

ANTHROPOLOGY 3HI3: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF HEALTH, ILLNESS AND HEALING

Summer 2021

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Lecture: Asynchronous; posted to
Avenue on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

Office: Virtual office
Office Hours: Wednesdays from 1:00-
2:00pm EST via Zoom (see link on
A2L). Email for appointment.

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Course Description

This course examines fundamental themes, theories, and concepts in medical anthropology. This course intends to deepen students' understandings of health and illness as a social, cultural, political and historical phenomenon through readings, film, and other media. Some of the major topics we will cover include: cross cultural definitions of health, illness and disease; bodies and embodiment as a means of understanding lived experience; health care seeking processes and healing practices; therapeutic modernism; health inequalities; and structural violence.

This course is delivered through asynchronous lectures, in which we will consider how the anthropology of health intersects and enhances our understanding of the mind, body, and healing. Note that course materials have been altered to account for virtual learning and to ensure its completion is more manageable during these times.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Describe core methods, theories, and concepts in medical anthropology by completing the readings and attending or watching recorded lectures.
- Explain the anthropology of the body and its connection to explanations of illness and disease by completing and submitting the reading response assignment.
- Identify health inequities and their causes in different populations through engagement with assigned readings, films, and other media.
- Outline the contributions that important medical anthropologists have made to the development of this field by engaging with readings.
- Develop skills in critical analysis as they relate to experiences and meanings of healing and illness in particular contexts through readings and written assignments.

Required Materials and Texts

There is **no required text** for the course. All articles and media assigned are posted under "Content" on Avenue to Learn.

Assigned readings should be complete before watching lecture recordings.

Class Format

1. Asynchronous lectures are posted biweekly to Avenue to Learn on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at 1:00pm EST. There are no tutorials for this course.
2. This course consists of **two synchronous lectures**. One on **Tuesday, June 22** to welcome students to the course and a second on **Tuesday, August 3** to engage in a discussion-based and learning activity. Both Zoom links are posted in the Avenue announcements.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Participation – 10%
2. Reading Response Assignments – 20%
3. Midterm – 30%
4. Final Exam – 40%

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation (10%)

Each week, you will respond to the following three statements to help you reflect on course materials (posted under “Content” in Avenue to Learn).

1. What is one thing that you will take away from this lecture?
2. What is one thing you found confusing (or difficult to understand) in this lecture?
3. To create one multiple-choice question that focuses on some of the tougher or more important concepts you encountered in this week’s lessons. Please make sure that you include three or four plausible options for the multiple choice question.

Your responses will also give the instructor a sense of your understanding of the course content.

These are a completion activity and there are no right or wrong answers. More details will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Reading Response Assignments (20%)

You will complete at least two of three reading response assignments during the term. The assignments are 500 words (in academic writing style) to a topic that will be posted on Avenue to Learn. You will have one (1) week to complete each assignment.

****I recommend**** that you complete all three (3) assignments during the term. In this case, only your top two marks will count towards your final grade. Reading response assignments will also be graded according to a detailed rubric, which will be posted to Avenue to Learn. More details about the assignments will be provided the first week of class on Avenue to Learn.

Midterm Exam (30%), July 13

This test consists of multiple-choice questions, and you will have 2-hours to complete the test. It covers all assigned readings, lectures, and films up to the midterm test date. More information will be provided well in advance of the test and the instructions will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Final Exam (40%), August 5

This test consists of multiple choice and short answer questions, and you will have 2-hours to complete the test. It is not cumulative. More information will be provided well in advance of the test and the instructions will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1

June 22 – What is Medical Anthropology? (Live Lecture)

Readings: None.

Please read the syllabus thoroughly. Zoom link on Avenue to Learn.

June 24 – Illness Experiences

Readings: Kleinman, A. (1988). The Meaning of Symptoms and Disorders. In *The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing, and the Human Condition*. Pp. 3-30. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Film: “Alicia’ Mercado’s Story,” from Worlds Apart (12 minutes & 56 seconds).

Week 2

June 29 – Explanatory Models of Illness

Readings: Laws, M. (2016). Explanatory Models and Illness Experience of People Living with HIV. *AIDS and Behavior*, 20(9): 2119–2129.

Film: “Mohammad Kochi’s Story,” from Worlds Apart (14 minutes & 5 seconds).

Reading assignment #1 opens in Avenue at 10:00am EST.

