

ANTHROPOLOGY 4S03: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Fall 2017

Schedule: Wednesday 8:30-11:20am

Room Number: LRW 1056

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 12-1pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an intensive research and writing-focused seminar for 4th year honours anthropology students. Each year, this class is designed around creating and publishing a body of original research on the anthropology of infectious disease. This year we will be putting together a special issue of NEXUS, McMaster's open access peer reviewed student anthropology journal.

The provisional title of this year's project is "*Infectious diseases as agents of change*". It will focus on the ways in which pathogens and humans have interacted in order to facilitate both biological and cultural adaptations to the impact of infectious diseases on human societies, past and present. Because we are putting together an issue of a journal, the theme is very broad. This allows you to focus on researching and writing on any topic that you would like that is related to the anthropology of infectious disease. Articles will need to be framed within anthropological perspectives and ways of writing and thinking, but I encourage you to be creative in your choice of topics – I want you to be able to write about something that interests you! In order to make a valuable addition to the existing literature on the anthropology of infectious disease, each article will need to contribute something unique – this could be a topic that has not previously been investigated in anthropology, a novel argument, or a new perspective on an issue that has been of interest to anthropologists. Each individual student will write their own chapter, but the class is meant to be a collaborative forum where you can discuss your ideas and help one another to work through issues and to review and edit your work.

COURSE GOALS

The primary goal of this course is to produce an issue of an academic journal, to which you will each contribute a research article written on the topic of your choosing. Through this process, you will conduct research, produce a professionally written article, and gain experience with the publication process. NEXUS is an open access journal, and you will have the opportunity to finish the course with a peer reviewed publication that is freely available to other scholars worldwide. The class will develop the table of contents, write the articles, provide peer feedback on one another's work, and format and publish the completed issue. I will edit the content and manage the journal platform.

Another major goal of the course is to gain experience with all aspects of the process of publishing a journal article. This includes research, writing, submission, peer review, editing, copyediting, and formatting. Using NEXUS's online platform, you will have the opportunity to review one another's work, as well as to receive feedback from external peer reviewers. You will receive constructive comments on your work from multiple sources, and will learn how to respond to this feedback and work through multiple rounds of revisions and edits. Gaining experience in providing constructive comments to your peers, and in not only recognizing problems in others' work but also determining how to solve them, will help you to improve the clarity and organization of your own written work.

CAVEAT:

This is an extremely demanding course! It is not a regular seminar class, but is labour-intensive and relies heavily on your self-directed learning. Producing a publication-worthy article in the short span of about 10 weeks requires you to put in a lot of work outside of class time, and can be extremely stressful. There is a **strict set of deadlines** for submitting material on your chapter, and you will have to stick to this schedule if you would like your article to be included in the special issue. If you feel that you cannot achieve the goals or deadlines established for each week, you should drop this course as soon as possible.

But, if you are in a position to stick with this course and **MEET THE DEADLINES**, you will gain valuable experience with collaborative research and the publication and peer review processes! You will greatly increase your knowledge about anthropological approaches to the study of infectious diseases, and will improve your abilities to write and to edit. At the end of the course, you will have a peer reviewed publication to add to your CV, and a special issue of an established journal to show off to your family and friends. The huge amount of work that you are expected to put into this course will, if you are able to complete it, also have significant rewards.

FORMAT

Because of the nature of the course, the format of our meetings will change from week to week as the research process proceeds. Most of the classes will be research meetings where we discuss how the articles are going, trouble shoot, brainstorm, problem solve, peer edit, and share information and sources.

A lot of information sharing and discussion will also take place through the course's Avenue site, as well as through the NEXUS online platform (<https://journals.mcmaster.ca/nexus>).

COURSE SCHEDULE – There will be NO EXTENSIONS on deadlines!

Week 1 (September 6) – Introduction

- Discussion of course expectations, issue theme, and possible article topics

Week 2 (September 13) – **Commit to an article topic**

- Discussion of formulating good research questions, effective research techniques, and abstract expectations

Week 3 (September 20) – **Submit article abstract** (up to 500 words)

- Abstract should outline your main research question, any other questions you will address, your theoretical perspective, how you plan to do this (your data and methods), and any provisional findings you have from the research you have done so far

Week 4 (September 27) – Research meeting

- Feedback on abstracts, discussion of moving forward with research strategies, extended outline expectations

Week 5 (October 4) – Submit extended outline of chapter

- Extended outline should be up to 2500 words, outlining the direction your research is going in and providing a road map for the draft of your paper (expanding on the research question(s), methods, and provisional findings from your abstract)

READING BREAK – October 11 (no class)

Week 6 (October 18) – Research meeting

- Feedback on extended outlines, discussion of research and writing issues and strategies

Week 7 (October 25) – Submit first draft

- Exchange of drafts for peer editing, discussion of peer editing process and expectations

Week 8 (November 1) – Research meeting - Peer editing

- Meeting and discussion of peer and instructor feedback, research and writing issues, revision strategies

Week 9 (November 8) – Submit edited draft based on peer feedback

- Second drafts will be sent out for peer review – discussion of peer review process

Week 10 (November 15) – Research meeting

- Discussion of strategies for receiving and responding to feedback, goals for the final stages of research and writing

Week 11 (November 22) – Research meeting

- Feedback from reviewers – discussion of revision strategies

Week 12 (November 29) – Submit text of final draft

- Submission of the final draft should include a breakdown of reviewer comments and an explanation of which changes you chose to make and those you didn't, and why

Week 13 (December 6) – Research meeting

- Final stages of putting together the issue: copyediting and formatting of final drafts

COURSE EVALUATION

Participation/Attendance – 30%

Initial Stages of Article Production (Abstract, Outline, Initial Drafts) – 30%

Final Article – 40%

SOME REFERENCES TO GET YOU STARTED

Becker, H. (1986). *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Farmer, P. (2001). *Infections and inequalities: The modern plagues*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Herring, D. A., & Swedlund, A. C. (2010). *Plagues and epidemics: Infected spaces past and present*. Oxford: Berg.

Inhorn, M. C., & Brown, P. J. (1990). The anthropology of infectious disease. *Annual Reviews of Anthropology*, 19, 89-117.

Singer, M. (2015). *The anthropology of infectious disease*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Trostle, J. A., & Sommerfeld, J. (1996). Medical anthropology and epidemiology. *Annual Reviews of Anthropology*, 25, 253-274.

THE UNIVERSITY REQUIRES INSTRUCTORS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ON COURSE OUTLINES:

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 course 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 their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies>.

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.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES EMAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email 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 reply at his or her discretion.**

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with special learning needs are asked to contact the instructor no later than the second week of classes. You must have written confirmation from Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Students can contact SAS to arrange for special accommodation for writing exams. They also provide or assist students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, and Classroom Accommodations. Tel: 905-525-9140, x. 28652. Email: sas@mcmaster.ca. Website: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>.

MCMASTER STUDENT ABSENCE FORM (MSAF) POLICY

- 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 (**NOTE**: This means that no components of this course are eligible for MSAF).
 - 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 for Missed Academic Term Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)