

## ANTHROP 2U03E *Plagues and People* Spring 2017

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### Office Hours:

Tuesday 4:00-6:00 pm and by appointment

### Class Schedule:

**Tuesday & Thursday 6:30-9:30 pm**

**Classroom: DSB AB102**

### Course Description

ANTHROP 2U03 *Plagues and People* is a consideration of the role played by infectious disease in human evolution. The social and biological outcomes of major epidemics and pandemics, past and present, will be explored using the Anthropology of Infectious Disease theoretical framework. Further, the course will examine the intersection of bioscience aspects of disease and pathogens; social determinants of health historically and currently; big events such as environment catastrophes and war; and listen to the voice of the lived experience of plagues.

We live in an era obsessed with killer germs, epidemics and pandemics. There is a growing sense of vulnerability as a growing list of pathogens becomes visible to investigators. Epidemics and plagues, however, are not new; they have influenced the course of human history for thousands of years. This course considers the origins, antiquity, and impact of plagues on human societies from an anthropological, biosocial perspective.

The class sessions begin with an exploration of models and general principles of infectious disease to establish a framework for understanding plagues. The focus then shifts to a discussion of specific plagues. We will consider historic, contemporary, and newly-identified plagues with a view to understanding why they emerge, how their occurrence is intimately linked to human behaviour, and how they transform societies.

Our goal is to understand the relationship between human behaviour and the emergence of epidemics; appreciate the importance of studying historic plagues for understanding current and future plagues; and have an anthropological framework for interpreting the biosocial origins and consequences of plagues.

**Format:** Lectures, readings, films with discussion groups to actively engage with the topics.

### Grading:

*This course will be graded using a mid-term and a final exam*

**Mid-Term Exam:** Mid-Term Exam

**40 %**

**Final Exam:** Multiple Choice Exam

**60%**

### Course Text:

Slack, Paul. 2012. *Plague: A Very Short Introduction* Toronto: Oxford University Press

See additional readings in class outline.

**Important Notes about the Course:**

Avenue to Learn will be used to serve as the method of communication for this course.

Summarized Lecture Materials will be posted on our course Avenue **AFTER** each class: PowerPoint presentations will not be posted for use during classes.

This course engages you in the active learning classroom.

**Class cancellations**

In the unlikely event of a class cancellation, students will be notified on Avenue to Learn, please check before leaving for class.

**Class attendance and preparedness:**

Uneven class attendance is *very* likely to have a profound impact on your ability to thrive in the course. Make every possible arrangement to ensure that you are able to attend classes. Ensure that you come fully prepared for class by engaging with the assigned materials.

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.

**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.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

\*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link (Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)

**Courtesy in Communications:**

All e-mails to your instructor must be written in full sentences (i.e. no point form, no text-messaging short form), and must contain a subject line that includes the course designation 2U03.

Be professional, courteous, and respectful in all communications. Your instructor will respond to your e-mail in a timely manner.

Do not assume that you will hear back immediately, or at any time of day or night, especially if you send an e-mail outside of regular business hours. Please provide your full name.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and 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.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Accommodation Students**

Please come to office hours prepared to discuss accommodation requirements prior to the second class to ensure your needs are fully understood.

### **AODA**

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact Marcia Furtado at 905-525-9140 extension 24423 or email [furtam1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:furtam1@mcmaster.ca)

### **Missed Academic Term work**

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:
  - The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
  - The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from ‘less than 30%’ to ‘less than 25%’ of the course weight.
  - The ‘one MSAF per term’ limit is retained.
  - As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.
- Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here: [http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests\\_for\\_Relief\\_f\\_or\\_Missed\\_Academic\\_Term\\_Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_f_or_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)

### **Courtesy in the classroom:**

Our demanding course schedule requires your attention, note taking and participation. Please turn off your cell phones, and refrain from non class related web-surfing during lecture.

**Class Schedule, Topics and Readings:**

Day	Topic	Materials and topical focus
Tuesday June 20	Plagues as milestones in the human experience	Defining the Anthropology of Infectious Disease Biocultural/Biosocial Understanding Chapter 1. Singer, Merrill. 2015. <i>The Anthropology of Infectious Disease</i> . Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press
Thursday June 22	What is a Plague? Terms of reference and theories from an anthropological perspective	Omran, Abdel-Rahmin. 1971. The epidemiologic transition: a theory of the epidemiology of population change <a href="http://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/58102">http://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/58102</a> Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 1. Plague, What is in a name?
Tuesday June 27	Epidemics, Endemic and Pandemic	The overview of disease, terminology and conceptual frameworks Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 2. Pandemics and Epidemics
Thursday June 29	The Black Death: the historic/social/cultural context	Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 4. Private Horrors
Tuesday July 4	Black Death in Art: How Plagues have changed cultural discourse through images and symbols	Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 6. Enduring Images
Thursday July 6	The Black Death: the modern implications	Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 3. Big Impacts "The Black Death Decoded" <a href="http://www.nature.com/news/2011/111025/full/478444a.html">http://www.nature.com/news/2011/111025/full/478444a.html</a>
Tuesday July 11	Active participatory mid-term review	Summing up the important focus of the Black Death
Thursday July 13		<b>Mid Term Exam (40%) location TBA</b>
Tuesday July 18	White Plague: Droplet Transmission and the lungs	David M. Morens. "At the Deathbed of Consumptive Art." Emerg Infect Dis. 8 (2002)
Thursday July 20	Secret Plague: Horizontal and vertical transmission and the politics of human sexuality	Brandt, Allan M. 1978 <i>Racism and Research</i> Axis Sally <a href="https://vimeo.com/40177310">https://vimeo.com/40177310</a>
Tuesday July 25	Speckled Plague: Eradication programs as a global endeavour	Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 5. Public Health
Thursday July 27	The Blue Death: Water, toxicity and the cultural biosphere	<a href="http://globalhydration.com/resources/waterbone-disease">http://globalhydration.com/resources/waterbone-disease</a>

Tuesday Aug 1	Plagues Among us: Viral Panic in the new millennium: Factors that underlie the modern plague lived experience and continue to capture our attention, such as Zika and Ebola.	Slack, Paul. 2012. Chapter 7. The lessons of histories
Thursday Aug 3		<b>Final Exam Multiple Choice questions (cumulative course content) 60% location TBA</b>