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## TOPICS:WHY DO WE GET SICK ? A MEDICAL HISTORY in Fall 2019 (SC2091B)

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Course Code</b>    | SC2091B                    | <b>Professor(s)</b>     | Albert Wu, Elena Berg         |
| <b>Prerequisites</b>  | None                       | <b>Office Number</b>    | C202 Berg, PV204 Wu           |
| <b>Class Schedule</b> | TF: 10:35-11:55 in<br>SD-1 | <b>Office Hours</b>     | By appointment                |
| <b>Credits</b>        | 4                          | <b>Email</b>            | awu@aup.edu,<br>eberg@aup.edu |
| <b>Semester</b>       | Fall 2019                  | <b>Office Tel. Ext.</b> | 614 Berg, 705 (Wu)            |

## Course Description

Why do we get sick? What causes the ailments we suffer from today, and what treatments have we developed to solve these problems? In this course we will embark on a journey through medical history, from early human origins to the present. We'll consider the conditions in which our early human ancestors evolved and how our past has helped shape the health challenges we face today.

In this fully team-taught course, you will become immersed in the history of science and medicine by tackling issues related to evolutionary biology, public health and disease, western medical practice, and alternative medicine. We will ask: How does our evolutionary history impact our health today? What ideas and assumptions undergird our medical practices, and how have they contributed to changes in approaches to medicine across time and space? And finally, how do we explain the persistence of pseudo-scientific approaches to medicine and health? The "medical revolution" of the nineteenth century is almost two-hundred years old, and yet medical "quackery" continues to proliferate: anti-vaxxers are reshaping the future of disease eradication, homeopathic remedies abound, and false assumptions about race, gender, and sexuality run rampant across many countries and cultures.

Throughout the semester, we will explore active-learning exercises that foster both humanistic and scientific thinking. We plan to take a number of field trips, including to the Musée de l'Homme and the Musée d'histoire de la médecine. As an upper-level class, we will focus primarily on pushing you to hone your historical and scientific thinking. We will introduce you to archival resources, asking you to explore and discover materials within the archives. Similarly, we will push you to grasp the scientific method, asking you to design experiments to test various popular medical remedies.

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## Course Learning Outcomes

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### General Education

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This course is a HI/SC elective and does not fulfill any of the core curriculum requirements.

### Course Outline

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#### PRELIMINARY CLASS OUTLINE (subject to change):

| Class | Date               | Topic of discussion & quiz topics                                                                                                         | Readings/assignments due that day                                          |
|-------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Tues Sept 3        | Introduction: how can history and evolution inform our understanding of human health? Why are Berg & Wu working together on this project? |                                                                            |
| 2     | Fri Sep 6          | Darwin in history                                                                                                                         | Ch. 2 of Zimmer's <i>Tangled Bank</i> : "Before and After Darwin"          |
| 3     | Tues Sept 10       | What is evolution? Who cares? The basics of evolutionary theory                                                                           | Lieberman                                                                  |
| 4     | Fri Sept 13        | How are humans different from their primate cousins? How did our bodies evolve?                                                           | Lieberman                                                                  |
| 5     | Tues Sept 17       | Human evolution up until "history" began 10,000 years ago                                                                                 | Lieberman                                                                  |
| 6     | Fri Sept 20        | Concepts in medical history: Plagues and Peoples                                                                                          | <b>Due : Journal entry #1</b><br>Ch. 1 in Porter, available on blackboard. |
|       | <b>Sat Sept 21</b> | <b>Visit to Musée de l'histoire de Medicine</b>                                                                                           | <b>Meet there at 14:00</b>                                                 |
| 7     | Tues Sept 24       | Ancient Ideas about the Body – Greek and China compared                                                                                   | Kuriyama, selections                                                       |

