

HI 290: Health and Healing in America

This course will consider the history of medicine and medical education, nursing and nursing education, healing practices from colonial times to the present, and the growth of the American hospital and health care systems. More broadly, the course invites students to understand how views on disease and healing have changed over time in the United States, and to explore historically constructed meanings of sickness and health in our past and present. **Meets LASC Requirements:** Thought Language & Culture (TLC), Individual & Community Well-Being (ICWB), and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

Objectives and Learning Goals

This course helps you make sense of something complex, ever-present, and often taken for granted: the existence of an immense, highly technological medical services delivery system in the United States. You will trace its underlying values, its rich and contingent history, and how its development was shaped within the current of American history. Disease and health are universal human considerations, but each individual experiences and interprets them through modes of perception, beliefs, and practices which are historically contingent. Thus the way that an individual experiences, defines, and responds to "health" or "disease" is tightly bound up in historical context. Illuminating that historical context in past times will help you understand its reality in your own lives. You will explore these interconnected dimensions by comparing your own understandings of health, wellness and disease with those of specific people in the American past.

These goals will be accomplished as you

- participate in the semester-long process of deconstructing or breaking down this complex system into its constituent parts and understanding where, when and how each developed;
- make informed comparisons between past ideas and practices of health & healing and those of today; and
- approach people, events, and ideas of the past with scholarly tools to understand what health and sickness meant in past times.

As you understand how people in the American past defined and responded to disease and illness, your understanding of the US experience is enriched. You will also understand and apply historical sources and methods, and will begin the process of *thinking like historians* through focused research, writing and seminar-style discussion. Being able to think like a historian will help you regardless of your major or your future career plans.

Required Readings

Leavitt, Judith. *Sickness and Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health*, Rev. ed. University of Wisconsin Press, 1997. ISBN 0299-15324-X
Oshinsky, David. *Polio: An American Story*. Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN 019-515294-8
Porter, Roy. *Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine*. W.W. Norton, 2004. ISBN 039-332569-5
Penney, Darby. *The Lives they Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic*. Bellevue Literary Press, 2009. ISBN 1-934137-147

Additional readings will be placed as PDF files on Blackboard or on the course blog. You will need (free) Adobe or FoxIt reader to access them.

Assignments and Grading

In a seminar like this one, involvement and participation are critical to your success and to your learning. Consistent attendance, preparation, and speaking up in discussion are essential components of the course. Our reading load will be substantial. Your A&P (Attendance and Participation) grade of 25% includes attendance, your contributions to the quality of class discussion, writing discussion questions when assigned to do so, and any in-class writings like response papers or “minute essays.”

Mid-term, you’ll conduct a research project investigating a disease and its treatment in the American past. This project includes a written report, a poster, and a mini-academic “conference” in which you present your findings orally to the class. (25%)

Through writing assignments, you communicate knowledge gained, develop your own independent thinking, and offer your informed perspectives on the past. There are 4 papers: “Disease Detective” based on investigation in primary sources (10%), a policy position paper (10%), an abstract of a scholarly article (5%), and a reflective paper looking back over your learning from the entire semester (5%).

Finally, over the course of the term you will assemble a set of flash cards of key terms, ideas, concepts, people, and historical facts related to the course content. The cards themselves are worth 10% of your grade and so is the final exam based on them.

A&P	Includes attendance, discussion, in-class writing, response papers and discussion questions	25
Disease Project	Written Report, due 11/8	15
	Poster and Oral Presentation, due 11/3	10
Papers	Disease Detective, due 9/29	10
	Article Abstract, due 10/18	5
	Position Paper, due 11/22	10
	Reflective Paper, due 12/8	5
Exam	Flash Cards, due 12/6	10
	Final Exam, 12/15	10
		100

The Fine Print

1) Technology is delightful and useful. However, some of it detracts from our learning environment. Silence your cell phones before entering class. No texting in class. Laptops are welcome but only for taking notes or accessing course materials – not for checking Facebook, email, or surfing the web.

2) Historical writing involves meticulous citation and careful sourcing. Plagiarism is totally unacceptable. All writing assignments *must* cite the sources of any information, quotations or ideas which are not your own work using standard citation styles (APA, Chicago Style or MLA). Let me be very clear. You cannot clip and

paste text from the internet into your papers and pass it off as your own writing. You cannot turn in a paper someone else has written or that you have bought online. Plagiarized work (or exam cheating) will automatically get a zero on the assignment and may cause you to fail the class, at my discretion. **I take such violations very seriously.** Please familiarize yourself with and follow the college policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

3) If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise), and you need a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with me as the semester begins so we can design a solution that will help you be successful in the class.

4) My office hours are Mondays 1-2, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30, Thursdays 1-2:30 & by appointment.

