

Course Outline for: ANTH 1899 Medical Anthropology: Health, Illness, and Healing Across Cultures

A. Course Description:

1. Number of credits: 3
2. Lecture hours per week: 3
3. Prerequisites: Recommended eligible for ENCG 1101 and READ 1106
4. Corequisites: None
5. MnTC Goals: Goal #5 History, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Goal #8 Global Perspective

This course introduces students to the ways that medical anthropologists understand disease, illness, suffering, and healing as it occurs in a complex weave of biological, psychological, cultural, environmental, and political-economic processes. Particular emphasis, through case studies, will be placed upon the cultural context in which illnesses and suffering are experienced, narrated, and addressed. The importance of cultural competence in health-related practices (the ability to understand and communicate effectively with people from different cultures) will be emphasized throughout this course.

B. Date last reviewed/updated: February 2022

C. Outline of Major Content Areas:

1. The meaning and experience of sickness, health, and healing
2. The structural, cultural and linguistic context of healing practices and access to care
3. Cultural, political, economic, and ecological influences on individual and population health and climate change
4. Interactions between cultural and biological dimensions of health and healing
5. Critical analysis of health-related research, policies and interventions, and the protection of human subjects
6. Ethnographic research on medical practice, technologies, and knowledge

7. Global and transnational dimensions of health and health care
8. Applications of anthropological theory and methods in health-related practice

D. Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Articulate basic terms and concepts important to discussion of medical anthropology. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 5a, 5b, 8a, 8b)
2. Recognize and apply basic intellectual frameworks (hypotheses, theories, ethical perspectives) used in the medical anthropology. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 5a, 5b, 5c, 8c)
3. Analyze cross-cultural diversity in health-related beliefs and practices in order to interpret them in the cultural context in which they occur. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 5a, 5b, 8a, 8b, 8c)
4. Recognize special problems in healthcare in the United States and elsewhere in the world. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 5a, 5b, 5d, 8a, 8b, 8c)
5. Analyze health and illness in five categories: biomedicine (in conventional and alternative or complementary medicine), traditional tribal medicine, folk beliefs and remedies in cultures, religious healing, and alternative medical practices. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 5a, 5b, 5d, 8a, 8b, 8c)
6. Recognize and articulate the evolutionary and historical trends in health and illness. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 5a, 5b, 5d, 8a, 8c)
7. Evaluate contemporary global disease and other health-related logical trends to predict and develop possible modes of intervention. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2d, 5a, 5b, 5d, 8a, 8b, 8c)
8. Apply intellectual frameworks to interpret selected course-related case studies. (Goals 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 5a, 5b, 5d, 8a, 8b, 8c)

E. Methods for Assessing Student Learning:

Assessment methods may include, but are not limited to, the following formats: exams, essay writing, quizzes, journal keeping, research paper writing, oral presentations, written assignments, reflection essays, group work, and/or any other assessment measures based upon the discretion of the instructor.

F. Special Information

Service Learning Opportunities may be included in some classes.