Course Description:
This course provides an introduction to the themes, theories, methods, and debates within medical anthropology. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the body, health, and medicine to understand that these are not “given” categories outside of questions/structures of culture and power. Topics include: cross-cultural understandings of health; biomedicine and health regimes as culturally contingent; embodiment of difference include race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability; biopolitics; and global and public health paradigms.

Course Requirements:
- Weekly Précis: Students will write a weekly one-page précis on the week’s readings. Students should tie together the readings, attempting to find a common thread(s). The précis should also include critical questions (i.e. questions that cannot be answered with a Google search) for the class. See the schedule for due dates and questions.
- Final Project: Students will write a 10-12 page integrative research paper on a topic of their choosing. This is an opportunity to go into greater depth, combining library research with in-class readings.
- Attendance and Participation: I firmly believe that students’ active participation—engaged assessments, cogent critiques—is necessary for a successful class. You all have important things to say! Attendance and participation will be graded accordingly.

Grading and Evaluation:
- Participation 30%
- Weekly Précis 30%
- Final Essay 40%

Course Learning Goals:
- Critically engage with readings on medical anthropology, health and culture, and global health
- Be able to situate biomedicine and other health cultures in historical and cultural context
- Identify theoretical frameworks for researching and understanding health and bodies
- Recognize the role of power, politics, states, and non-governmental actors in health and embodiment
- Draw connections between readings to understand ongoing debates
- Clearly present arguments and ideas in class discussions and coursework

Course Materials:
Most of the course readings will be available as PDFs on Classes V2 under the “Resources” section.

Required Texts:
Course Policies:
Attendance and Respectful Participation
Class attendance is mandatory, and your participation in class is important. Please complete each day’s assigned readings before coming to class, and bring electronic or hard copies of the relevant readings and your notes to class for reference. Come prepared to raise questions and exchange ideas with the group. It’s okay if you disagree with something from the readings, or with others’ comments during discussion—understanding different interpretations is part of what anthropology is about. Respectful disagreement can be productive for thinking through difficult issues, and this class is a safe space for sharing divergent viewpoints. Don’t be afraid to talk, and always be respectful of others. However, in order to facilitate a safe and comfortable learning environment for everyone, racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise harmful language will not be tolerated during discussions.

Please note that the use of laptops and electronic tablets is permitted during class. However, it is important that we focus on our discussions without interruptions or distractions. To that end, please use these devices only in service of the class. Moreover, CELL PHONE USE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Weekly Précis
Students will complete weekly one-page, single-spaced précis due Thursdays by 5 pm. The précis should begin with a brief summary of the readings for that week (M, W, F readings) and then develop connections between readings and how they relate to that week’s thematic module. Lastly, the précis will end with questions that the readings provoked. I take these précis very seriously, as should you. They help me to gauge your understanding of the materials as well as provide students with an opportunity to think deeply and critically about the materials. Again, this is not solely a summary of the readings, but an opportunity for you to create links and themes.

Final Paper
Students will write a 10-12 page integrative research paper on a topic of their choosing. I encourage students to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss a topic. This is an opportunity for students to draw on the theoretical approaches, themes, methodologies, and approaches highlighted in the readings. The paper is due on the last day of class, Friday August 4 by 5 p.m.

Timely completion of assignments is important. In accordance with Yale College policy, extensions will not be granted except under proven emergency conditions and with a note from your Dean. Unexcused late work will be marked down by half a letter grade for every day that it is late.

On Disability in the Classroom:
My aim is to make this course accessible and welcoming to all interested persons. If you have a disability, please let me know and I will do my best to support you. This goes triply for folks with non-apparent disabilities or who pass, mask, or compensate. No need to do that here. I will try my best to make the classroom accessible.

Office Hours and Consultations:
I am always happy to talk with you about the course, either via email or in person. Please make appointments to meet with me, and bring your ideas, questions, doubts, and/or rough drafts.
Academic Integrity:
I treat the issue of plagiarism very seriously. If you cite from a book, article, or web page, you must note the source in your paper and clearly mark the citation with quote marks "" or block citation styles. If you are unfamiliar with how to cite, consult http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources on this matter. For other writing resources, please see http://ctl.yale.edu/writing

I will fail any students who I catch plagiarizing (even on drafts or short assignments). Recycling material that you wrote for other classes is also plagiarism unless you clear it with me beforehand. Plagiarizing from yourself will get you failed in this course just as quickly as plagiarizing from other people. I reserve the right to submit any of your work (including drafts and informal pieces) to plagiarism search engines or sites. If I suspect plagiarism, I also reserve the right to give you a short quiz about your paper (if you wrote it, you should be able to handle with aplomb).

