ANTH 3301/SOCI 3301  
Health, Healing, and Ethics:  
Cross Cultural Perspectives on Sickness and Society

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Office hours: after class or by appointment

Instructor Biography  
I received my B.S. and M.A. in Anthropology from Tulane University, and an M.A. in Anthropology from Southern Methodist University. I am currently a Ph.D. Candidate in the Anthropology program at SMU. I believe in public anthropology: anthropology that is accessible but also challenges us to think critically about everyday dilemmas and issues and can be used to solve everyday problems. My teaching style reflects this.

Course Overview  
In this course, we will use the tools of medical anthropology to explore how political, economic, cultural, social as well as biological factors shape how different groups of people encounter and experience health and illness. Our perspective will be cross-cultural, global, and comparative. Course themes include:

• The divergent meanings and experiences of health, illness, and healing in the United States and around the world;
• The role of culture – including both patients’ culture and the “culture of medicine” – in illness, health, and healing;
• The causes, consequences, and implications of health disparities associated with gender, socioeconomic class, race/ethnicity, and immigration status, among other factors;
• The relationships among a) health risk, b) social, political, and economic inequality, and c) structural violence in the U.S. and around the globe;
• Bioethical considerations and dilemmas; and
• Anthropological perspectives on the development and use of medical technologies.

Learning Objectives/ Benefits from Taking this Course  
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

• Understand the difference between disease and illness.
• Appreciate and understand how systems of medical diagnosis and treatment vary across sociocultural settings.
• Understand how sociocultural and political context shape health status and access to health care.
• Understand some of the primary ethical issues associated with access to health care and the fruits of biomedical research.
• Demonstrate the ability to use inter/multi-disciplinary strategies in approaching complex issues.

As a SMU-in-Taos course, this class will benefit from a small class size, an instructor who is familiar with the Fort Burgwin campus, readings with a focus on health/illness and New
Mexican relevance, and experiential learning through field trips and guest speakers from the local area.

**Additional UC Learning Outcomes**

**FOR PILLAR: Individuals, Institutions, and Cultures II**
- Students will be able to analyze different theoretical or interpretive perspectives in the study of individuals, institutions, and cultures that shape economic, political and social experiences.
- Students will be able to evaluate critically the research outcomes, theory, and/or theoretical applications in the study of individuals, institutions, and cultures that shape economic, political and social experiences.

**FOR PILLAR: Philosophical and Religious Inquiry and Ethics II**
- Students will be able to identify ethical issues within a particular domain, and to explain and evaluate responses to those issues in terms of both their factual and ethical presuppositions.

**FOR PROFICIENCY: Global Engagement**
- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the material culture, underlying values, beliefs, or practices that are central to the culture(s) being visited or studied.

**FOR PROFICIENCY: Human Diversity**
- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.

**Required Course Texts**


- Additional readings will be provided via Blackboard [BB]. Please check your email regularly for updates on readings.

**Absences**
Because this is an accelerated semester, attendance and class participation is crucial to doing well in this course, and missing even a single class will put you significantly behind. Any unexcused absences will be cause for a reduction in your “attendance and participation” grade. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. If you will not be able to attend a specific session, you must make arrangements with another student to get copies of notes, etc. Appropriate medical and family excuses will be accepted, with proof, in order to establish new dates for assignments.
Attendance and Class Participation

*Participation means being present in mind as well as in body.* Students are expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss the readings and the films that have been shown. Class participation grades will be based on the frequency, pertinence, creativity, and clarity of contributions in class. Comments must reflect critical thinking and must engage the course material. *Active participation is volunteered participation through discussion of assigned material.* In consideration for your fellow classmates, please do not come in late or leave early during class unless you have notified me beforehand.

Course Evaluation

Assignments must be turned in on time; for each 24-hour period an assignment is late, one full grade will be deducted (e.g., an “A” paper will become a “B” paper). Appropriate medical and family excuses will be accepted, with proof, in order to establish new dates for assignments.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and Class Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Cumulative)</td>
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Attendance and Participation (40%): Discussion-based activities will comprise a substantial amount of the course, so everyone’s participation is important! Participation includes actively engaging with the readings and discussing them in a productive manner during class, answering questions posed by the instructor in class, participating in small group work, participating in activities, and being respectful of divergent viewpoints. Your participation grade will also include quizzes, announced or unannounced, in-class or take-home, at the instructor’s discretion. In addition, you will be responsible for one reading presentation; at orientation, you will pick one “optional reading” from the course schedule to complete and present to your peers. Your grade will be based on how well you present the reading to your peers, relate the reading to other class readings/materials, and the discussion questions you come up with for your peers.

Breakdown for attendance and participation grade:
- Active class participation: 15%
- Quizzes: 15%
- Reading Presentation: 10%

Course Project (40%): See pages 8-9 of the syllabus for complete instructions.

Final Exam (20%): The final will be an in-class exam.

