Ch 1 & 2 | **9/1**  Good, Introduction, Ch. 2, 9 |  |
| 3. What is medical anthropology? | **9/6**  L & N: Ch 4 | **9/8**  Good, Chs. 5-8 |  |
| 4. Cultures, Controversies, and Medical Traditions | **9/13**  L & N: Ch. 3, 5, 6 | **9/15**  Zika and Ebola and Contagion (in class discussion) | **FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS ON 9/15** |
| 5. Illness, Healing, and Medical Pluralism | **9/20**  Good, 9, 10, 12, 21 | **9/22**  Discussion, in class exercise |  |
| 6. Reproduction and the Body | **9/27**  Textbook Ch. 8, 10 | **9/29**  Biss, pp. 1 - 104 | **FIRST ESSAY PROMPT DISTRIBUTED ON 9/27** |
| 7. Reproduction & the Body | **10/4**  Biss, 105 - end | **10/6**  Film about the vaccine controversy and autism – tbd. |  |
| 8. Reproduction & the Body | **10/11**  Good, ch. 23, 24, 33 | **10/13**  Good; 17, 30, 31 | **FIRST ESSAY DUE 10/13 IN CLASS**  **Radiolab podcast ‘babystory,” on BB.** |
| 9. Biomedicine & Biopower | **10/18**  Textbook Ch. 7  Dumit, Introduction | **10/20**  Dumit, Ch. 1-3 |  |
| 10. Biomedicine & Biopower | **10/25**  Dumit, ch. 4-end | **10/27**  L & N, Ch. 9, 12 | **SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE 10/27 IN CLASS** |
| 11. Life & Death | **11/1**  Good, 14, 16, 28, 37 | **11/3**  Good, 32, 34, 35 |  |
| 12. Life & Death | **11/8**  Catch up day, discussion, in-class exercise | **11/10**  Clips, blog posts, videos in class on plastic surgery |  |
| 13. Body Politics & Perfectibility | **11/15**  Edmonds, “Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery,” pp. 1-57 | **11/17**  Edmonds pp. 57-122 | **THIRD RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS 11/17**  **SECOND ESSAY PROMPTS DISTRIBUTED** |
| NO CLASS | **THANKSGIVING** | **BREAK** |  |
| 14 Body Politics & Perfectibility | **11/29**  Selections from Kulick, Don. “Fat.”  Videos/blogs/etc | **12/1**  This American Life: “Call Me Fat.” | Articles/materials on BB |

**FINAL EXAM TUESDAY, DEC. 6th AT 8 AM. FINAL ESSAY DUE DURING EXAM PERIOD.**

*The final exam will be an in-class collaborative exercise. If you have read for the class and attended class, you should not need to study for the exam. I will be testing how well you think like a medical anthropologist, not recall of facts.*