

GLOBAL HEALTH AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY (ANSC  
148)  
WINTER QUARTER 2018



INSTRUCTOR:

DR. SAIBA VARMA

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APPOINTMENT

TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

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UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL APPRENTICE:

ANNETTE CHENG

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OFFICE HOURS: WEDNESDAYS 2-3 PM, FAIRBANKS COFFEE CART IN FRONT OF YORK HALL

I. COURSE OVERVIEW

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“It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society” – Jiddu Krishnamurthi

In contemporary American society, Western medicine—or *biomedicine*, as we will refer to it in this course—is seen as offering quick, effective, and technologically advanced solutions to pain and suffering. *Biomedicine* is a medical system that privileges the physiological and biological causes of disease. As a clinical science, biomedicine is usually seen as culture-less, as universally effective on all bodies. But what happens when Western medicine goes “global,” that is, when it encounters cultural values or beliefs that conceptualize illness, healing, or the body in different ways? Is medicine itself “cultural,” and if so, how? In this course, we will examine how people experience, encounter, confront, and use global health interventions across the globe, and we will appreciate why an anthropological approach to global health is critical to help improve these interventions.

Most readings in this course will be drawn from a subfield of anthropology called *medical anthropology*. By reading anthropological accounts called ethnographies, we will see how conceptions of the body, the causes and meanings of illness, and encounters with health institutions, vary and shift over time and across different contexts. One of the takeaways from this course is that it is possible—indeed, imperative—to understand health, illness, and medicine, not only by looking inside individual bodies, but by situating individual lives within broader social, historical, and political contexts. For students interested in careers in medicine, global health, or public health, medical anthropology offers an interpretive approach to both expert *and* patient perspectives of medicine, the body, and healing. Throughout the quarter, we will develop an understanding of medicine, culture, and healing as dynamic concepts that interact in unpredictable ways, yet are critical to

therapeutic outcomes. We will see how cultural values are, in fact, matters of life and death for people all over the world.

## II. REQUIRED READINGS

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Sherine Hamdy and Coleman Nye. 2017. *Lissa: A Story about Medical Promise, Friendship and Revolution*. University of Toronto Press. ISBN: 1487593473.

Available at the UCSD bookstore.

## III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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The key to success in this course is to attend all lectures, keep up with the readings and assignments, participate in discussions, and ask questions.

### 1. In-class quizzes – 100%

The graded assignments for this course will consist of **four (4) quizzes**, which will occur during class time. The quizzes capture whether you are keeping up with the readings and how well you understand and respond to the key concepts of the course. Each quiz will count as **25%** of your final grade. In order to prepare for the quizzes, you should keep track of the main concepts and arguments of each article; how the article/argument relates to other readings that week; and how the reading relates to our class as a whole.

There will be **no make-up** for missed quizzes unless you have an excused absence. Excused absences are given only: (a) with presentation of a valid medical or emergency excuse in writing (written by a medical doctor although no specific identifying information regarding the condition should be included); (b) with an emergency in the family; or (c) if you are involved in activist or organizing activities on campus that force you to miss class. **Excused absences must be discussed in advance with Dr. Varma**. Any other failure to take a quiz will result in no credit.

### 2. Extra credit

There will be several extra credit opportunities throughout the quarter, which I will announce in class. To receive +1 point extra credit, you must email me a **one page** (double spaced) **summary** of the event you attended, including how it relates to our course discussion so far. All summaries must be emailed to me by the day following the lecture or event to receive full credit. **Please note that you can only do a maximum of 2 extra credits.**

## IV. POLICIES

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*Preparing for class:* Please bring all readings with you to lecture, either in paper form (preferable), on a tablet, or on your computer. **A smartphone is not an acceptable reading device.** You should take notes on each assigned reading and keep track of keywords and vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar. These notes will help you prepare for lecture, discussion, and the quizzes. The onus is on you to take detailed notes of the reading and lecture. I will not be posting powerpoints from class onto Tritoned, as part of your responsibility for this course is to attend lecture and take appropriate and detailed notes for yourself.

Although we are in a large classroom, this course will consist of a combination of lectures and in-class discussions. This means that you may be called on to participate in the form of individual, pair, or group discussion groups. I also encourage you to ask questions, synthesize readings, and offer analyses at any point.

Rather than expect that the professor will impart knowledge to you, you will also be responsible for generating course content.

*Classroom conduct:* To facilitate a vibrant and respectful environment, and to maximize your own learning potential, only students sitting in the last two rows of the lecture hall may use laptops. Computer use in the lecture hall should be strictly limited to consultation of course materials and composition of class notes. I encourage you to take handwritten notes in lecture because these have been shown to improve learning and retention.

Please put away your cell phones when class begins. Anyone found texting, browsing the internet, or talking on the phone while class is in session will be asked to leave. You are invited to create an environment of mutual respect and intellectual productivity by listening and speaking with an open mind. You should feel free to approach me if you feel anyone’s participation in the course, including your own, is being impeded.

*Accommodations:* Anyone in need of classroom or exam accommodations for a disability is encouraged to contact the Office for Students with Disabilities and should inform me as soon as possible.

