

ANTH 413/613: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON HEALTH DISPARITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Tuesdays & Thursdays 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Woods Hall (WDS) 1114

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course examines health disparities in the United States. Powerful economic, political, social, and cultural forces shape who gets sick, what illnesses/diseases they get, how they are treated while seeking care, what treatment options they have, and what their ultimate health outcomes are. The goal of the course is to understand these processes through the lens of critical medical anthropology.

Anthropologists have increasingly found ourselves in interdisciplinary conversation with scholars and practitioners in public health, medicine, and other related fields. Accordingly, we will first examine core concepts in these fields, such as the social determinants of health, and approaches like intersectionality and critical race theory to understand how disparities related to race, ethnicity, class, and gender have been characterized. We will then turn to medical anthropology, examining key concepts/approaches used to frame discussions of disparities like biomedicine, medicalization, embodiment, structural violence, social suffering, structural violence, and market-based medicine.

Grounded in these concepts, we will then turn to ethnographic explorations of disparities, examining the social categories of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, but complexifying them by interrogating how they are configured and deployed in specific contexts in ways that produce disparities. We will also consider how these categories intersect with other anthropological domains of interest like history, place, kinship, racialization, globalization, transnationalism, belonging, and identity.

To do so, we will read three ethnographies that span different geographic locales and populations of focus. We will evaluate these ethnographies to determine how anthropological insights enrich discussions about biomedical phenomena such as risk factors, co-morbidities, chronic disease, health care access, health care seeking practices, health promotion, treatment modalities, patient non-compliance, provider bias, and cultural/structural competency. Throughout our examination of these ethnographies, we will continually consider the interplay between structural forces and individual/group agency.

In line with calls to promote *health equity*, this course will continually consider roles that anthropologists and others can play in understanding and ameliorating health disparities both in our reading and discussion throughout the course and by considering interventions to address disparities in the final section of the course.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To learn about how structural inequalities shape health disparities for different groups in the United States
- To understand how scholars explain these disparities by learning key concepts and theoretical approaches in the field of medical anthropology
- To develop analytic skills that help us better contextualize health disparities and equity
- To compare and evaluate ethnographies of health disparities to better understand how distinct contexts produce disparities
- To consider the roles that anthropologists can play in ameliorating health disparities and promoting health equity

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

This class emphasizes active participation, discussion, and solid writing and research skills. Specifically, your final grade for the course (**500 points**) will be based on the following:

- **Attendance and Participation** (50 points - 10%) I expect you to attend class and participate actively. Prior to each class, complete the readings for that day and come to class prepared.
- **Discussion Questions** (25 points - 5%) Each student will choose a class session for which to send discussion questions ahead of time to stimulate group discussion. Please send a maximum of 5 questions to Dr. Getrich by **12 noon the day before** you are designated to lead discussion.
- **Freewrites** (50 points - 10%) You will spend 10 to 15 minutes in class responding to a prompt about the course readings for that day or week. Freewrites **will not be announced** ahead of time and **no make-ups** will be given. There will be 5 total.
- **Exam** (100 points - 20%) At the end of the first section of the course, you will take a take-home exam that will test your comprehension of the core concepts used to frame discussion of health disparities. Further instructions will be reviewed in class and the exam will be posted on ELMS. Your exam is due (via ELMS) by **Sunday, 3/5 at 12 noon**.
- **Ethnography Reviews** (150 points - 2 x 75 points each - 30%) During the second section of the course, you will be asked to write a review of 2 of the ethnographies we are reading. In these reviews, you will critically evaluate the ethnography, addressing: main arguments, the author's positionality, theoretical framing, research methods, data analysis/interpretation, presentation of findings, and contribution relative to other ethnographies. Further instructions will be reviewed in class and posted on ELMS. Reviews are due (via ELMS) by **Friday, 4/14** and **Friday, 4/28 at 12 noon**.
- **Final Research Paper** (125 points - 25%) During the third section of the course, you will complete a final research paper focused on a health disparities topic that interests you. Further instructions will be reviewed in class and posted on ELMS. A one-page proposal describing your topic and identifying 4-5 sources you will use for the paper will be due on **Friday, 5/5 at 12 noon** (worth 25 points) via ELMS. You will then complete the final paper, which is due on **Saturday, 5/13 by 10 a.m.** (worth 100 points) via ELMS.