Syllabus

#	Date	Topic	Reading	What's Due
1	Wed 9/8	A Short History of Medicine + Flexner Report	Porter, Blood & Guts (one assigned chapter); excerpts from Flexner Report, in class	
2	Mon 9/13	What is Disease?	Porter, Blood & Guts (the rest)	Flashcards from your chapter
3	Wed 9/15	Social Healers	Ulrich [#4] and "August 1787; Exceeding Dangerously Ill"	
4	Mon 9/20	Sickness and Health in late 18 th century Maine	Primary Sources: Ballard's Diary	
5	Wed 9/22	Curing Lewis and Clark	Steele, "Lewis and Clark: Keelboat Physicians"	
6	Mon 9/27	Sickness and Health on the Trail of the Corps of Discovery	Primary Sources: Lewis and Clark Diary	
7	Wed 9/29	Sickness and Health in America: An Overview	Leavitt [Intro]	Disease Detective
8	Mon 10/4	Medical Science and Therapeutics	Warner [#5], Numbers/Warner [#8]	
9	Wed 10/6	Victorian Institutions and Change Over Time: Dispensaries and Hospitals	Pictorial Essay (295-307); Rosenberg [#19], Vogel [#20]	
	Mon 10/11	No Class – Columbus Day		
10	Wed 10/13	Epidemics and their Social Impact	Leavitt [#25], Duffy [#26]	
11	Mon 10/18	Frontier Diseases	Steele, "The Metamorphosis of American Medicine in the 19 th Century" (PDF)	Article Abstract
12	Wed 10/20	Polio 1916 v. Flu 1918	Rogers [#35] + an article on the 1918 flu (TBA)	
13	Mon 10/25	Polio I	Oshinsky, Ch 1-4	

#	Date	Topic	Reading	What's Due
14	Wed 10/27	Polio II	Oshinsky, Ch 5-11	
15	Mon 11/1	Polio III	Oshinsky, Ch 12-16	
16	Wed 11/3	Conference Day		Poster & Presentation
17	Mon 11/8	The Third Party (tal #392 Act II)	Numbers [#17] + Kaiser Overview (PDF)	Written Report
18	Wed 11/10	How We Got our System	Stevens, "History and Health Policy in the US" (PDF)	
19	Mon 11/15	Spiraling Costs	TAL "More is Less" (audio)	
20	Wed 11/17	Health Care Reform	Pro/Con websites, TBA	
21	Mon 11/22	We Debate Health Care	No reading; we will view part of the film <i>Sicko</i>	Position Paper
	Wed 11/24	No Class - Thanksgiving		
22	Mon 11/29	Civil War Nursing I	Oates, <i>Woman of Valor</i> excerpt (PDF)	
23	Wed 12/1	Civil War Nursing II	Alcott, <i>Hospital Sketches</i> ; Steele, "The Professional Nurse" (PDF)	Honors: Book Review
24	Mon 12/3	Forgotten People and Places	Penney and Stastny, <i>The Lives They Left Behind</i> (entire)	
25	Mon 12/6	Mental Illness	Grob [#21] + one Elissa Ely	Flash Cards
26	Wed 12/8	Wrap-Up Day; Exam Prep		Reflective Paper
	Wed 12/15	Final Exam 12:30 pm		

Assignments and Grading - Honors

Honors work isn't necessarily more work, it's deeper/better work. My standards for grading take into account that your intellectual capabilities and core critical writing/thinking skills tend to be stronger. You expect more from yourselves and I reward your accomplishment accordingly.

To that end, honors students have a slightly different grading scale from the other students. For example, I already assume you'll attend and participate, so that is a smaller part of the grade. Likewise, I'm less concerned about your surface-level recall learning, so I place less weight on the flash cards and more weight on assignments that challenge you to read and analyze on a deeper level.

Your A&P (Attendance and Participation) grade of 20% includes attendance, your contributions to the quality of class discussion, writing discussion questions when assigned, and any in-class writings like response papers or "minute essays."

Mid-term, you'll conduct a research project investigating a disease and its treatment in the American past. This project includes a written report, a poster, and a mini-academic "conference" in which you present your findings orally to the class. (25%)

Through writing assignments, you communicate knowledge gained, develop your own independent thinking, and offer your informed perspectives on the past. Your papers will be: "Disease Detective" based on investigation in primary sources (10%), a policy position paper (10%), an abstract of a scholarly article (5%), and a reflective paper looking back over your learning from the entire semester (5%). You'll have one additional reading (a book of your choice from a list I'll provide), and a book review based on that text (10%).

Over the course of the term you will assemble a set of flash cards of key terms, ideas, concepts, people, and historical facts related to the course content. The cards themselves are worth 5% of your grade and the final exam based on them is worth 10%.

A&P	Includes attendance, discussion, in-class writing, response papers and discussion questions	20
Disease Project	Written report	15
	Poster and oral presentation	10
Papers	Disease detective	10
	Position paper	10
	Article abstract	5
	Reflective paper	5
	Book review	10
Exam	Flash cards	5
	Final Exam	10
		100