*Communication:* The best way to communicate with your TAs and me is via email. However, before you email any of us, please check the syllabus to make sure that the answer to your question cannot be found there. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Email is also the best way to set up an appointment with me in case you cannot make office hours. All emails should have a specific subject line that indicates the purpose and context of the email, including a reference to the course title (ANSC 148); a salutation, such as “Dear Professor X”; proper grammar and spelling; and a signature, such as “sincerely” or “thank you.”

V. GRADES

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A 93-100	A- 90-92	B+ 87-89	B 83-86
B- 80-82	C+ 77-79	C 73-76	C- 70-72
D+ 67-69	D 63-66	D- 60-62	F 0-59

VI. COURSE SCHEDULE

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Please complete each day’s readings **in the order** they appear on the syllabus.

PART I: FOUNDATIONS OF MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Week 1: Introduction: Whose Global Health?

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 1/8	<i>Introduction to course and syllabus</i>  Watch: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amCyFbTIYCg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amCyFbTIYCg</a>
Thurs. 1/10	Barbara Ehrenreich, “Rituals of Humiliation” in <i>Natural Causes</i>

Week 2: Explanatory Models of Disease

DATE	READINGS DUE

Tues. 1/15	Elliot Mishler, "Viewpoint: Critical Perspective on the Biomedical Model"
Thurs. 1/17	Michel Foucault, <i>The Birth of the Clinic</i> , pages ix-xiv only.  John Long, "Foucault's Clinic"  <b>Extra credit opportunity:</b> Lesley Jo Weaver, <i>Sugar and Tension: The Intersection of Diabetes and Mental Health among Women in India</i> 4:00-5:30 pm, SSB 107

Week 3: The Medical Gaze and its Limits

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 1/22	Susan Greenhalgh, <i>Under the Medical Gaze: Facts and Fictions of Chronic Pain</i> , Part I "Understanding Chronic Pain"
Thurs. 1/24	Cecilia Van Hollen, "Invoking <i>Vali</i> : Painful Technologies of Modern Birth in South India"  <b>Quiz #1</b>

Week 4: Becoming a Medical Expert

Tues. 1/29	Allen Smith and Sherryl Kleinman, "Managing Emotions in Medical School"
Thurs. 1/31	Claire Wendland, "Moral Maps and Medical Imaginaries: Clinical Tourism at Malawi's College of Medicine"  Courtney Martin, "Western do-gooders need to resist the allure of 'exotic problems' - <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/apr/23/western-do-gooders-need-to-resist-the-allure-of-exotic-problems?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Tweet">http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/apr/23/western-do-gooders-need-to-resist-the-allure-of-exotic-problems?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Tweet</a>

Week 5: Migrant and Refugee Health

Tues. 2/5	"Misleading headline claims thousands of caravan migrants have HIV, tuberculosis, other diseases" - <a href="https://www.politifact.com/facebook-fact-checks/statements/2018/dec/04/puppetstringnewscom/misleading-headline-claims-thousands-caravan-migra/">https://www.politifact.com/facebook-fact-checks/statements/2018/dec/04/puppetstringnewscom/misleading-headline-claims-thousands-caravan-migra/</a>  "Doctors Don't Know Anything: The Clinical Gaze in Migrant Health" - Seth Holmes
Thurs. 2/7	Sarah Willen, "Darfur through a Shoah Lens"  <b>Quiz #2</b>

PART II: GLOBAL HEALTH HISTORIES AND PRACTICES

Week 6: Colonial Legacies

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 2/12	Jean Comaroff, “The Diseased Health of Africa: Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body” in <i>Knowledge, Power and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life</i> , Pp. 305-329  Laura Seay and Kim Yi Dioone, “The long and ugly tradition of treating Africa as a dirty, diseased place”
Wed. 2/13	Quarterly Conversations in Global Health – extra credit opportunity
Thurs. 2/14	Kalindi Vora, “Re-imagining Reproduction: Unsettling Metaphors in the History of Imperial Science and Commercial Surrogacy in India”

Week 7: Structural Violence

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 2/19	Paul Farmer, “An anthropology of structural violence”
Thurs. 2/21	Fanny Chabrol, “Viral Hepatitis and a Hospital Infrastructure in Ruins in Cameroon”  Watch: Gallstones and the Colonial Politics of the Future/Billy-Ray Belourt <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ohSatwGtl">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ohSatwGtl</a>

Week 8: Lissa

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 2/26	<b>Quiz #3</b>  Veena Das, <i>Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty</i> , Chapter One
Thurs. 2/28	Lissa, Part I  S. Lochlann Jain, “Cancer Butch”

Week 9: Lissa

DATE	READINGS DUE
Tues. 3/5	<i>Lissa</i> Part II  Sherine Hamdy, “When the State and Your Kidneys Fail”
Thurs. 3/7	Julie Livingston, “Pain and Laughter”

Week 10: Global Health Futures/Alternatives

Tues. 3/12	<i>Lissa Part III</i>  Sherine Hamdy and Soha Bayoumi, "Egypt's Popular Uprising and the Stakes of Medical Neutrality"
Thurs. 3/14	<b>Quiz #4</b>  Conclusion
Tues. 3/19	<b>Other extra credit opportunities:</b>  Friday, March 15: Lucinda Ramberg, "Dalit Futures and Sexual Modernity," 12-2 pm SSB 107  Friday, March 22: Radhika Govindarajan, "More-than-Human-Democracy: On the Political Lives of Cows, Rivers, and Mountains in Contemporary India," 4-6 pm SSB 107.