The due dates for all of assignments are noted on the detailed course schedule below. Assignments are due on the date listed in the course schedule; late assignments will **only** be received up to one class meeting after the assigned date and will lose a letter grade (e.g., an A will become a B).

GRADES

You can follow your progress throughout the course on Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with your progress and contact us if you feel your work has not been evaluated fairly. Grades in this course are earned, **not** negotiated. Do not write us at the end of the semester asking for last-minute changes to your grade. The grading scale for this course is:

99-100 = A+	87-89.9 = B+	77-79.9 = C+	67-69.9 = D+
93-98.9 = A	83-86.9 = B	74-76.9 = C	64-66.9 = D
90-92.9 = A -	80-82.9 = B-	70-73.9 = C-	64 or below = F

COURSE-RELATED POLICIES

This course adheres to the Course Related Policies of the Office of Undergraduate Studies (<http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>). You are expected to uphold the Codes of Academic Integrity and Conduct and take full responsibility for your academic work. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will **not** be tolerated and will be reported.

For assignments, you must cite all sources that you used, whether you quote directly or paraphrase them. Incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. Per the American Anthropological Association (<http://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2044>), we will use the Chicago Manual of Style (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>). [See also Purdue University's online resource about the Chicago Manual of Style <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>]

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Classroom communications will all be managed through ELMS, the Enterprise Learning Management System (www.elms.umd.edu). Make sure to turn on notifications for the course and check your email regularly for announcements. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the ELMS workspace (see http://www.elms.umd.edu/student_quickguides) and seek support if you need it (<http://www.elms.umd.edu/page/student-landing-page>).

You can email me through ELMS or directly at cgetrich@umd.edu. I will respond to your emails in a timely manner, though if you send them outside of working hours (after 6 p.m. weekdays or on the weekend), my response will not be immediate. I also strongly encourage you to come see me in person during office hours as I really do like to get to know students.

Please arrive on time to class; coming late is disrespectful and disruptive. Once in class, I strongly encourage you to take notes the "old-fashioned" way (i.e., with paper and a writing utensil), which studies have shown to be a better mode of learning (www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/). You may **only** use a laptop or tablet if you sit in the area designated on the first day of class and stay on task.

Use of cell phones during class is prohibited; silence or turn them off and put them away. Use of earbuds is likewise prohibited. If I see them, I will ask you to put them away and possibly dismiss you from class. Using technology (laptops, tablets, or phones) inappropriately may also result in points being deducted from your participation score.

ACCOMODATIONS

The University provides appropriate accommodations for students with a range of disabilities. [Disability Support Services \(DSS\)](#) (4-7682; dissup@umd.edu) facilitates reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals. Students must first have their disabilities documented by DSS. The office then prepares an *Accommodations Letter* stipulating needed accommodations. **You** are responsible for meeting and presenting this letter to me **by the end of the drop/add period** so that we can discuss your accommodations and I can sign the *Acknowledgement of Student Request* form.

ABSENCES

You are expected to attend all class meetings. Consistent attendance offers you the most effective opportunity to gain command of course concepts and materials. You are still responsible for information and material covered during absences. Events that justify an excused absence include: religious observances, mandatory military obligations, illness (of you or an immediate family member), participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond your control (e.g., a death in the family or a required court appearance).

In the event that you must miss a class, you must notify me in a timely manner prior to the absence or as soon afterwards as possible. You must also provide appropriate documentation of the absence. For medically necessitated absences, you may provide a self-signed excuse one time that does not coincide with a major due date and thereafter documentation from a physician or the University Health Center. For all other types of absences, you must provide verifiable documentation (e.g., a religious calendar, a court summons, or a death announcement).

REQUIRED READINGS

The reading load in this course is high, commensurate with an upper-level course. The following 3 core ethnographies are required for the course:

Bridges, Khiara M.