Course Readings:
Please note that this course has a moderate-heavy reading load, especially given the accelerated summer-session class schedule. It is important that students plan and pace their readings for the course.

Engaged reading practices such as taking notes, highlighting and underlining texts, annotating in the margins, and writing questions while reading are highly encouraged. We will go over some active reading strategies on the first day of class, but here are some quick tips:

• Take notes while reading
• Mark questions and key passages in the text
• Write down the article’s main points or arguments
• Compare author’s approach to other readings for that week
• Identify the author’s methodology (how did they research the topic?). Do the methods support the author’s claims?
• Do you find the arguments convincing? Why or why not?

If students are not managing to complete the reading assignments, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus. This includes, with advanced warning, changing reading assignments, instituting reading quizzes and/or changing the nature of reading response assignments (i.e. making them time, in-class writing exercises).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASS MEETINGS

Week 1: De-Centering Biomedicine as Culture
Learning Goals: Students will be able to unpack medical language and treatment paradigms and be able to identify cultural assumptions embedded in these regimes of care.

Monday July 3: Introduction to the Course

Wednesday July 5: “Speaking Science:” Biomedical Language and Metaphor
• Fadiman, Anne. 1997. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her
American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-31


First Precis Due Thursday July 6th by 5 pm

Friday July 7: Biomedicine as Culture

• Fadiman, Chapters 4-6, pp. 32-77


• Biomedicalization, Chapter 3 “From the Rise of Medicine to Biomedicalization” pp. 104-146

Week 2: Perspectives on Health and Illness

Learning Goals: Students will understand the connections between the cultural assumptions of biomedicine and how doctors and patients interact in clinical settings. Students will be able to explain, in anthropological terms, how and why doctors and patients may have divergent expectations and opinions regarding medical treatment and care and how these play out in medical encounters.

Monday July 10: Biomedical Encounters

• Fadiman, Chapters 9 to 11; pp. 106-153


Wednesday July 12: Interpreting Illness and Situated Knowledges

• Fadiman, Chapters 12-15 pp. 154-224


Second Precis Due Thursday July 13 by 5 p.m.

Friday July 14: Bridging the Gap?

• Fadiman, Chapters 17-19, Afterword pp. 250-288, 289-303


Week 3: Embodiment and Difference

Students will be able to explain medical representations of race, class, gender, sexuality, and
disability. They will be able to define intersectionality and explain how patients’ and doctors’ experiences and embodied subject positions influence medical encounters.

Monday July 17 Medicalizing Difference
- Karkazis, Katrina. 2008. Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experiences. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, Introduction (pp. 1-30) and Chapter Four “Boy or Girl? Bodies of Mixed Evidence and Gender Assignment” (pp. 89-132)

Wednesday July 19 Disciplining Race and Sexuality

Friday July 21 Disability and the Body
- Ralph, Laurence. 2014. Renegade Dreams: Living Through Injury in Gangland Chicago. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Introduction (pp. 1-18) and Chapter Four (pp. 119-139)

Week 4: Biopolitics
Students will be able to articulate the main tenets of biopolitics, including the emergence of medical technologies as modes of surveillance, the increased focus on population, and individual discipline.

Monday July 24 Introduction to Biopolitical Theory

Wednesday July 26 Disciplining Bodies
Fourth Precis Due on July 17 by 5 p.m.

Friday July 28 Biopolitics in Action

Week 5: Global Public Health and Medical Targets
Students will be able to situate themes discussed thus far (biomedicine, culture, biopolitics, power) within broader contexts of global health and humanitarian interventions. Students will be able to explain how transnational health interventions intersect with politics, capitalism, violence, and imperialism.

Monday July 31 Genealogies and Legacies of Global Health

Wednesday August 2: Global Health Inequalities

Fifth Precis Due on Thursday August 3 by 5 p.m.

Friday August 4 Transnational Politics of Health and Humanitarianism

Final Paper Due Today, August 4 by 5 p.m.