HIS 310.001: Medicine, Disease, and Health in American Society

SPRING 2017

WEDNESDAYS 4-6:30PM

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OFFICE HOURS: MW 11-12:30 AND BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description:

In “Medicine, Disease, and Health in American History,” we survey the history of American medicine from the colonial period through the twentieth century to present day. The course is organized roughly by chronology, though the following themes will be analyzed across time: medical ethics; patterns of health, disease, and death; major movements in medical theory and practice; the structure of the medical marketplace; the causes and effects of epidemic disease and the evolution of public health responses; the development and implementation of medical technology; the construction of disease, or the broader social context and cultural representation of health and illness; and the evolution and future of health care policy in the United States.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to provide a range of critical responses to the question: “How has medicine reflected society and its culture throughout American history?”

2. Students will have a general appreciation for major developments in the ten themes listed above.

3. Of greater importance, students will be able to explain the causes and effects of major developments in the ten themes listed above.

4. Using specific examples, students will be able to explain how external forces – social, political, economic, cultural, and technological – have influenced medical research and praxis in the United States.

5. Develop analytical writing skills

Required Texts:


Additional readings not in the textbooks will be assigned as well. These readings will be available via D2L as indicated in the syllabus.

Class Format:

At each meeting, students will be asked to discuss and debate in detail the assigned reading for that week. We will explore both the content the authors present as well as the evidence on which
they base their arguments. Moreover, we will discuss how each book fits in with the other works that we have read on this topic.

As student participation is fundamental to the success of the course, each of you will be required to come to class having digested the readings and ready to contribute questions and comments. You will also be expected to be open about your ideas and respond constructively to the ideas of others. Each of you will be asked to answer at least one question each session.

PLEASE NOTE: CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION IS MANDATORY. STUDENTS MISSING MORE THAN ONE SESSION WITHOUT AN APPROVED EXCUSE WILL NOT RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.

Grades:

Attendance and Participation (30% of the final grade): The success of this course depends on translating thoughtful reading into productive discussions. Students who do not participate in an informed and productive manner should expect to do poorly in this aspect of the class and will see their grade suffer thus. So, do the reading and come prepared to engage in friendly and productive discussions with your colleagues.

Leading Discussion (20% of the final grade): Every student will lead two discussions, wherein they will be responsible for presenting a supplemental reading to the class. In your discussion, you will present an overview of the articles or book, including: 1) a brief academic biography of the author; 2) a summary and analysis of the reading—argument, methodology, sources, support, writing style, how the supplemental reading fits into the week’s discussion and related to the primary reading for the week, etc. 3) students will turn in a precis over the supplemental text. A precis should summarize a given book or article’s argument, scope, and methodology as clearly and concisely as possible. These essays will be no longer than one single-spaced page in 12-point Times New Roman font with one inch margins all around.

Final Paper (5% for the proposal; 15% for the presentation/rough draft; 30% for the final draft—for 50% of the final grade): You will complete a 12-15-page paper on the topic of your choice. Topic selection must occur no later than Wednesday, February 22nd. It is expected that each of you will consult with me during office hours about possible paper topics prior to making your final decisions. You may choose any subject relative to the theme of this seminar, and your papers must be based on both primary and secondary sources. You will be required to include at least ten (non-internet) sources in your final paper. A handout will be provided with some of the more readily available published primary materials that many of you may find useful.

On Wednesday, February 29th, each of you will present to the seminar your proposed final paper topics. You will be required to prepare a 2-3 page prospectus that outlines the major themes of your project, discusses your possible sources, and includes a tentative bibliography. You will also be expected to provide copies of your prospectus to all members of the seminar.
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On Wednesday, March 8th, each of you will be required to prepare an opening paragraph and detailed outline of your final papers. You will once again make a presentation to the seminar on the progress of your papers. No extra copies of this assignment are needed.