|                                                         |                  |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8                                                       | Fri Sept 27      | Case Study I: Infectious diseases – smallpox as a case                             | <b>Due : 1st press analysis</b><br>Watts, Smallpox in the New World and in the Old                                    |
| 9                                                       | Tues Oct 1       | Case Study I: Infectious diseases – vaccines and the anti-vaccination movement     | Wolfe, Anti-Vaccinationists Past and Present. Also listen to first episode of Endless Thread.                         |
| 10                                                      | Fri Oct 4        | Antibiotics and antibiotic resistance<br>Case Study II: Race, racism, and medicine | <b>Due: ideas for final research projects, posted on Blackboard</b><br>Agostin Fuentes 2012 Chap. 6: Myths about race |
|                                                         | <b>Sat Oct 5</b> | <b>Visit to the Musée de l'homme</b>                                               | <b>Due: Journal entry #2</b><br><b>Meet there at 11:00</b>                                                            |
| 11                                                      | Tues Oct 8       | Case Study II: Race, racism, and medicine                                          | Lifton, <i>Nazi Doctors</i> , selections.                                                                             |
| 12                                                      | Fri Oct 11       | Present your 5-min sales pitches in class                                          | <b>Due: sales pitches</b>                                                                                             |
| 13                                                      | Tues Oct 15      | Case study III: Race, medicine, and experimentation                                | Skloot, <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> , selections                                                      |
| 14                                                      | Fri Oct 18       | Case study III: Race, medicine, and experimentation                                | Cont. Skloot, <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i><br><br>Reverby, <i>Examining Tuskegee</i> , selections      |
| 15                                                      | Tues Oct 22      | Case study IV: Lifestyle diseases – Obesity, heart disease, diabetes               | <b>Due: 2nd press analysis</b><br>Gilman, <i>Fat: A Cultural History of Obesity</i> , selections.                     |
| 16                                                      | Fri Oct 25       | Case study IV: Lifestyle diseases and their cures: Do diets work?                  | Lieberman<br><b>Due: Abstracts, outlines, and annotated bibliographies</b>                                            |
| 17                                                      | Tues Oct 29      | Case study V: Mental health and anxiety                                            | Jerome Goopman, "The Troubled History of Psychiatry."<br><br>Reading on the biological stress response TBA            |
| <b>Fall break – Weds Oct 30 to Sun Nov 3 - NO CLASS</b> |                  |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                       |
|                                                         | Tues Nov 5       | <b>No class</b>                                                                    | One of three class periods that we'll omit in exchange for museum visits                                              |
| 18                                                      | Fri Nov 8        | Case study VI: Ageing –                                                            | Thane, "Social Histories of Old                                                                                       |

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problems with our backs, hips, and feet

Age and Aging.”

Lieberman

**Due: Journal entry #3**

Tues Nov 12 *No class (Armistice Break)*

Fri Nov 15 **No class**

Work on your rough drafts

19      Tues Nov 19      Case study VII: Ageing – cancer      Mukherjee, *Emperor of all Maladies*

20      Fri Nov 22      **No class** – between Tues and today, meet with your peer review group and submit your peer review feedback

**Due: rough drafts**

**Due: Journal entry #4 (your peer review feedback, due by 5 PM)**

21      Tues Nov 26      Case study VII: Ageing – cancer      Mukherjee, *Emperor of all Maladies*

22      Fri Nov 29      Case study VIII: New ethical frontiers, genetic disease and CRISPR

**Due: 3rd press analysis**

23      Tues Dec 3      Press release presentations

24      Fri Dec 6      Press release presentations

**Due: final research papers**

**You will give your oral presentations on your projects during the final exam period, which will be Dec 13 at 8:30 AM. Please upload these onto Blackboard by Tues Dec 12 at 12 noon.**

## Textbooks

| Title                                                       | Author                | Publisher      | ISBN           | Required |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
| The Story of the Human Body: Evolution, Health, and Disease | Lieberman, Daniel     | Vintage        | 978-0307741806 | Yes      |
| The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks                        | Skloot, Rebecca       | Broadway Books | 9781400052189  | Yes      |
| The Emperor of All Maladies: A                              | Mukherjee, Siddhartha | Scribner       | 9781439170915  | Yes      |

## Attendance Policy

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Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

## Grading Policy

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| Item       | Description                                                                                                                                  | Percentage of final grade |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Attendance | It is extraordinarily important to come to class and to participate actively. Note: anyone who misses more than 4 class periods will receive | 10%                       |

