

CULTURE, HEALTH AND DIVERSITY

Term1

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Course Description

Culture is one of the determinants of health. People's understanding and experiences of health, illness and health care are greatly influenced by their cultural beliefs; and culture informs the construction of the health and social systems that respond to people's health needs. Hence, the critical understanding of the intersection between culture and health, and the complexities of culture is relevant to the development of any effective health program. Using the concept of culture as an integral framework for understanding people's health behaviors, this course discusses the cultural role of institutions and healers, construction of health risks and the moral dimensions of cultural beliefs and the impact these may have on influencing health behavior.

Since culture permeates several areas of our daily lives, this seminar will build on students' lived experiences and examples from the local and global community, to learn how the concepts they have learned could be applied to real-life situations.

The learning modes will predominantly comprise of brief introductory overviews, group discussions, out of class experiential learning and class presentations.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- To articulate the key notions and complexities of culture, its diversity, pluralism and how it intersects with health.
- To examine the concepts, and tools that are used in examining the relationship between culture and health.
- Apply the theoretical concepts to critically analyze the approaches used in current public health practices.
- Through reflecting on their own cultural lens, foster cultural awareness for future health researchers and practitioners

Required Materials and Texts

1. Edberg M. (2013) Essentials of Health, Culture, and Diversity. Understanding people, reducing disparities. Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC. Burlington, MA
2. Electronic copies of all other required reading (i.e. scholarly journal articles) are available on the McMaster library system.

Class Format

This is a seminar course and will employ a mixture of learning strategies. These will include in class, traditional lectures, guest lectures, student-led discussions as well as an experiential learning aspect.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Class participation and attendance: 15%
2. Introspective Reflection paper: 20%
3. Group project: 30%
4. Final Essay: 35%

Course Evaluation – Details

Class attendance and participation (15%), due on Various dates

Participation will be evaluated in 2 parts; attendance and contribution to class discussion; facilitation of class seminar.

a) Class attendance and how much you contribute to the class discussion (5%)

This is a seminar course, hence class attendance is mandatory and your participation in the class discussion is of great benefit to everyone's learning. Remember you have to be present in class to be able to contribute. To facilitate this; you will select any 5 weeks (excluding the week you are facilitating) out of the 13 weeks to complete your reflective question assignment. **On the Monday before the class** of the weeks you have selected, you will submit 2 written questions that highlight your understanding of the readings in relationship to the topic for the week. These will be submitted on avenue).

Additional Contribution will involve:

- Coming to each class prepared
- initiating a question/discussion, based on the questions; providing necessary information or feedback; providing examples; summarizing a discussion; and encouraging others in class.

You are requested not to use your phones. Computers should only be used for note taking. Inappropriate use of the two during the seminar will count as negative participation and will impact your participation grade. You will each evaluate your participation at the end of each class.

b) Facilitation of seminar discussion (10%)

Starting from week 3, students will take turns in facilitating the seminar discussions. During the first two classes, students will form groups. They will choose a week where there will lead a seminar discussion. This will involve students: providing a summary of the readings and how the readings relate to the topic we are discussing; and developing a case study (or video clip) and questions; based on the readings; which will facilitate further discussion and learning.

The quality of the case study and questions will be evaluated in terms of:

- Alignment with seminar objectives;
- Ability to link the ideas within the different readings

- Degree to which the questions facilitate engagement in discussions

Assignment/test 2: Introspective Reflection paper (20%), due October 3rd

This paper will focus on the material covered to date. The purpose of the paper is to help you reflect on your **individual “cultures”** and **how they may influence your health, behaviors** and your **perception of the “others”**. **Based on the material covered in class** to date (and your understanding of the definitions of culture, health and ethnomedical systems and how we acquire our “cultures”), you will develop a six-page, double-spaced paper. While independent writing is encouraged, you may consider the following questions as a guide for your reflection:

- How do you define culture? In what ways does culture influence health?
- What are your cultural beliefs in relationship to health? What is your definition of health? When is one healthy? What causes ill health? How can health be restored or improved? What institutions are responsible for healing? Use illustrative examples when discussing these questions.
- **Reflecting on the literature on how we acquire our cultures**; discuss how you acquired these cultural beliefs;
- Using explicit examples from what you have learned about other cultural beliefs in relationship to health, compare your beliefs with that of another culture. After describing the “other” culture in detail, discuss what ways are they similar or different from your cultural health system.
- Reflect on the ways in which this discussion contributes to your understanding of health, culture and diversity.