2011 *Reproducing Race: An Ethnography of Pregnancy as a Site of Racialization*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN-13: 978-0520268951

Garcia, Angela

2010 *The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN-13: 9780520262089.

Mendenhall, Emily

2013 *Syndemic Suffering: Social Distress, Depression, and Diabetes among Mexican Immigrant Women*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. ISBN13: 978-1611321425.

In addition, a number of book chapters and articles will be posted as pdfs on the ELMS course site, organized by modules (labeled by week/date when reading is due). You are responsible for downloading and reading them by the designated date. Readings are due on the day they are listed in the week-by-week detailed Course Schedule that follows. It is your responsibility to read the syllabus carefully and come to class prepared.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. CONCEPTUALIZING & THEORIZING HEALTH DISPARITIES		
WEEK 1	Thursday, 1/26 <i>Course Introduction</i>	
WEEK 2	Tuesday, 1/31 <i>Core Topics and Concepts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baer, Hans, Merrill Singer, and Ida Susser. 2013. "Medical Anthropology: Central Concepts & Development." In <i>Medical Anthropology and the World System</i>, Chapter 1, Pp. 3-34. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger. Smedley, Brian, Adrienne Stith, and Alan Nelson. 2003. <i>Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care</i>. National Academies Press.
	Thursday, 2/2 <i>Anthropological Approaches and Methods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baer, Hans, Merrill Singer, and Ida Susser. 2013. "Theoretical Perspectives in Medical Anthropology." In <i>Medical Anthropology and the World System: Critical Perspectives</i>. Chp. 2, Pp. 35-66. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger. Singer, Merrill and Hans Baer. 2012. "What Medical Anthropologists Do." In <i>Introducing Medical Anthropology: A Discipline in Action</i>, Chp 2, Pp. 43-75. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
WEEK 3	Tuesday, 2/7 <i>The Social Determinants of Health</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Braveman Paula, Susan Egerter, and David Williams. 2011. "The Social Determinants of Health: Coming of Age." <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i> 12:381-398. Raphael, Dennis. 2006. "Social Determinants of Health" <i>International Journal of Health Services</i> 36(4):651-677.
	Thursday, 2/9 <i>Health Disparities and Equity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adler, Nancy and David Rehkopf. 2008. "U.S. Disparities in Health: Descriptions, Causes, and Mechanisms." <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i> 29: 235-252. Dressler, William, Kathryn Oths, and Clarence Gravlee. 2005. "Race and Ethnicity in Public Health Research: Models to Explain Health Disparities." <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> 34:231-252.
WEEK 4	Tuesday, 2/14 <i>Intersectionality and Critical Race Theory</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weber, Lynn. 2006. "Reconstructing the Landscape of Health Disparities Research." In <i>Gender, Race, Class, and Health: Intersectional Approaches</i>, Schultz and Mullings, eds. Chapter 2, Pp. 21-59. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Ford, Chandra and Collins Airhihenbuwa. 2010. "Critical Race Theory, Race Equity, and Public Health." <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 100 (Suppl1): S30-35
	Thursday, 2/16 <i>Market-Based Medicine and Inequality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rylko-Bauer, Barbara, Paul Farmer. 2002. "Managed Care or Managed Inequality? A Call for Critiques of Market-Based Medicine." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 16(4):476-502. Becker, Gay. 2004. "Deadly Inequality in the Health Care 'Safety Net': Uninsured Ethnic Minorities' Struggle to Live with Life-Threatening Illnesses." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 18(2):258-275.

