

Health and Healing (Soc/Ant 315)

University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth

Fall 2008

Instructor: Dr. Karen Straight

Office Hours: Appointments by arrangement

Phone: 774-206-5547

Please Note: This syllabus is provided for informational purposes. It may be altered up until the first day of class. Be sure to print out a new syllabus within the online class on the first day.

Required Texts:

Helman, Cecil G. 2007. *Culture, Health and Illness*. Fifth Edition. Boston: Butterworth Heineman

Fadiman, Anne. *Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1998.

Course Objectives:

In this course, students will

- Critically examine our own ethnocentrism.
- Explore the concept of ethnorelativism and its applications.
- Examine the social construction of health and illness in diverse societies.
- Evaluate major theoretical approaches to the study of health and illness.
- Explore the health and illness from a holistic perspective
- Engage in active research on the culture and health concerns facing diverse communities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of stratification and marginalization on health care and access to resources.

Course Description:

We will begin this course with an exploration of our own ethnocentrism and the concept of ethnorelativism. From this vantage point, we will explore the social construction of disease across diverse cultures. We will then turn to an exploration of major theoretical approaches to the study of culture and health. Our discussions will lead to thoughtful and provoking discussions of how ethnographic perspective, theory and observation may be applied to contemporary Western models. We will question how societies come to define illness, and how the identification and treatment of illness occurs in a politicized context in which one must take into account gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and societal positioning within a global economy. As we explore these questions, we will learn more about the medical systems of a

variety of cultures from Southeast Asia, Africa, the United States, and Latin America. The focus here will be on many of the most recent refugee and immigrant groups to come to the area.

We know that learning occurs at a deeper, more lasting level when we process information in a variety of ways through multiple mediums. Keeping this in mind, the course format is structured to be highly interactive, experiential, and research oriented. You will view streaming video, engage in discussions, complete virtual web tours, exams and a paper. Key lecture points will be underscored with web sites, audio and visual materials. Students will be asked to take an active part in the learning process through activities which demand small amounts of additional research outside the class (depending upon the assignment it may be library research or field work).

Course Assignments and Expectations

The following are my expectations as well as the requirements of this class toward your semester grade.

1. You are expected to participate regularly. Students need to keep up with the readings and review all lecture materials posted in the online classroom. Follow the due dates outlined in this document closely.

2. You will be allowed to take exams over a set number of days. Exams will not be provided outside of these dates.

3. Late assignments will not be accepted. The paper assignment must be submitted via the assignment area in myCourses. Emailed assignments will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to make sure that your assignment has been submitted properly.

4. Students will not be allowed to make-up discussions. This would defeat the purpose of a discussion.

5. Make sure that your writing is free of plagiarism. Students that plagiarize will receive, at minimum, an F on the assignment. They risk more severe consequences. Please refer to the following discussion of Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:

<http://www.umassd.edu/faculty/handbook/a.cfm#academicdishonesty>

6. Taking an online course means assuming responsibility for learning myCourses, access to the internet, your own computer, and communicating with me in a timely fashion about any problems you may encounter. I welcome emails from students. My phone number is above for use Monday through Friday during reasonable hours. If you experience a problem during finals week, you may phone or email me any day of the week during normal business hours. Be aware of the due dates. If you experience a technical problem, you must assume responsibility for contacting me immediately **and** responding to my returned emails and/or phone calls within a 12 hour period. If you are experiencing technical problems with email, use the phone number above. Technical problems do not automatically mean an extension of assignment and/or exam due dates. It is a good idea to document technical problems by taking a screen shot so that you can email it to me as an attachment (for instructions, check out: <http://consumer.installshield.com/kb.asp?id=Q108297>)

Students with Learning Disabilities:

If you have a learning disability, I encourage you to contact me within the first few days of class. In addition, campus resources are available to assist you. Please phone ext. 8711 for assistance.

Grading:

Discussion Participation.....130

Race Virtual TourTBD

Health Virtual Tour.....TBD

Death Virtual Tour.....TBD

Essay Assignment on Fadiman Text.....100

Chapter Quizzes.....30 points each for a total of 360

Submission of Assignments:

All assignment must be submitted into the proper area within myCourses. Emailed assignments will not be accepted. If you are new to myCourses, I would encourage you to finish your assignment early in case you have difficulties uploading into the assignments area.

Technical Tips:

You will likely find many of your answers to technical questions about Web CT here:

http://www.umassd.edu/cits/instructional/development/student/student_started.cfm

Contact technical support by one of the following methods: **Students enrolled in fully web-based online courses seeking technical assistance should:**

- Send email to dartmouthsupport@umassonline.net, or
- Call 1-508-000-8501 or 1-508-999-8793 between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM EST during the week, or 1800-569-6505 between 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM and on weekends and holidays or
- Contact support via [live text chat](#) between 5:00PM and 8:30AM and on weekends and holidays.

