

Pardis Mahdavi, PhD
Pardis.Mahdavi@pomona.edu

Course Syllabus
E81.2314: International Health and Development

I. Course Overview

In this course, students will explore a variety of topics in international health – the cross-cultural study of determinants of health and disease, local constructions of illness and disorder, rituals and techniques of healing, and understandings of suffering. This class introduces a wide array of perspectives that are central to the discipline and have evoked much discussion in recent times. By focusing on diverse theoretical perspectives and approaches that have guided the formation of discourse on international health and development to the present, we will see the important ways in which public health has evolved and changed as scholars grapple with the current debates.

Over the past few decades, international public health has undergone a period of intense self-examination with regards to its own history and its use in the present day. This course seeks to have scholarly exchanges that are stimulating, thought-provoking and inspire students to see the relevance of public health to a variety of disciplines including international development, medicine, sociology and gender studies.

At the conclusion of this course, each student will be able to exercise the following skills:

- 1 discuss the central themes of international health and development as they are studied and in their historical context
- 2 understand the concept of culture, the way in which public health professionals study it, and its essential role in health and healing
- 3 describe how an internationally informed view of cultural and ethnic differences can generate solutions to problems of contemporary human existence
- 4 interact with current debates and critiques of international health and its sub fields
- 5 articulate basics of ethnographic methodology as a research strategy within the discipline

II. Student Assessment

The great majority of each student's grade will be derived from the final research project. Weekly attendance and class participation are absolutely vital to the functioning of the course and thus attendance will be taken at the start of every class.

Class Participation	10%
Response Papers	20%
Class Presentations	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Research Project	<u>40%</u>
	100%

A Note on Class Participation and Presentations: To encourage article-focused, class discussions, two students will be responsible for summarizing/critiquing the main points of that week's reading. The rest of the class will be responsible for preparing one critique, question, or summary point for each reading.

Response papers: 3 short essays (2-3 pages double spaced) each based on one week's reading will be due in class on the date for which that reading has been assigned.

Midterm exam: The midterm exam will test students' comprehension of major concepts in international public health and ask them to synthesize their learning by exploring various debates within the field. The exam will consist of one take home essay and some in-class multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

A Note on Late Assignments: Late assignments are strongly discouraged. To encourage adherence to the scheduled due dates, assignments will lose a half letter grade for each day late.

III. Course Texts

Whitaker, E. (Ed.). Health and Healing in Comparative Perspective. Prentice Hall, 2005.
(this will be our major textbook)

Fadiman, A. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997.

Scheper-Hughes, N. Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Mental Illness in Rural Ireland. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Bourgeois, P. In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Farmer, P. AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. (optional)

IV. Course Assignment/Reading Schedule

(Class 1) - Course Overview – Introduction to International Health and Healing

Miner, H. Body Ritual Among the Nacirema. American Anthropologist 58 (3): 503-507, 1956.

Leslie, C. “Backing Into the Future” (textbook pp. 5-13)

(Class 2) – Background on the Discipline

Agar, M. “Toward a Qualitative Ethnography” (1-13)

Ascencio, M. Machos and Sluts: Gender, Sexuality and Violence Among a Cohort of Puerto Rican Adolescents. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 13 (1): 107-126. 1999

Agar, M. “Recasting the Ethno in Ethno Epidemiology”

(Class 3) – Social Inequalities and Health

Marmot, M. The influence of income on health: Views of an epidemiologist. *Health Affairs*. March/April 2002: 31-46 (vol. 21, N. 2).

Chalmers, J. “Deprivation, Disease, and Death in Scotland: Graphical Display of Survival Cohort.” *British Medical Journal*. 323: 967-968, 2000.

J.W. Lynch, G.D. Smith, G.A. Kaplan, J.S. House, “Income Inequality and Mortality: Importance to Health of Individual Income, Psychosocial Environment, or Material Conditions,” *BMJ* 320: 1200-1204, 2000.

“Life at the Top” article from the *New York Times*

(Class 4) – Historical Causes of Health Disparities

B.G. Link and J. Phelan. Fundamental Sources of Health Inequities. in *Policy Challenges in Modern Health Care*, ed. D. Mechanic, L.B. Rogut, D.C. Colby, J.R. Knickmam, 2005, pp. 71-84, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Engels, F. “The Conditions of the Working Class in England”

Kilinenberg, E. “Dying Alone”

(Class 5) – Health and Development on the Streets of New York

Bourgois, P. In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Dunier, M. "Sidewalk"

*****Response paper #1 due no later than TODAY!**

(Class 6) – Transnational Health Concerns

Hirsch, J. A Courtship After Marriage: Sexuality and Love in Mexican Transnational Families

Phinny, J. "Rice is Essential but Boring, You Should Get Some Noodles"

(Class 7) – Health and Alternative Sources of Healing

Bates, D. "Why Not Call Modern Medicine Alternative?" (textbook pp. 29-41)

Whiteford, M. "Homeopathic Medicine in the City of Oaxaca, Mexico" (textbook pp. 53-60)

Van Blerkom, L.M. "Clown Doctors: Shaman Healers of Modern Medicine" (textbook pp. 95-95)

Forbes Brown, M. "Shamanism and Its Discontents" (textbook pp. 95-109)

(Class 8) – Midterm

*****Research question for final project due Thursday**

(Class 9) – Health, Human Rights, Equity

Jonathan Mann, Lawrence Gostin, Sofia Gruskin, Troyen Brennan, Zita Lazzarini, and Harvey Fineberg, "Health and Human Rights," in Jonathan Mann, Michael A. Grodin, Sophia Gruskin and George J. Annas, *Health and Human Rights: A Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 7-20.

Lincoln C. Chen and Giovanni Berlinguer, "Health Equity in a Globalizing World," in *Challenging Inequities in Health: From Ethics to Action*, Timothy Evans et al. (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 34-44.

Richard Parker, "The Global HIV/AIDS Pandemic, Structural Inequalities, and the Politics of International Health," *American Journal of Public Health* 92(3):343-346, 2002.

Rosalind Petchesky, *Global Prescriptions: Gendering Health and Human Rights*, London and New York: Zed Books, 2003, pp. 76-124.

***** Response paper #2 is due no later than TODAY!**

(Week 10) – Globalization, Global Health and Inequalities

Farmer, P. “Social Scientists and the New Tuberculosis” (textbook pp. 373-384)

Krieger, N. “Does Racism Harm Health?” (textbook pp. 426-435)

Castells, M. “The Rise of the 4th World”

Doyal, L. The Political Economy of Health. Boston: South End Press, 1979. Chapter 3, Health, Illness and Underdevelopment, pp. 96-137.

Recommended:

Farmer, P. AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

(Class 11) – Ethnography of Disease

Scheper-Hughes, N. Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Mental Illness in Rural Ireland. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Fadiman, A. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997.

****** Response paper #3 due no later than TODAY***

(Class 12) – Presentation of Final Research Projects

******Final papers due no later than 5 p.m. 6/21***