**ALL FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 4:00 PM ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 3rd. LATE PAPERS WILL BE DROPPED ONE-THIRD OF A GRADE FOR EACH DAY LATE--WEEKENDS INCLUDED (e.g., from a B to a B-, or a B- to a C+). Any papers left under my office door, or in my mailbox without a time stamped and signed by the department secretary will be counted as arriving when I find them. PAPERS SENT VIA EMAIL WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

All papers must be typed or word-processed in 10 or 12-point fonts and doubled-spaced with one-inch margins. Papers will be evaluated on the following points:

1. strength of your historical arguments and content
2. how well you have used historical evidence to support your arguments
3. composition (i.e., spelling, grammar, sentence structure)
4. form (i.e., correct citation)

A handout will be provided with guidelines how to format and footnote your papers.

**Course Requirements:**

I expect students to be prepared daily for class by reading the assigned texts in advance of class and by having questions or discussion points. I expect regular and attendance and punctuality; I will drop you from the course after four unexcused absences. Any students caught sleeping may be woken up. If you fall asleep or are disruptive in class, you may be asked to leave and will not receive participation credit for that day. If you are frequently disruptive in class, I will ask you to withdraw from the course. Disruptive behaviors include the following: arriving late or leaving early on a regular basis; conversing with other students during lecture; or the use of any electronic device (laptop, cell phone, tablet, etc.) for any purpose other than to take notes.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:**

You are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University’s policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism (if not, see the student catalog). You may study together and share information for your final projects. But **ALL papers are to be written only by you, the individual student.** You are also responsible for being sure that your work is not plagiarized by others. Failure to abide by the university policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism will result in an “F” for the course.

**Objectionable Materials Warning:**

Some of the reading materials that we will read contain scenes of explicit violence, sexual brutality, ethnic and gender stereotyping, nudity, obscenity, adult themes, profanity, and offensive language that might be found objectionable by some. There may also be ideas or practices endorsed by specific books, or expressed by individual members of our seminar, that
some may consider immoral or amoral. In the instructor’s opinion, these materials are essential for understanding American history. If these materials will make you uncomfortable, please do not enroll in the course.
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: An Introduction to the History of Medicine

Introduction: What is the History of Medicine?

AND—Patterns of Life and Death in Early Modern Europe and America

Required Readings:

• Burnham, What is Medical History? Introduction.


Week 2: Medicine in Early Modern Europe and America, 1750-1850

Required Readings:

• Starr, Social Transformation, Introduction.


• “Rules agreed to by the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital, for the Admission and Discharge of Patients” in Some account of the Pennsylvania Hospital: From its first rise, to the beginning of the fifth month, called May, 1754 (Philadelphia: B. Franklin & D. Hall, 1754), p.25-27.

Week 3: Healers, Patients, and the Marketplace in Early America

Required Readings:

• Starr, Social Transformation, book 1, ch.1.

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**Week 4: Epidemic Disease and Public Health: Outbreak, Urbanization, Sanitarianism**

Required Readings:


**Week 5: Medical Heterodoxy and Heroic Medicine in Nineteenth Century America**

Required Readings:

- *Phrenology and Phineas Gage*

**Week 6: Germ Theory, the Laboratory, and the Public Health State**

Required Readings:

- *Antiseptic History and Discovery of Anesthesia*
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**Week 7: The Rise of the Modern Medical Profession and Limits of Reform**

Required Readings:

* Pure Food Law History and Patent Medicine


**Week 8: The Rise of Hospital Medicine**

Required Readings:

* Starr, Social Transformation, book 1, ch.3-5.


**Week 9: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS**

**Week 10: Changing Patterns of Mortality in the Twentieth Century**

Required Readings:


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Week 11: Medicalization of Gender

Required Readings:

• Polarization of Abortion in American Society


Week 12: Patient Advocacy

Required Readings:


Week 13: Paying for Health Care

Required Readings:


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**Week 14: The Construction of Disease: Racism, Experimentation, & Informed Consent**

Required Readings:


**Week 15: Modern Day Eugenics (?) in the Medical Marketplace**

Required Readings:

- *Modern Day Eugenics*

**Week 16: FINAL PAPERS DUE by 4:00p.m.!!!