The paper should not exceed **six pages** (double-spaced). While this is a personal reflection, you are still expected to use the literature to support some of your thoughts (e.g. literature on how we learn our cultures would be relevant). You will be expected to use 2-3 additional sources of literature (outside the course readings) when writing this paper.

Assignment 2: Group project (30%),

The purpose of this group project is to enable students to observe how a specific organization has integrated culture in their programming. At the beginning of the course, students will be introduced to potential organizations with which they could work. Students will also be asked to identify any organization they and their groupmates could potentially work with (this should be approved by the course instructor).

After an introduction to the key concepts in culture, diversity and health; students will be required to work with the selected programs. Students' participation will involve:

- 1) Actual presence at the organization (for at least 10 hours over the semester)
- 2) Identifying the different “cultures” represented in the program
- 3) Observing and participating in the programs (e.g. structured fitness or activity sessions).
- 4) Interviewing adult participants and program staff individually or in groups.
- 5) Reviewing program materials, general and program policies, program plans, to understand how culture is conceptualized and integrated.

- 6) Meeting with Supervisors or Manager to discuss their perspective.
- 7) Providing a summary of how culture is integrated into programs and opportunities to better integrate culture.
- 8) Identifying challenges and areas of concern where culture is not being considered and could be impacting people.

Based on their collective findings, students will develop a comprehensive report on all the above aspects. This comprehensive report will include a (1) literature review (10%) due October 29th; their understanding of the program that includes discussions with the program manager in order to develop a comprehensive report with recommendations on integrating culture into the program (10%) due on November 19th. They will also develop a poster which they will present to the organization they are working with (10%) due on November 26th.

This will be a group grade

Hard copies of the papers should be submitted in class and an electronic copy online.

Assignment: Research essay (35%), due December 10th

Literature review (5%) Final paper (30%)

During week 8, students will randomly select a health/ aging issue where culture and diversity are relevant (e.g. reproductive health, substance use, mental health, end-of-life, sexuality). Based on a review of the relevant literature, students will use the theoretical tools we have covered in class to engage in an in-depth discussion of the relevance of culture, and how culture might impact the selected health/aging-related issue. Students will then identify one local or international organization/ program that addresses the selected issue and conduct an “evaluation” of the degree to which the program integrates a cultural and/or diversity perspective, based on the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout the course. After the evaluation, students will propose explicit strategies through which the selected program can effectively augment culture, and diversity aspects in their programming.

To facilitate this, students will conduct a literature review on their selected topic and submit it as early as possible. The Literature review will account for 5% of the total grade. The final essay requires you to consult **at least ten scholarly sources published between 2009- 2019** (e.g. scholarly journals, research reports, and/or books).

Students will search and summarize the relevant literature in a four-page, double-spaced document which they will **submit online** at the end of the class time on December 10th.

More details of the essay will be discussed in class.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Sept. 3)

Self-reflection assignment

Readings:

None

Notes: Refer to ATL for details for this exercise

Week 2 (Sept. 10)

Course overview and Defining culture and Health: Concepts, rationale and complexity

Readings:

- 1) Gregg, J., & Saha, S. (2006). Losing culture on the way to competence: The use and misuse of culture in medical education. *Academic Medicine*, 81, 542-547.
- 2) Foronda, C. L. (2008). A concept analysis of cultural sensitivity. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 19, 207-212
- 3) **Textbook, Chapters 1 & 2**

Week 3 (Sept. 17)

Cultural Health systems

Readings:

