ANTH 215E Health, Healing and Culture: An Introduction to Medical Anthropology

**Professor:** Elena González Rojo  
**Office:** CUI (Building 25 Ground floor)  
**Email:** egonroj@upo.es  
**Office Hours:** By appointment (please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails)

**Course information:**  
**Spring 2020**  
**Tuesday & Thursday**  
**5:30-6:50**

**Course Description**
This course aims to provide students with a basic understanding of some of the anthropological approaches and tools that are relevant to the study of health and illness and to the improvement of the impact and sustainability of health work. It is aimed at those new to anthropology and can thus be used as an introduction to the subdiscipline for health novice social scientist. It will introduce students to the topics, theories, and methods of the discipline, applied to the scientific study of the social and cultural determinants of health. We will explore topics such as mental health and illness, systems of healing, woman’s health, ethics, intercultural competence and practical uses for health care settings. In addition to this, it will enable the student to learn theoretical concepts and no less importantly, to become able to use them in cases and examples directly connected to daily life, including examples of actual topics.

**Course Goals and Methodology**
The main goal of this course is to offer a basic understanding of the main concepts of Medical Anthropology. We will delve into the connections between our conceptions of health and healing processes and sociocultural contexts. This course will introduce Medical Anthropology, which is the subfield of anthropology concerned with how human societies respond to and shape the experiences of health, illness, and recovery. As we move on, we will delve into to more specific and complex aspects, such as the meaning and value of healing in particular cultures, different etiological systems, ethno- medical systems, reproductive health, and mental illnesses, among others.

The general objectives that this course addresses will enable you to:

- Demonstrate an analytical understanding of a range of concepts, principles and definitions used in medical anthropology.
- Demonstrate awareness of intercultural competence in health care, enabling effective work across ethnic and cultural lines.
- Be able to explain the role of the main social and cultural determinants of health.
- Explain how culture influences our perception of health and healing, and become aware of the risk of ethnocentrism.
- Be able to apply what you learn to your daily life and own experiences.
The methodology of the course will be based on lectures, readings, participation and class discussions. The student will have available a range of readings that will help to illustrate the different relationship between culture and the subject’s perceptions of health and healing. Classes will consist of lectures and class discussions. Students are encouraged to use a Blackboard site, where the professor will post slides, journal articles, assignment instructions and additional resources such as audiovisual material. Coursework will include lectures, students’ presentations, videos, outside readings and short written assignments. Participation is a key factor in this course. Engaging in discussions and presenting the contents that you will actively learn about the theory but also about how to apply it, getting feedback and guidance and assuring proper understanding. Students will be expected to come prepared to class, reading the daily assignment. In class, the instructor will use audiovisual materials to supplement the information presented in the readings. Every session will be structured around class discussion, focusing on the readings assigned and the audiovisual material presented.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the semester, students who complete all necessary assignments will be able to:

- Define and explain what culture and Medical Anthropology are, and their meaning in different cultures.
- Describe the nuances separating illness from disease.
- Think critically about different perceptions and experiences of health, and of healing processes as a result of acculturation.
- Identify processes related to health and illness as diverse as cultural backgrounds can be identified.
- Discuss with an appropriate vocabulary about cultural influences, healing processes and medical systems.
- Demonstrate the ability to translate knowledge into practice using examples and cases.

Required Texts
There is no textbook required for this course. Therefore, students are not expected to purchase any material. The instructor will post the class material on Blackboard, which is accessible both on campus and off campus. To log in, you need to sign in on https://campusvirtual.upo.es using the username and password you received in your orientation folder.

Bibliography

• Foster, G. (1976). Disease etiologies in Non-Western medical systems, American Anthropology, 78 (4), 773-782

Course Requirements and Grading
Students will be evaluated on their ability to articulate and critically apply the terms, concepts and theories from class and readings verbally, during class discussions, as well as in writing, on exams and in written assignments, as follows:

Paper (20%): Students are required to write an essay of 1300 words on a subject chosen from the range of questions below, which are based on topics and readings that are covered in the course. Students can also write an essay about a topic of their interest related to the course. Students are required to type their essay in a Word processing software using Times New Roman font in size 11, double spaced. On a cover page, students should indicate the essay question they are answering and
provide a word count of the essay. To prepare for their essay, students should build on reading material from the course, other literature sought from sources external to the course, examples used in class and their own experiences. All references to literature and ideas given by others should be cited throughout the essay in ‘Author, Date’ format, for example (Davis, 1995), and should be listed in full at the end of the document.

Essay Questions:

1. Medical pluralism and ethnomedical systems.
2. Female Genital Mutilation and Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery.
3. Healing processes in different cultures.
4. Ethics in anthropology.
5. Intercultural Competence
6. Racism
7. Free topic

Final reflection (15%): The final reflection is a way to achieve clarity and better understanding of what you are learning. Students are required to write a personal reflection of 700 words on the subject chosen for the mid-term paper. They should also include a general reflection on the course using the main concepts covered in the semester. Students are required to type their reflection in a Word processing software using Times New Roman font in size 11, double spaced.