WEEK 5	Tuesday, 2/21 <i>Biomedicine</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhodes, Lorna. 1996. "Studying Biomedicine as a Cultural System." In <i>Medical Anthropology: Contemporary Theory and Practice</i>, Chapter 9, Pp. 165-180. New York: Praeger. Good, Byron. 1994. "How Medicine Constructs its Objects." In <i>Medicine, Rationality, and Experience</i>, Chapter 3, Pp. 65-87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
	Thursday, 2/23 <i>Medicalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lock, Margaret and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2010. <i>An Anthropology of Biomedicine</i>, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, Pp. 32-82. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
WEEK 6	Tuesday, 2/28 <i>Embodiment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krieger, Nancy, and George Davey Smith. 2004. "'Bodies Count,' And Body Counts: Social Epidemiology and Embodying Inequality." <i>Epidemiologic Reviews</i> 26, 92-103. Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret M. Lock. 1987. "The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 1(1): 6-14.
	Thursday, 3/2 <i>Structural Violence and Social Suffering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer, Paul. 2005. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: Social and Economic Rights in the Global Era." In <i>Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights & the New War on the Poor</i>. Chapter 1, Pp. 29-50. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. Kleinman Arthur, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock. 1996. <i>Social Suffering</i>. Introduction and Chapter 1, Pps. ix-23. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
	Sunday, 3/5	TAKE-HOME EXAM due by 12 noon
II. ETHNOGRAPHIES OF HEALTH DISPARITIES		
WEEKS 7 - 8 Ethnography 1 Mendenhall, <i>Syndemic Suffering</i>	Tuesday, 3/7 <i>Syndemics and Suffering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mendenhall, Introduction & Chapter 1 (Pp. 1-34) Singer, Merrill and Scott Clair. 2003. "Syndemics and Public Health: Reconceptualizing Disease in Biological-Social Context." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 17(4):423-41.
	Thursday, 3/9 <i>Illness Narratives and Chronic Disease</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mendenhall, Chapter 2 (Pp. 35-51) Chaufan, Claudia. 2004. "Sugar Blues: A Social Anatomy of the Diabetes Epidemic in the United States." In <i>Unhealthy Health Policy</i>, Castro and Singer, eds. Chapter 17, Pp. 257-274. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
	Tuesday, 3/14 <i>Social Stress and Diabetes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mendenhall, Chapter 3 & 5 (Pp. 53-80; 93-106) GRAD: Page-Reeves, Janet, Joshua Niforatos, Shiraz Mishra, Lidia Regina, Andrew Gingrich, and Robert Bulten. 2013. "Health Disparity and Structural Violence: How Fear Undermines Health among Immigrants at Risk for Diabetes." <i>Journal of Health Disparities Research & Practice</i> 6(2):30-47.
	Thursday, 3/16 <i>Immigration-Related Disparities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mendenhall, Chapter 4 (Pp. 81-92) Castañeda, Heide, Seth Holmes, Daniel Madrigal, Maria-Elena DeTrinidad Young, Naomi Beyeler, and James Quesada. 2014. "Immigration as a Social Determinant of Health." <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i> 36:375-392.

WEEK 9	Tuesday, 3/21 & Thursday, 3/23	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
WEEKS 10-12 Ethnography 2 Garcia, <i>The Pastoral Clinic</i>	Tuesday, 3/28	NO CLASS – SFAA CONFERENCE
	Thursday, 3/30 <i>Geographies of Addiction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garcia, Introduction (Pp. 1-36) GRAD: Horton, Sarah, Joanne McCloskey, Caroline Todd, and Marta Henriksen. 2001. "Transforming the Safety Net: Responses to Medicaid Managed Care in Rural and Urban New Mexico." <i>American Anthropologist</i> 103(3):733-746.
	Tuesday, 4/4 <i>Understanding Drug Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garcia, Chapters 1 & 2 (Pp. 37-110) Nichter et al. 2004. "Qualitative Research: Contributions to the Study of Drug Use, Drug Abuse, and Drug-Related Interventions." <i>Substance Use and Misuse</i> 39:1907-1969.
	Thursday, 4/6 <i>Intergenerational Drug Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garcia, Chapter 3 (Pp. 111-149) GRAD: Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al. 2011. "Historical Trauma among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Concepts, Research, and Clinical Considerations." <i>Journal of Psychoactive Drugs</i> 43(4):282-290.
	Tuesday, 4/11 <i>Suicide</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garcia, Chapter 4 (Pp. 150-182)
	Thursday, 4/13 <i>Drug Treatment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garcia, Chapter 5 & Conclusion (Pp. 183-210) Singer, Merrill. 2004. "Why Is It Easier to Get Drugs Than Drug Treatment in the U.S.?" In <i>Unhealthy Health Policy</i>, Chapter 19, Pp. 287-301. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
	Friday, 4/14	ETHNOGRAPHY REVIEW 1 due by 12 noon
WEEKS 13-14 Ethnography 3 Bridges, <i>Reproducing Race</i>	Tuesday, 4/18 <i>Medicaid Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2 (Pp. 1-73)
	Thursday, 4/20 <i>The Medicalization of Pregnancy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges, Chapters 3 & 4 (Pp. 74-143) GRAD: Dovidio et al. 2008. "Disparities and Distrust: The Implications of Psychological Processes for Understanding Racial Disparities in Health and Health Care." <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 67(3):478-486.
	Tuesday, 4/25 <i>Pathologizing Populations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges, Chapter 5 (Pp. 144-200) Chavez, Leo. 2004. "A Glass Half Empty: Latina Reproduction and Public Discourse." <i>Human Organization</i> 63(2):173-188.
	Thursday, 4/27 <i>Medical Disenfranchisement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges, Chapter 6 & Epilogue (Pp. 201-257) Metzl, Jonathan and Helena Hansen. 2014. "Structural Competency: Theorizing a New Medical Engagement with Stigma & Inequality." <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 103:126-133.
	Friday, 4/28	ETHNOGRAPHY REVIEW 2 due by 12 noon