You will be asked to view important videos and listen to audio materials. If you do not have Quick Time and Real Player, you will need to download them. Both are available for free to download:

Download the free Quick Time plugin at www.apple.com

Download the free Real Player plugin at www.real.com

Additional plugins are available via Blackboards plugin page:

http://www.webct.com/tuneup/viewpage?name=tuneup_browser_tuneup_information#plugins

If you are not sure if you have this software or if you are not sure how to run and install it, please call the help desk.

Participation in Discussion

During the term you will complete ten discussion assignments. **Except for the first week, discussion assignments will be due no later than Tuesday for the week**

the assignment is assigned. Additionally, respond to two students by Friday of that week. My desire is to see discussions unfold throughout this period. Please post your response, view other students' work, and engage in discussion. Re-enter the discussion during the week to create and ongoing conversation.

Participation in discussion is a critical aspect of this class. Through discussion we will learn a great deal about others, ourselves, and different ways to perceive the world around us. When you are caught of guard by another person's insight or perspective on an issue, you are forced to examine your own opinions, assumptions, and values. This is invaluable to the learning process. As you develop your responses, consider how you might add value to our discussion. Add new information, an important reference to the text, engage in debate, etc. Replies of "good work" or "well done" are supportive in nature, but will not count towards your grade.

In other words, give our discussions time and attention. Demonstrate a willingness to hear others' ideas, play with new ideas, and show respect across our differences and similarities. If you do, you will come away from this course with new and worthwhile knowledge.

Because the point of the discussions is to encourage interaction, late responses will **NOT** receive points. I will evaluate your participation in discussion keeping the following rubric in mind:

Knowledge of the Material

Excellent	Competent Improvement	Needs
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Willingness to Play with New Ideas

Excellent	Competent Improvement	Needs
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Thoroughness in Answering the Discussion Question/Issue

Excellent	Competent Improvement	Needs
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Ability to Draw Connections

Excellent	Competent	Needs Improvement
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Depth and Reflection Evident in the Analysis

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Excellent

Competent
Improvement

Needs

Engagement with Discussion Participants

Excellent

Competent

Needs Improvement

My Schedule:

I generally participate in the course Monday through Friday. I take the weekends off to be with my family. I have made some of the assignments due on Sunday in order to allow you to take advantage of the weekend as I know that you all have very busy schedules. You will, however, want to plan ahead. I encourage you to email questions to me Monday through Friday.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Topic	Reading	Assignments*
Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism (9/2 – 9/14)	Introduction – Chapter One	Discussion: Multicultural Self – complete by 9/12 Discussion: Race and Ethnicity – Post your reply by 9/12 Race Virtual Tour due 9/12 Chapter Quiz – available from 9/2 – 9/14
Medical Ecology and the Western Model of Illness 9/15 – 9/21	Chapter Two	Discussion: Health and Illness: due by 9/19. Chapter Quiz – available from 9/15 – 9/21
Culture Bound Illness 9/22 – 9/28	Independent research	Discussion: Culture Bound Illness due 9/26 Health Virtual Tour due 9/26
Language, Culture, and Health 9/29 – 10/5	Chapter 5	Discussion: Multicultural Communication: respond to 2 of your peers by 10/3 Chapter Quiz – available from 9/29 – 10/5
The Ecology and Economics of Nutrition 10/6 -10/12	Chapter 3	Chapter Quiz available from 10/6 – 10/12
Diverse Communities and Healthcare 10/13 – 10/19	Chapters 4 and 15	Discussion: Community Needs Assessment due 10/19

		Chapter Quiz (to cover both chapter 4 and 5) available 10/19
Pain and Culture 10/20 – 10/26	Chapter Seven	Discussion: Pain – due 10/21. Reply to posts by 10/22. Chapter Quiz available 10/20 – 10/26
Birth and Death 10/27 – 11/9 (Note the two week period)	Chapters 6 and 9	Discussion 1: It's your birthday! - due 10/27 Discussion 2: Values about death – due 10/28 Death Virtual Tour due 11/7 Chapter Quiz (to cover both chapters) available 10/27 – 11/9
Culture, Stress, and Alternative Health 11/10 – 11/16	Chapter 11	Discussion: Alternative Health Movements – due 11/11 Peer reviews by 11/14. Chapter Quiz available 11/10 – 11/16
Mental Health 11/17 – 11/23	Chapter 10	Discussion: Mental Health – due 11/18 Chapter Quiz available from 11/17 – 11/23
The Impact of Biotechnologies 11/24 – 11/26 and 12/1 – 12/7 Thanksgiving Break – 11/27 – 11/29	Chapter 14	Discussion: Human Genome Project – due 11/25 <i>Spirit Catches You</i> Assignment Due no later than 11/25 Chapter Quiz available from 11/24 – 12/7
Medical Anthropology and Global Health 12/8 – 12/15	Chapter 18	Discussion: Field Assignment – due 12/12 Last quiz – the last quiz will be available on the first day of finals)

- **Each week you will want to read the lectures and complete the web activities within the Learning Unit on the course web page.**