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|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|                                                    | a zero.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |     |
| Class participation, including leading discussions | You are expected to have continuous, active, high-quality contribution to in-class discussions. You will also be working together in small groups to present various topics in class and guide class discussion of related readings. | 15% |
| Online journal                                     | Four times during the semester we will ask you to submit an online journal entry in which you will reflect on the course material and its scientific and historical context (500 words each).                                        | 10% |
| Press article project                              | During the semester you will craft three 600-word critical reviews of popular press articles on topics relevant to human health. During the final sessions of the semester, you will present your “portfolio” to the class.          | 20% |
| Final research paper                               | Pick a topic in human health, explore it from an evolutionary and historical perspective, and write an 8-page research paper (in stages, see below)                                                                                  | 35% |
| Final research presentation                        | Give a professional Powerpoint presentation on your research topic (during final exam period)                                                                                                                                        | 10% |

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**Online journal:** Four times in the semester, you will keep an online journal. On Blackboard, these entries will be private, shared only with Professors Berg and Wu, and we will endeavor to comment on each of your entries. For each entry, you will write about 500 words on a specific topic that we specify. These sentences should reflect your own thoughts and attention to elegant, concise prose. Some suggestions for open journal entries: choose a quote (one to three sentences) that is surprising, thought-provoking, or that inspires comparisons with other countries or contemporary situations. Can you connect an idea to your own experiences, to a different time period, or to another work that we have read? What words, images, or examples does the writer use to convey his/her argument? Important due dates:

Journal 1: **Sept 17**

Journal 2: **Oct 4**

Journal 3: **Nov 8**

Journal 4: **Nov 22**

**Leading discussion:** At least once during the semester, you will work with other classmates to prepare readings for discussion in class. This will entail reading the assigned material well in advance, doing extra background research on the topic, briefly presenting the material at the beginning of class, and guiding the discussion.

**Press release project:** You will write three 600-word critical responses to different press articles that you find yourself, on various themes that we will identify together in class. We will assess your analyses on the quality of the content as well as the writing. Important due dates:

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Press analysis 1: **Sept 24**

Press analysis 2: **Oct 18**

Press analysis 3: **Nov 29**

Final presentation of your press portfolio: during the final sessions of the class

**Final research paper and presentation:** You will pick a topic related to human health and investigate it from both historical and scientific perspectives. You will explore the controversies surrounding this topic and how both history and science can inform (or have informed) this debate. Throughout the semester, you will receive feedback on your work both from your classmates and from us. The result of this research will be an 8-page paper (worth 35%, divided into 200 points) and a well-rehearsed 15-minute Powerpoint presentation (worth 10%), which you will give to the class during final exam period. Important due dates:

Identify research topic and post ideas on Blackboard (5 points) – **Oct 1**

Professional pitch of your project idea – you will have exactly 5 min of class time to “sell” your idea to your peers. Use whatever props you like (10 points) – **Oct 11**

Maximum 250 word Abstract, outline, and annotated bibliography (25 points) – **Oct 25**

Rough draft – **Nov 19** (50 points)

Final paper due (110 points) – **Dec 6** (last day of class)

Oral presentation – final exam period (**Dec 13**)

A: Excellent; student is working to the maximum of their potential; demonstrates original, critical thinking, superior writing and research skills.

B: Good; student demonstrates potential; original ideas and sound writing and research skills.

C: Adequate; student demonstrates an understanding of the course material but could improve originality or critical skills; writing and research skills are mediocre.

D: Inadequate; insufficient thought, care or time have been given to the assignment; poor comprehension of material, writing and research; does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment.

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F: Failing; unacceptable work; does not demonstrate an understanding of course material, is incomplete; critical thinking, writing and research skills need immediate and urgent attention for improvement AND/OR the assignment has been plagiarized.

## Other

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### ASSIGNMENTS, ATTENDANCE, and CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

- **Print out all assigned online readings and bring them to class.** If you prefer to read online, you may bring a portable device instead – but talk to us first.
- **Submit all assignments on time.** Written assignments submitted late will go down by a proportion of a letter grade for every day late, i.e. A becomes A-, A- becomes B+, etc.
- **Any assignment that is proven to be plagiarised will receive zero and serious cases will result in an automatic F for the course.** Plagiarism is academic misconduct and a serious breach of university policy. University disciplinary procedures will be carried out in case of infraction.
- **If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent.** Four or more unexcused absences will lead to a 0 for the participation grade. If you are absent more than four times, you may be asked to withdraw.
- Please be respectful of others and **avoid using your mobile phones or computers** for personal reasons during class.