III. AMELIORATING HEALTH DISPARITIES/PROMOTING HEALTH EQUITY

WEEK 15 Policy and Multilevel Interventions	Tuesday, 5/2 <i>Multi-Level Interventions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trickett, Edison and Sarah Beehler. 2013. "The Ecology of Multilevel Interventions to Reduce Social Inequalities in Health Care." <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i> 57(8):1227-1246. • Sallis, James F., Neville Owen, and Edwin B. Fisher. 2008. "Ecological Models of Health Behavior." Chapter 20 in <i>Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice</i>, 4th edition. Glanz, Rimer, and Viswanath, eds., pp. 465-485. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
	Thursday, 5/4 <i>Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horton, Sarah, Cesar Abadía, Jessica Mulligan, and Jennifer Jo Thompson. "A Critical Medical Anthropological Approach to the U.S.'s Affordable Care Act." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 28(1):1-22. • Hardy, Lisa, Christina Getrich, Julio Quezada, Amanda Guay, Raymond Michalowski, and Eric Henley. 2012. "A Call for Further Research on the Impact of Immigration Enforcement on Public Health." <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 102(7):1250-1254.
	Friday, 5/5	FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL due by 12 noon
WEEK 16 Clinic-Based Interventions & Community Partnerships	Tuesday, 5/9 <i>Clinic-Based Interventions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getrich, Christina, Andrew Sussman, Deborah Helitzer, Richard Hoffman, Teddy Warner, Victoria Sánchez, and Angélica Solares. 2012. "Expressions of <i>Machismo</i> in Colorectal Cancer Screening among New Mexico Hispanic Subpopulations." <i>Qualitative Health Research</i> 22(4):546-559. • Getrich, Christina, Shirley Heying, Cathleen Willging, and Howard Waitzkin. 2007. "An Ethnography of Clinic 'Noise' in a Community-Based, <i>Promotora</i>-Centered Mental Health Intervention." <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 65(2):319-330.
	Thursday, 5/11 <i>Community Partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minkler, Meredith and Nina Wallerstein. 2008. "Introduction to Community-Based Participatory Research: New Issues and Emphases." In <i>Community-Based Participatory Research for Health: From Process to Outcomes</i>, 2nd edition, Minkler and Wallerstein, eds. Chapter 1, Pp. 5-23. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. • Cheatham-Rojas, Ann and Eveline Shen. 2008. "CBPR with Cambodian Girls in Long Beach, California: A Case Study." In <i>Community-Based Participatory Research for Health</i>, Chapter 7, Pp. 121-135. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. • Clements-Nolle, Kristen and Ari Max Bachrach. 2008. "CBPR with a Hidden Population: The Transgender Community Health Project a Decade Later." In <i>Community-Based Participatory Research for Health</i>, Chapter 8, Pp. 137-148. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
	Saturday, 5/13	FINAL RESEARCH PAPER due by 10 a.m.

