

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

ANTH 446: Poverty, Inequality, and Health

Fall 2012 T 12:30-3:15 Howell 201

Instructor: Mark Sorensen, 209B Alumni Hall

phone: 962-3280; e-mail: msorensen@unc.edu

Office Hours: W 10:00-12:00

Course Description: We will explore the social, cultural and biological mechanisms and processes linking poverty, inequalities and health (psychosocial, contextual, and neomaterial) from a global and historical perspective. We will evaluate key competing explanations for the links between wealth and health. We will also investigate the health consequences of rapid culture change and economic development. The goals of the course are to elucidate broad scale patterns of health and global change, and to understand the role of sociopolitical context, individual behavior, and human biology in shaping health status. The processes of globalization, modernization and economic change have had profound impacts on health status throughout the world. These health effects operate through a variety of mechanisms including acculturation and culture/lifestyle change, through increased social inequality, and through changes in the structure of health care systems. We will use both evolutionary and political economic perspectives to explore the health consequences of culture change.

Required Texts:

Kunitz Stephen J. 1996. Disease and Social Diversity: The European Impact on the Health of Non-Europeans. London: Oxford UP.

Sapolsky, Robert M. 2004. Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: The Acclaimed Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping. New York: Holt. 3rd Ed.

Wilkinson, RG. 2005. The Impact of Inequality: How to Make Sick Societies Healthier New York: The New Press.

Additional readings will be posted on Sakai.

The course will follow a seminar format with in-depth discussion and analysis of readings, lectures and film topics. During each class session we will begin with a discussion of the assigned readings, followed by a lecture and discussion of the day's topic.

Course Organization and Expectations

Attendance and Participation

Student participation is essential in this course. Discussion of readings, student presentations, films, and lectures enhance the assigned readings. You should come to each class prepared to 1-3 contributions/points to the discussion. Readings should be completed prior to the class period to which they are assigned.

Reading Response: For each class you will be required to write a brief (**one page**) response to the assigned readings. These papers will help you organize your thoughts before class and provide a springboard for class discussion.

Short paper projects: You will be required to complete three short research papers (4-5 double spaced pages in length) throughout the semester. These papers will involve in-depth analysis of theory and concepts related to the course through examination of one or more cases from the primary literature.

In-Class Assignments: We will break into small groups for discussion and analysis of key issues

ASSESSMENT:

Participation (Discussion and Attendance)	15%
Reading response	15%
Short papers (15% each)	45%
Final Exam	20%

Date	Topics	Readings
T 8/21	Introduction/Organization; Biocultural perspectives in human biology research	
9/4	Population vs individual perspectives; Preston Curve; Lorenz curve	Worthman & Kohrt 2005; Kunitz 2006
9/11	Affluent Societies; The Socialization of health and disease	Wilkinson 1-4

9/18	Poverty, inequality and health: is it endogeneity, social capital, or what? // Status, stigma and respect // cooperation and conflict	Wilkinson 6-8; Sapolsky 1, 17
9/25	Status hierarchies, social differentiation, cohesion and reciprocity	Sapolsky; TBA; Bird & Smith 2005; Borgerhoff Mulder et al 2009;
10/2	Expansion of theoretical and conceptual framework First paper due in class; late papers not accepted	Lynch et al; Kawachi;
10/9	Diachronic perspectives on poverty, inequality and health	Goodman 1997; Floud 2011; Fogel 2004
10/16	Biological pathways linking inequalities and health --stress and energy metabolism	Sapolsky 2-7
10/23	Biological pathways linking inequalities and health – Immunity, Stress and disease	Sapolsky 8-9; Glaser & Kiecolt-Glaser 2005; Sweet; Sorensen et al. 2009; Gersten 2008
10/30	What's so stressful about stress? Health Disparities Second paper due in class; late papers not accepted	Sapolsky 10-18
11/6	Disease and Social Diversity: The European Impact on the Health of Non-Europeans.	Kunitz 1-4
11/13	Disease and Social Diversity: The European Impact on the Health of Non-Europeans.	Kunitz 5-7
11/20	Development, Poverty and Inequality	TBA
11/27	Case study: Health and culture change // Rapid economic change, markets and health	(Coimbra et al., 2002; Godoy and Cardenas, 2000; Godoy et al., 2004; Sorensen et al., 2005) *additional readings TBD
12/4	Summary and conclusions Third paper due in class; late papers not accepted	
12/11	12:00 Final Exam	