

ANTHROPOLOGY 2290F-650

Cultures of Health, Illness, Disability and Healing

COURSE OUTLINE

Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Pamela Block (she/her)

Email: pblock@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays 1:30-2:30pm EST or by appointment. Weekly Synchronous Zoom Q&A are Mondays 1:00-1:30. Live Q&A will be recorded and posted on OWL each week.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Mode of delivery: For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online. It is *asynchronous*, meaning that students will be provided with a variety of lesson materials and activities that can be done throughout the week, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

Calendar Course Description: An exploration of the social and cultural basis of health, disability, disease, and healing. We will examine patterns of illness and epidemics, social and cultural aspects of risk, the use of ritual in healing, and the politics of health, among other issues, from an ethnographic and historical perspective.

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Syllabus:

The goal of this course is to introduce you to medical anthropology, the role that anthropologists play in helping us understand global beliefs about illness and disability. We will learn about how anthropologists influence and work with systems of health, healing, wellness for policy, research, and activism. The course will include an emphasis on how health, illness, disability and healing are understood globally and cross-culturally, and will examine the relationship between biological, social and cultural understandings of these concepts.

Weekly schedule of activities

Week	Date	Details
Week 1	Sept 9 (Wed) to Sept 13 (Sun)	Orientation: An Introduction to the Course;
Week 2	Sept 14 (Mon) to Sept 20 (Sun)	Sept 17 – Add/Drop deadline Read pp. 1-35: 1-2.3

Week	Date	Details
Week 3	Sept 21 (Mon) to Sept 27 (Sun)	Essay 1 Topic Due Sept 21, 11:55pm (Submission window closes September 25 th 11:55pm) Read pp 36-71: 2.4-3.4
Week 4	Sept 28 (Mon) to Oct 4 (Sun)	Read pp 72-115: 4-5.3
Week 5	Oct 5 (Mon) to Oct 11 (Sun)	Group Project Topics Due Monday October 5th, 11:55pm (submission window closes October 11 th 11:55pm) -
Week 6	Oct 13 (Tues) to Oct 18 (Sun)	Monday, October 12 – Thanksgiving Essay 1 Due date October 13th, 11:55pm (submission window closes October 18 th , 11:55pm) Read pp. 155-192: 7.4-9.1
Week 7	Oct 19 (Mon) to Oct 25 (Sun)	Journal for Weeks 1-6 Due October 19th, 11:55pm (submission window closes October 23 th 11:55pm) Read pp. 193-235: 9.2-10.4
Week 8	Oct 26 (Mon) to Nov 1 (Sun)	Read pp. 236-273: 11-12.2 Essay 2 Topic Due date October 26th (submission window closes November 1 st , 11:55pm).
READING WEEK	Nov 2 (Mon) to Nov 8 (Sun)	FALL READING WEEK
Week 9	Nov 9 (Mon) to Nov 15 (Sun)	November 12 – last day to drop a course without penalty. Read pp. 274-307: 12.3-13.4
Week 10	Nov 16 (Mon) to Nov 22 (Sun)	Read pp. 308-344: 14-15.1
Week 11	Nov 23 (Mon) to Nov 29 (Sun)	Group Projects due November 21st, 11:55pm. (submission window closes November 29 th , 11:55pm) Read pp. 345-382: 15.2 -16

Week	Date	Details
Week 12	Nov 30 (Mon) to Dec 6 (Sun)	Final Projects: A Virtual Poster Session Essay 2 November 30th, 11:55pm (submission window closes December 4 th , 11:55pm). Weeks 6-12 Journals Due December 6th, 11:55pm (submission window closes December 9 th , 11:55pm)
Week 13	Dec 7 (Mon) to Dec 9 (Wed)	Final Projects: A Virtual Poster Session continues through December 9 th , 11:55pm.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the historically-contingent social, cultural, political and economic influences on the interpretation, treatment and management of health, illness, disability and healing
- Identify the relationship between broad level social forces and their influence on individual biography and the lived experience health, illness, disability and healing
- Recognize that ethnographic fieldwork can reveal the limitations of standard biomedical understandings and practices relevant to health, illness, disability and healing.
- Apply emerging understandings of health, illness, disability and healing to the COVID pandemic.

Course Materials:

The textbook for this course is *The Routledge Handbook of Medical Anthropology*. By Lenore Manderson, Elizabeth Cartwright, Anita Hardon (first edition 2018). An electronic version of this book is available for free through the library or for sale via the bookstore. Supplemental readings will be included in weekly lessons in OWL.

Registered students will be able to access additional course readings through the course site in OWL before the first day of class.

Evaluation:

Journals and Discussions (Forums/VoiceThreads) 25%

Text Journal (10%)

Students will keep a text journal reflecting on the course readings and activities. Each week student will add at least one Discussion Question (DQ) and one Real World Example (RWE) for the week's readings to their journal. Journals will be submitted in two parts at weeks 6 and 12. Students are expected to use these weekly journal entries as a basis for weekly discussions in the week's online Forum/VoiceThread. Journals are submitted twice per term after weeks 6 and 12. If you wish to receive feedback on your journal – indicate it in the assignments tab and in bold at the top of the document.

Discussion questions (DQs) should be essay-type questions that don't have a simple yes or no answer, like something you would see in an essay exam. It must be directly related to the week's readings. Think of one and put it in your journal every week. The TA or Instructor will also be providing DQs on Monday each week to start off discussions. Starting in Week 2, you must post your questions by Wednesday by each week and respond by Friday of each week. The TA or Instructor will post summative feedback on the following Monday (e.g. you can expect summative feedback for Week 2 on Monday of Week 3 etc.).

