International Health and Global Society

SARS in East Asia and Canada; AIDS and malaria in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America; malnutrition and deficiency diseases in the developing world; stress, heart disease, and eating disorders in the United States and Europe: wherever we turn, we are assaulted by these images. The Internet, television, and print journalism ensure that we are never unaware of the health crises that besiege our globalizing society, to the extent that we see these problems as a symptom of globalization itself.

Yet such concern is far from new. Historians and epidemiologists have long recognized that the “microbial unification of the world” dates at least to the Black Death of the fourteenth century. Throughout the nineteenth century, cholera devastated South Asia, Europe, and the United States; a century ago, bubonic plague and flu each killed millions globally. In this course, we will draw on a wide range of historical and anthropological materials and methods to examine the history of public health and medicine as international phenomena. Focusing on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we will explore topics such as the connections between global pandemics of infectious disease and European colonial expansion; strategies for curtailing the spread of disease across borders; historical and contemporary anxieties about the health consequences of global migration; and the emergence of a global medical marketplace. Particular themes include the connection between health and wealth; the relationship between culture and medical ideas and practices; and the tensions of practicing medicine in multicultural settings.

Course Format and Evaluation Criteria:

The course is divided into units that address particular sets of problems and themes concerning international health. Our meetings will follow a seminar format, based on discussions of the course readings. Your attendance and informed participation are therefore crucial both to the group and to your performance in the class, as they constitute 20% of your final grade.

Written work includes a map assignment and three short reaction papers (2-3 pp. critical responses to selected readings), each of which constitutes 10% of your grade. For the remaining 40% of your grade, you are responsible for researching and writing one longer (~15 pp.) paper, in which you will explore the historical development of a contemporary problem or issue in international health. Topics must be approved in advance. The first draft of the paper must be turned in by Wednesday, November 24; the final draft is due on Tuesday, December 21.
Readings:

Course readings will be found in a packet, available in the office of the Department of the History of Science, 7143 Social Science Bldg. Because of the seminar format of the course, it is imperative that you complete the readings before the class meeting for which they are scheduled.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, I urge any student with a disability to inform me as soon as possible, so that I may make any necessary accommodations to ensure full participation and facilitate educational accessibility. All such requests are confidential.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with UW policies on plagiarism and to assume full responsibility for academic integrity in all coursework.

Meeting schedule:

Thurs., Sept. 2—Course introduction

Tues., Sept. 7—Contact and Conflict: Medicine, Culture, and Common Sense


Thurs., Sept. 9—Medical Geography and European Expansion: Mapping Disease Landscapes


MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS, THURSDAY, SEPT. 9.
Tues., Sept. 14— God and Medicine: Missionary Healing and Tropical Disease


Thurs., Sept. 16— The Diseased Heart of Africa? Agents and Epidemiology


Tues., Sept. 21— Mediated Chaos: Representing Disease in a Global Society


Thurs., Sept. 23—The Political Economy of Sickness and Health: Development and Disease in the Twenty-First Century


FIRST REACTION PAPER DUE IN CLASS, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23.

Infectious Disease and Global Connections: Case Studies

Case 1—Smallpox: Disease and Power, Domination and Eradication

Tues., Sept. 28—Civilization and Conquest: Smallpox and Colonial Domination


Thurs., Sept. 30—Research Meeting with Micaela Sullivan-Fowler (Ebling Library)

Tues., Oct. 5——The End of Infectious Diseases? The Ideology and Politics of Eradication


Thurs., Oct. 7—Return of the Pox? Eradication and the Specter of Bioterror


**Case 2—Cholera and Plague: Colonial Epidemiology between Lab and Field**

Tues., Oct. 12—Cholera and Plague as Diseases of Empire


**RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE IN MY MAILBOX, WEDNESDAY OCT. 13, 5 PM.**

Thurs., Oct. 14—Ethnoepidemiology: Disease, Population, and Culture


Tues., Oct. 19—Plague on the Ground: Epidemic Control in India


David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body*, 200-239.
Thurs., Oct. 21—Globalization and the Return of the Plague


Case 4—HIV and the Politics and Economics of Global Health

Tues., Oct. 26—AIDS: History, Politics, and Epidemiology


Thurs., Oct. 28—AIDS and Its Precedents: Reliving the Dark Ages


Tues., Nov. 2—Fighting the Pandemic: Politics and Finances


SECOND REACTION PAPER DUE IN CLASS, TUESDAY NOV. 2.

Sickness, Healing, and Conflict: Mental and Maternal Health

Thurs., Nov. 4—Madness and Empire: Mental Illness and the Politics of Colonial Medicine

Tues., Nov. 9—The Stresses of Modernity: Mental Health and Postcolonial Development


Thurs., Nov. 11—Therapy, Pluralism, and Globalization: Case Studies


Tues., Nov. 16—Missionaries, Motherhood, and Medicalization


Programs and Strategies for Global Health and Development

Thurs., Nov. 18—From Sanitary Policing to Alma Ata: Organizing International Health


Tues., Nov. 23—Politics, Healing, and Development: NGOs and World Health


FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPERS DUE IN MY MAILBOX BY 5 PM, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24.

Thurs., Nov. 25—No Meeting: Thanksgiving Break

Facing Contemporary Problems: Development, the Global Marketplace, and “Surplus Bodies”

Tues., Nov. 30—The Population Bomb: Linking Reproduction and Development


Thurs., Dec. 2—Environment, Health, and Globalization: Learning from Bhopal


Tues., Dec. 7—Global Trade and the Bodies of the Poor


THIRD REACTION PAPER DUE IN CLASS, TUESDAY DECEMBER 7.
Thurs., Dec. 9—Problems and Priorities: The Disease Model and Polio Eradication


Tues., Dec. 14—Industry, Ethics, and Technologies of Knowledge Production


RESEARCH PAPERS DUE IN MY MAILBOX NO LATER THAN 5 PM, TUESDAY DECEMBER 21.