- 1) Foster GM. 1976. "Disease Etiologies in Non-Western Medical Systems." *American Anthropologist* 78:773-82.
- 2) Häuser, W., Hansen, E., & Enck, P. (2012). Nocebo Phenomena in Medicine: Their Relevance in Everyday Clinical Practice. *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International*, 109(26), 459–465. <http://doi.org/10.3238/arztebl.2012.0459>
- 3) **Textbook, Chapter 3**

Week 4 (Sept. 24)

Cultural systems of psychology and mental health

- 1) George E.V Positive mental health: is there a cross-cultural definition? *World Psychiatry*. 2012 Jun; 11(2): 93–99
- 2) Sotero, M. 2006. "A Conceptual Model of Historical Trauma: Implications for Public Health Practice and Research." *Journal of Health Disparities and Research Practice* 1(1): 93-108.
- 3) **Textbook, Chapter 4**

Week 5 (Oct. 1)

The relationship of etiology to morality in Cultural beliefs and practices related to health

- 1) Corrigan, p.w. & Watson a.c. Understanding the impact of stigma on people with mental illness
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1489832/pdf/wpa010016.pdf>
- 2) Kleinman, Arthur and Rachel Hall-Clifford. Forthcoming. Stigma: A social, cultural, and moral process. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 63(6). <http://jech.bmj.com/>
- 3) Courtney; W.H. (2000) Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: a theory of gender and health. *Social Science and Medicine* 50 (10): 1385–1401
- 4) **Textbook, Chapter 5**

Week 6 (Oct. 8th)

Culture, healers and the institutions of health

Readings:

- 1) Bilby KM. & Handler JS. (2004) "Obeah: Healing and protection in West African slave life." *The journal of Caribbean History* 38(2):153-183
- 2) Homola S. (2006) Chiropractic: History and overview of theories and methods. *Clinical orthopaedics and related research* 444:236-242
- 3) Tafur MM, Crowe & Torres (2009). A review of the Curendesimo and health practices among Mexicans and Mexican- Americans. *Occupational Therapy International* 16(1): 82- 88
- 4) **Textbook, Chapter 6**
Notes: [**Reflection paper due**]

Week 7 (Oct. 15th)

Reading Week

Week 8 (Oct. 22nd)

Culture dimensions in public health and Related programs

Readings:

- 1) A Framework to Evaluate the Cultural Appropriateness of Intervention Research
Western Journal of Nursing Research December 1, 2012 34: 1002-1022

Notes: [Guest speakers from various organizations- HCCI, McMaster diversity office, YWCA case introduction etc. and overview of group project]

Week 9 (Oct. 29th)

Integrating cultural dimensions in Public health and Health promotion interventions

Readings:

TBD depending on students' projects

Notes: **[Literature review for group project due]**

Week 10 (Nov. 5th)

Integrating cultural dimensions in Public health and Health promotion interventions (Case study on culture integration):

Readings: TBD depending on students' projects

Notes: **[Group project]**

Week 11 (Nov. 12th)

Integrating cultural dimensions in Public health and Health promotion interventions (Case study on culture integration):

Readings: TBD depending on students' projects

Notes: **[In class reflection on learning]**

Week 12 (Nov. 19th)

Integrating cultural dimensions in Public health and Health promotion interventions (Case study on culture integration)

Readings: TBD depending on students' projects

Notes: **[Group report presentation (Organizations); Group report due]**

Week 13 (Nov. 26th)

Integrating cultural dimensions in Public health and Health promotion interventions (Individual Cases)

Notes: **[Group Poster presentation]**

Week 14 (Dec. 3rd)

Review and wrap up.

Course Policies

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

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”.

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.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is

subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Course Modification

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. If any 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.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

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 behavior 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 types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity), located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

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 credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. [Student Accessibility Services](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity) can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity) policy.

If you require this course outline in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society (ext. 27227 | e-mail: hasdept@mcmaster.ca).

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 requiring a RISO accommodation 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.

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.

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.