Real World Examples (RWEs) are reflections can be anything that connects the week's readings to something from your experiences out in the world. They might be drawn from literature, film, social media, news articles, blogs or personal experiences. Put one of these in your journal every week and share them in discussion forums if you choose.

Discussion Posts 15%

Over the course of the term every student is expected at minimum to post one DQ and make responses to 3 other students' DQs every week (4 posts per week, a minimum total of 48 posts per student per term) and to read/listen to a minimum of 36 posts to read per week. Between making your own posts and responding to others' posts this should be roughly an 60-90 minutes of effort per week. To have documentation of your participation in forums, be sure you mark any posts you've read: "Marked Read"). Any Posts you make should be short. Longer than 100-200 words or 1 minute of talking, they become hard to read/process. If you like to write/say more, make another post.

There is no maximum number of posts per week. You may post or comment multiple times if you like. If you are posting beyond these minimum requirements, if your posts are insightful, and that other students find them helpful, note this in your journal. Be sure to let others know if you find their discussion posts helpful too. The TA and instructor will be highlighting your (and our) favorites in our weekly summative responses.

Owl Activities 15% OWL

You are expected to fully engage in all lessons on OWL and complete all exercises. These include a mixture of items including weekly readings, video, comments, questions to answer, surveys etc. that should take 60-90 minutes and constitute 1-1.5% of your grade each week.

Essays or Alternative Format Assignments 40%

Twice, during this course, you will be expected to turn in one essay of 750 words (up to 1000 words will be accepted) and either a second 750 word essay or alternative modality (video, painting and artist statement, poster, slide presentation, graphic narrative etc.) on a topic of your choosing related to the readings and class discussions. Video/audio submissions must include a transcript. PowerPoints may not exceed the 750 word-limit. The essays (or alternative modalities) will be weighted at 20% each (40% total). See due dates in the weekly syllabus table above. Accommodations or extensions to these deadlines may be provided on a case by case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic counselors but this request must be made before the late submission window closes.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database

for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com). All assignments are required to have a Turn-It-In score below 15%.

Final Projects 20%

Final Group online projects will be worth 20% of your grade for the course. Groups of 5 students will work together to develop a lesson on a topic they have selected. Your discussion group is expected to communicate regularly via email, forums, VoiceThread, Zoom or any other method accessible to all group members. The audience for these presentations will be classes of Secondary Students in London. Presentations are expected to have an informative component (options include video, audio, images, text, slides) and an interactive component (surveys, quizzes, games, puzzles or other activities that can be completed asynchronously). Lessons are expected to be 15 minutes in length (roughly 3 minutes of material per student). In a group self-evaluation, the group as a whole will be required to evaluate 1) Quality of finished product, 2) Group process including breakdown of work-load, 3) Peer evaluations of the other group members, and 4) Individual self-evaluations.

Topics for these lessons should be based on the course topics and readings, though supplementary materials may be used. The lessons must be accessible (e.g. all video and audio must be captioned or provide a transcript and descriptions must be provided for images).

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

This is an essay-designated course. Both essay assignments, journals, and group projects must be submitted and all receive passing grades in order to pass this course.

Course Specific Statements and Policies:

Learning Community. Just like there are many learning styles there are also many teaching styles. Some courses are structured with information flowing primarily from the instructor to the student and then flowing back from the student to the instructor, perhaps mediated by teaching assistants. This is effective for lower levels of knowledge acquisition: remembering and understanding. This is not how I am teaching this course. For higher levels of knowledge acquisition: applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, we will establish what is called a learning community. Knowledge in a learning community circulates, flowing between all participants through online and small group discussions. The instructor assumes a mentoring role rather than as sole authority and there is recognition of different sorts knowledge available in the classroom, especially when learners come from many disciplines and backgrounds. Research shows students reach higher levels of understanding when they are actively engaged in the learning process in this way. [Here is a site with some more information.](#) As well as [this PDF article.](#)

This style may not work for everyone, indeed may make even some people uncomfortable. I invite you to review our syllabus carefully and consider if you are prepared for this level of engagement. Your active weekly participation and engagement in this course through direct communication with other students during small group discussions (using text, audio or video) and via a group project is essential to your success here.

Collective Access. In this course we are all "in it" together. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to information and needed supports to be successful this course. This may mean describing images, making sure videos are captioned, taking notes collectively, etc.

Collective access needs vary from course to course, so I will let you know of any specific access guidelines that we need for this course. This site discusses some examples of [collective access](#). I would suggest briefly describing any photos you post and make sure any videos you post (including ones you personally make) are captioned. Auto-Captioning is very easy to do on [YouTube](#).

If you have access needs or concerns feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to meet to discuss how to best support your success in this course.

Statement on Seeking Academic Consideration:

It is important that you please contact me as soon as possible **in advance of any due dates** if you are seeking academic consideration. Academic consideration will not be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please consult [university policies on procedures for seeking academic consideration](#).

Accommodation, Illness Reporting and Academic Considerations

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see: [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

[Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. **Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.** See link below for more details on the penalties for plagiarism. All assignments will be evaluated using Turn-It-In in the Assignments portal (video/audio submissions must include a transcript). **All assignments are required to have a Turn-It-In score below 15%.**

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in [Western's academic policies](#).

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