Course Format

Every day, there will be a lecture component along with some combination of a quiz, discussion, activity, or film that will illustrate the day’s topic. You are expected to participate in all discussions and activities, and this will be part of your “attendance and participation” grade! All assignments are due at the beginning of class.
**Prior to the beginning of the J-Term session, you will need to read the following book:**

All other assigned readings should be completed before the class meeting for which they are listed. All readings are required unless otherwise noted as Optional Reading.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and <strong>Assignments</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday Jan 4</td>
<td>What is Anthropology? What is Medical Anthropology?</td>
<td>• “Conceptual Tools: Belief and Healing” [BROWN pp. 122-123]</td>
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<td>• Konner, Mel. “Transcendental Medication” [BROWN—Ch. 13]</td>
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<td>• <strong>Decide on a health topic for your course project [in-class]</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday Jan 5</td>
<td>Illness Narratives and Explanatory Models</td>
<td>• “Case Studies in Explanatory Models” [BROWN—pp. 261-262]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Heurtin-Roberts, Suzanne and Efrain Reisin. “Health Beliefs and Compliance with Prescribed Medication for Hypertension among Black Women in New Orleans.” [BROWN—Ch. 29]</td>
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<td>• Optional Reading: Waxler, Nancy. “Learning to Be a Leper: Case Study in the Social Construction of Illness.” [BROWN—Ch. 18]</td>
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<td>• <strong>Turn in Part 1 of Course Project</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday Jan 5</td>
<td>The Culture of Biomedicine</td>
<td>• Working with the Culture of Biomedicine” [BROWN—p. 272-273]</td>
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<td>• Miner, Horace. “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema.” [BB]</td>
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<td>• Good, Bryon J. “How Medicine Constructs its Objects” [BB]</td>
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<td>Wednesday Jan 6</td>
<td>Western Shamans: Becoming a Biomedical Doctor</td>
<td>• Optional Reading: Klass, Perri. “Invasions.” [BB]</td>
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<td>• Taylor, Janelle S. “Confronting ‘Culture’ in Medicine’s ‘Culture of No Culture’” [BROWN—Ch. 32]</td>
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<td>• <em>The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down</em> [FADIMAN Ch. 1-7; Note: Review only, since this is assigned to read before the term]</td>
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<td>Day</td>
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| Wednesday   | Jan 6    | Native American Health                   | **In-class time to work on Part 2 of Course Project**  
Field Trip to Taos Pueblo!  
Reading TBA |
| Thursday    | Jan 7    | Cultures in Tension                      | **Turn in Part 2 of Course Project**  
*The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* [FADIMAN Ch. 8-end]; Note: Review only, since this is assigned to read before the term]  
Kleinman, Arthur and Peter Benson. “Anthropology in the Clinic: The Problem of Cultural Competency and How to Fix It” [BROWN—Ch. 33] |
| Thursday    | Jan 7    | Culture and Inequality; Structural Violence | Optional Reading: Sargent, Carolyn. “President, Society for Medical Anthropology Speaking to the National Health Crisis: Voices from Medical Anthropology” [BB]  
Farmer, Paul. *Infections and Inequalities*: Chapter 2 (optional) and Chapter 3 (required) [BB] |
| Friday      | Jan 8    | Ethics, Racism, and Medical Research     | Brandt, Allan. “Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study.” *Hastings Center Report* 8(6):21-29 [BB] |
| Friday      | Jan 8    | Applying Medical Anthropology            | Field Trip TBA                                                                      |
| Monday      | Jan 11   | Biomedicine, Technology, and the Body    | **Turn in Part 3 of Course Project**  
Lock, Margaret. “Inventing a New Death and Making it Believable” [BROWN—Ch. 24]  
*Optional Reading*: Rapp, Rayna. “Accounting for Amniocentesis” [BROWN—Ch. 21]  
Friese, Carrie, Gay Becker, and Robert Nachtigall. “Rethinking the Biological Clock: Eleventh-Hour Moms, Miracle Moms, and Meanings of Age-Related Infertility” [BROWN—Ch. 23] |
| Monday      | Jan 11   | Drugs and Risk                           | Garcia, Angela. “Regeneration: Love, Drugs and the Remaking of Hispano Inheritance” [BB]  
Singer, Merrill. “Why is it Easier to Get Drugs than Drug Treatment in the United States?” [BROWN—Ch. 11]  
*Optional Reading*: Singer, Merrill et al. “Why Does Juan...” [BB] |
Have a Drinking Problem? The Perspective of Critical Medical Anthropology” [BROWN – Ch. 35]
- **In-class time to work on Part 4 of Course Project**

| Tuesday Jan 12 (morning) | Globalization, Health, and Ethics | • **Turn in Part 4 of Course Project**
| Tuesday Jan 12 (afternoon) | Environmental Degradation and Health | Field trip/Guest Speaker TBA |
| Wednesday Jan 13 (morning) | Class Presentations | • **Part 5 of Course Project** |
| Wednesday Jan 13 (afternoon) | Final Exam | • (in-class) |

**OTHER CLASSROOM ISSUES**

**Computers and Cell Phones**
Computers may only be used in class for note-taking. This policy may change if computers become more of a distraction than a learning tool. All online connections must be OFF and cell phones silenced or put away for class. Students using the Internet or using their cell phones during class will lose participation points for the day.

