Health, Disease, and Healing II:

Medicine and Public Health in Modern History

Official Course Description, Designations, Requisites, and Attributes:

Medicine in Europe from the 18th century to mid-20th century, investigating changes in disease and demography, state interest in health care, the medical professions, and both scientific and alternative medical ideas.

Requisites: Jr st
Course Designation: Breadth – Humanities
Undergraduate General Education
Level - Intermediate
L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S
Repeatable for Credit: No

Instructional Mode: Face-to-face

Since the eighteenth century, western biomedicine has become increasingly interwoven with science and technology. The mapping and classification of the human anatomy, the discovery of a microbial universe, the development of modern diagnostic and therapeutic technologies, and the increasing professionalization of medical practice have all contributed to dramatic successes in the struggle against disease. But to what extent are they responsible for significant improvements in public health? What other, more mundane transformations have also contributed to the improvement of the public’s health? This course explores these questions by setting modern medicine and public health in their historical and social contexts, with a concentration on Europe since about 1750. Major foci include changing approaches to the body and its ailments; the relationships among medicine, health, and the state; the politics and economics of sickness and health; and popular responses to medicine.

Our meetings will include both lecture and discussions. Your regular attendance and active, informed, and regular participation count for 20% of your final grade. Each student will be required to take the lead in starting discussion once during the semester, and must submit at least three discussion questions to me in advance (no later than 10 am on the day of the class). There will also be two short papers (~ 5
pages) based on course reading material, each of which constitutes 20% of your grade. The final written requirement is an original research paper of 10 to 12 pages (plus bibliography), which will constitute 40% of your grade.

This course meets as a group for two 75-minute sessions per week and carries the expectation that you will spend an average of 3 hours outside of class for each class period. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of 6 hours per week for reading, writing, and preparing for discussions.

The course is graded on a GPA scale as detailed below. Your final grade will be a weighted average of your grade for each assignment.

A: 3.76-4.0
AB: 3.26-3.75
B: 2.76-3.25
BC: 2.26-2.75
C: 1.76-2.25
D: .76-1.75
F: 0-.75

Research paper

The major requirement of this course is an original research paper on a subject of your choice based on primary sources. I have designed the parameters of the assignment in a manner that brings this course into compliance with the writing-intensive course requirements of many medical schools’ admissions policies.

The paper must be 10 to 12 pages in length (double-spaced). In addition, it must include a bibliography listing your sources and other works cited. You may use any citation style you wish, but please be consistent. The topic must cover some aspect of medicine or health in modern (post-1789) Europe or the United States. You must submit a written paper proposal that includes the following information: a clear identification of the topic the paper will explore, an explanation of how the topic relates to the major themes of the course, and an indication of the kinds of sources you will use to support your argument. This is not a detailed bibliography: simply indicate the types of sources that you think will constitute the bulk of your evidence (for example, medical journal articles, historical public health surveys, novels or memoirs).

The deadlines for the research paper are as follows:

13 Feb.: Paper proposal due
3 March: Bibliography due
2 April: Draft due
7-10 April: Individual paper consultations
4 May, 9:45 am: Final paper due

The research paper will comprise 40% of your final grade.
Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Distinguish primary from secondary sources
- Recognize the utility of humanistic methods for the study of medicine and public health
- Develop critical thinking skills through techniques of close reading and written analysis
- Understand essential developments in the evolving relationship between medicine and public health in modern societies.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.
The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

All reading materials are available on the course’s Canvas site, along with the syllabus, slides, and assignments. Assignments will be posted no later than two weeks before the assignment deadline. Slides will be posted AFTER the lecture/discussion to which they are linked has taken place.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Introduction**

**Tues., 21 Jan.**—Introduction

**Thurs., 23 Jan.**—Disease, Illness, and Public Welfare: Introducing the Concepts


**Enlightenment in Theory and Practice**

**Tues., 28 Jan.**—Beginning with the Body


**Thurs., 30 Jan.**—Medicine before Modernity

Tues., 4 Feb.—Medical Science before Scientific Medicine: Statistics and Experiments


Thurs., 6 Feb.—Toward a Healing Profession


Contagion and Illness, Place and Race

Tues., 11 Feb.— Colonial Medicine and the Civilizing Mission


Thurs., 13 Feb.— Society and Sickness in an Industrializing Europe


PAPER PROPOSAL DUE VIA CANVAS

Tues., 18 Feb.— Death, Disease, and the Social Environment


Thurs., 20 Feb.— Sanitation in Medicine and Public Health


**FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE VIA CANVAS, THURSDAY, 20 FEBRUARY**

**Recasting Disease: Infection and Vulnerability in a Universe of Germs**

Tues., 25 Feb.— Rethinking Contagion


Thurs., 27 Feb.— A Gendered Revolution? Women in Medicine


**The Twentieth Century: Sickness and Health in a Technological Era**

Tues., 3 March— Devastation and Healing: The First World War


**PAPER BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE VIA CANVAS**

Thurs., 5 March— Infection and Invisibility: Two Stories of Sexual Health


**Tues., 10 March**— Health and Breeding: Prevention and Politics


Explore:

Jacqueline Wernimont and Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Rubicon*  
https://scalar.usc.edu/works/eugenic-rubicon-/index

**Thurs., 12 March**— Sickness, Health, and Wealth


George Orwell, “How the Poor Die,” in *MWC*, 368-75

**TUES., 17 MARCH AND THURS., 19 MARCH: SPRING BREAK**

**Tues., 24 March**— State Solutions in West and East

Manchester *Guardian* archive: The Beveridge Report


**Thurs., 26 March**— Why are We So Healthy?


Tues., 31 March— Technology’s Promise and Costs


Thurs., 2 April— NO CLASS MEETING; RESEARCH PAPER DRAFT DUE VIA CANVAS. PLEASE SIGN UP FOR INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PAPER CONSULTATIONS

7-10 APRIL: INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PAPER CONSULTATIONS

Tues., 7 April— Better Living Through Chemistry


Elizabeth Siegel Watkins, “Reconceiving the Pill: From Revolutionary Therapeutic to Lifestyle Drug,” in Therapeutic Revolutions, pp. 43-64.

Thurs., 9 April— AIDS and the Triumph of Disease


Tues., 14 April— Why are We So Sick?


SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE VIA CANVAS TUESDAY, 14 APRIL
Thurs., 16 April—Reemergence


**Health and Vulnerability in the Contemporary World**

Tues., 21 April—Chernobyl and the End of the Cold War


Thurs., 23 April—Refugees, Asylum, and Biological Citizenship


Tues., 28 April—Race, Class, and Vulnerability in a Changing Europe


Thurs., 30 April—Conclusions


**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE 4 MAY, 9:45 AM, VIA CANVAS**