July 1 – No Class

Readings: None.

Week 3

July 6 – Anthropology of the Body

Readings: Scheper-Hughes, N., & Lock. M. (1987). The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 1(1): 6-41.

Oths, K. (1999). Debilidad: A Biocultural Assessment of an Embodied Andean Illness. *Medical Anthropological Quarterly*, 13(3): 286-315.

Optional – YouTube: Embodiment in Anthropology (15 minutes & 40 seconds).

The Dropbox closes for reading assignment #1 at 10:00am EST.

July 8 – Ethnomedical Systems

Readings: Foster, G. (1976). Disease Etiologies in Non-Western Medical Systems. *American Anthropologist*, 78(4): 773-782.

Evans-Pritchard, E. (1976). The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events. In *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*. Pp. 18-32. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Film: Shadows and Illuminations (35 minutes).

Reading assignment #2 opens in Avenue at 10:00am EST.

Week 4

July 13 – Midterm

Our Avenue to Learn will have a discussion forum for students to ask questions about the midterm exam in advance.

July 15 – Medical Pluralism in World Perspective

Readings: Whitaker, E. (2003). The Idea of Health: History, Medical Pluralism, and the Management of the Body in Emilia-Romagna, Italy. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 17(3), 348-375.

Moynihan, R., Heath, I., & Henry, D. (2002). Selling Sickness: The Pharmaceutical Industry and Disease Mongering. *British Medical Journal*, 324 (7342): 886-891.

The Dropbox closes for reading assignment #2 at 10:00am EST.

Week 5

July 20 – Local Biologies and Anthropological Perspectives

Readings: Lock, M., & Nguyen, V. (2010). Local Biologies and Human Difference. In *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*. Pp. 83-109. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell Ltd.

Lock, M., & Kaufert, P. (2001). Menopause, Local Biologies, and Cultures of Aging. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 13: 494-504.

Optional – YouTube: Research with Japanese Women on Menopause (32 minutes & 12 seconds).

July 22 – Causes of Health Disparities

Readings: Farmer, P. (2010). On Suffering and Structural Violence: Social and Economic Rights in the Global Era (1996, 2003). In Haun Saussy (ed.), *Partner to the Poor: A Paul Farmer Reader* (pp. 328-349). Berkeley: University of California Press.

YouTube – A Reflection of Growing Inequality (11 minutes).

Reading assignment #3 opens in Avenue at 10:00am EST.

Week 6

July 27– The Anthropology of Environmental Health

Readings: Kopnina, H. (2016). Asthma and Air Pollution: Connecting the Dots. In *A Companion to the Anthropology of Environment Health*. Merrill Singer (ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 458-482.

YouTube – Air Pollution in Mexico City (10 minutes & 57 seconds).

July 29 – Biopolitics and the State

Readings: Nguyen, V. (2010). *Biopower: Fever, Tribes, and Bulldozers*. In the Republic of Therapy. Pp. 111- 136. Durham: Duke University Press.

Optional - Nichter, M. (2008). Why is Research on Local Illness Categories Important? In *Global Health: Why Cultural Perceptions, Social Representations, and Biopolitics Matter*. Pp. 69-89. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

The Dropbox closes for reading assignment #3 at 10:00am EST.

Week 7

August 3 – Discussion of Bending the Arc (Live Lecture)

Readings: None.

Film: Netflix – Bending the Arc (1 hour, 41 minutes & 54 seconds).

Zoom link on Avenue to Learn.

August 5 – Final Exam

Our Avenue to Learn will have a discussion for students to ask questions about the final exam in advance.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

You will complete at least two of three 500-word response papers in academic writing style. This is not a research or essay paper. You will be provided with the topic and materials that you will respond to. Once completed, your assignments will be submitted to the Dropbox in Avenue to Learn as a non-encrypted PDF in MS Word or compatible document. It must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with standard one-inch margins. A rubric outlining the expectations of the assignments will be provided in Avenue to Learn. All submitted assignments will be automatically filtered through Turnitin.com.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Assignments are due per the schedule outlined in the course syllabus. Students are expected to notify the instructor ahead of deadlines when they encounter challenges. Students who do not submit their assignment(s) on time will be graded zero after five calendar days, inclusive of weekend days.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Any students experiencing circumstances interfering with deadlines outlined in the course syllabus will contact the instructor immediately to discuss their situation and decide on the course of action.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ADVISORY STATEMENTS

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.