**Academic Honesty**
Academic honesty is of utmost importance. Cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication are unacceptable behaviors and will not be tolerated. If a student is caught in an act of academic dishonesty, she/he will receive a 0 on the assignment and will be brought to the honor council. See SMU’s honor code: [http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/PCL_05_HC.asp](http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/PCL_05_HC.asp)

**Disability Accommodations**
Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit [http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass](http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass) to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

**Religious Observance**
Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing on the first day of class, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

**Suggestions for note-taking:**
1. Don’t write every word.
2. Develop a list of abbreviations that you can remember and then use it.
3. Write your notes in a way that gives you visual clues of what’s important. Major headings are in CAPS and start at the left. Names, vocabulary, and examples are all indented with a star or number separating them from each other.
4. Always leave the far left blank during class. You’ll use this when studying to put notes and arrows, etc.
5. Never doodle if you’re not acing the class. You may say it helps you think, but it’s distracting you – instead, review the previous sentences you wrote. If you’re bored, think up a question to ask the professor.
6. Talk to other students.
7. Talk to the professor. Professors usually go faster when students aren’t asking questions. They’re often happy to slow down when someone expresses interest in what’s being said. So in-class or after class, make yourself and your needs known.
8. If I repeat a term or concept, it’s important. Make sure you understand it. Ask for additional examples if needed.
9. Develop some short-hand, for example:

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<tr>
<th>w/</th>
<th>with</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anth</td>
<td>anthropology or anthropologist</td>
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<td>Ethn</td>
<td>ethnography or ethnographer</td>
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<td>wh/</td>
<td>which, what, when</td>
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*Items on syllabus are subject to change.*
Course Project Guidelines (40% of total grade)

For this project, you will pick a current health-related topic with an ethics focus to examine. You will explore this topic in-depth from a variety of different angles. I ask that you pick a relatively specific, focused topic. For example, the topic of “cancer” would be too broad, but “breast cancer funding” would be a more focused topic. I recommend you choose a topic that is appealing to you. For example, in previous years, I had a student athlete pick a topic on concussions in the NFL, a political science major who did her topic on the Affordable Care Act, a veteran who did his topic on PTSD, and a human rights major who chose the Death with Dignity Act for her project. Feel free to discuss a potential topic with me if you are unsure about it. Before selecting your topic, you should make sure there is sufficient information available on it. There are a total of five different assignments that make up this project. Each assignment is explained in detail below. Towards the end of the course, you will present your project to the class.

1. Choose a Health Topic
Pick a health topic, and in one to two paragraphs, explain why you chose this topic. Also, include a discussion of what you already know about this topic and what you hope to learn through this project. Pick a health topic that appears frequently in the news.

2. News Log: Three Newspaper Articles
Collect three published articles about your chosen health topic from major newspapers. News articles must be published within the past six months. Please submit URL links to electronic versions of the articles rather than hard copies. For each article, write a well-developed, thoughtful, paragraph-long log entry that explains:
• The overall point of the article
• Why the article is important
• How the article relates to our course (be sure to cite a class reading)

Technical Requirements:
• When citing the U.S. media, use major newspapers such as: the New York Times, Boston Globe, The LA Times, or the AP. The Dallas Morning News is also acceptable. I encourage you to use international newspapers, and I will accept a variety of international newspapers. If in doubt, ask in advance whether sources are approved.
• Carefully follow the following format for your three news articles:

[[Write the body of your log entry here. It should be a well-developed and well thought through paragraph—or more than one paragraph if you find it necessary. Two Paragraphs max.]]

3. Field Trip to Interview Community Members in Taos
For this assignment, we will take a fieldtrip off-campus. In a public area, you will approach three to four community members and ask if they would be willing to participate in a short
interview. The purpose of the interviews is to ask participants their opinions about the health topic you are researching and for you to practice your interviewing skills. Before the field trip, you will have time in-class to prepare your interview questions. Following the field trip, you will write a two-to-four page paper, double-spaced, summarizing the opinions of the community members you interviewed. You should also reflect on anything that surprised you in the responses you received and how well informed you think the opinions are of the community members you interviewed. Be sure to include notes/transcripts of the interviews you conducted along with your paper.

Follow the same format as Part 2 of the course project. However, you must cite different readings from Part 1 of your news log.

5. Class Presentation of What You Have Learned
Drawing on what you have learned in the previous four parts of the project, you will develop a creative way of educating your classmates about your health topic. A PowerPoint/Prezi presentation is acceptable, but feel free to get as creative as you want when developing a way to present what you have learned.

**Project Grading Breakdown:**
1) Health Topic--15 points
2) News Log (Part 1)--20 points
3) Field Trip and Interviews--25 points
4) News Log (Part 2)--20 points
5) Class Presentation--20 points
Total: 100 points