Oral presentations (10%): This activity is intended for students to do research (non-participant observation in a supermarket). After this exercise, students will organize a debate to discuss the analysis with the class. These presentations will be organized and scheduled ahead.

Participation (15%): Students are expected to regularly participate in class discussions. Class participation will therefore be graded according to the students’ previous work and reflections about the provided material. Active participation means not only attendance (being there ≠ participation) but discussion with relevant basis (text-based and not just random personal experience and background), asking and answering questions in class, engaging in class discussions and conversations with class mates, questioning information presented and discussed. This course is based on the assumption that students take part not as passive consumers of knowledge but as active participants in the exchange, production, and critique of ideas—their own ideas and the ideas of others. To this end, students need to prepare themselves reading the contents due for each session. While students may be regularly keeping up with the required readings and assignments it also important that they come prepared to show that they are keeping up with those readings/assignments through active class participation.
Rubric for Assessing Participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of participation in class</th>
<th>Exemplary (90%-100%)</th>
<th>Proficient (80%-90%)</th>
<th>Developing (70%-80%)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (&gt;70%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student initiates contributions more than once in each recitation.</td>
<td>Student initiates contribution once in each recitation.</td>
<td>Student initiates contribution at least in half of the recitations</td>
<td>Student does not initiate contribution &amp; needs instructor to solicit input.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of comments</td>
<td>Comments always insightful &amp; constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions &amp; specific, thoughtful criticisms or</td>
<td>Comments mostly insightful &amp; constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.</td>
<td>Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.</td>
<td>Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion &amp; personal taste, e.g., “I love it”, “I hate it”, “It’s bad” etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening Skills</td>
<td>Student listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others’ remarks, i.e., student hears what others say &amp; contributes to the dialogue.</td>
<td>Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect &amp; build on others’ remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.</td>
<td>Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.</td>
<td>Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.</td>
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Midterm (20%) and final exams (20%): Exams will include a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and short essay questions. Students must demonstrate that they have mastered the theories, concepts and terms from lecture, class discussions, videos and readings.

The final grade for the course is comprised of the following:

- Paper (20%)
- Final Reflection (15%)
- Oral Presentation (10%)
- Participation (15%)
- Mid-term Exam (20%)
- Final Exam (20%)

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1 Source: Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence. Carnegie Mellon University
Final Grade Expectations
The instructor will use the Spanish 10-point grading scale. The grades that will appear on your final transcript are also Spanish grades.

- Grade A/A- (9-10) — Outstanding performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course. The best possible grade.
- Grade B+/B (8-9) — Remarkable performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Next highest.
- Grade B/B- (7-8) — Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Indicates high average performance.
- Grade C+/C (6-7) — Fairly good performance showing an understanding of the course on a basic level. Indicates low average performance.
- Grade C/C- (5-6) — Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course's topics. Lowest passing grade.
- Grade F (0-5) – Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Failing grade.

General Course Policies
Leaving the classroom: Leaving the classroom on repeated occasions is disturbing to both your professor and your classmates and may adversely affect your participation grade. Please make use of the 10 minute breaks in between classes to fill up your water bottle, use the restroom, etc.

Punctuality and tardiness: Arriving late to class is disruptive to both the professor and your classmates. Please be punctual as your professor may count your late arrival as half of an absence or simply close the door, not let any late students in and consider it as one full absence.

Communicating with instructor: Please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails. The weekend is not included in this timeframe. If you have an urgent request or question for your professor, be sure to send it during the week.

Attendance and Absentee Policy
Attendance is mandatory at all classes. As we understand that you might fall ill or be unable to come to class (e.g. due to a religious holiday, a flight delay, a family wedding/reunion, a graduation, a job interview, etc.) at some point during the semester, you are allowed up to 4 absences. You will be responsible for the material covered and any work missed. You will not need to justify your absences (up to 4) in any way unless you miss an exam, a presentation, a quiz, etc. In this case, you must present a doctor's note (signed, stamped and dated) to be able to reschedule the exam, etc. It will still count as an absence but you will be allowed to retake the exam, etc. We don't encourage you to use all 4 days unless you really need them as your participation grade may suffer if you are not in class. If used unwisely and you get sick late in the semester, the following penalties will apply:
- On your 5th absence, 1 point will be taken off of your final Spanish grade
- On your 6th absence, 3 points will be taken off of your final Spanish grade
- On your 7th absence, 5 points will be taken off of your final Spanish grade

For classes that meet once a week, each absence counts as two. For classes that meet daily, the penalties outlined above apply if you go over 6 absences (7th absence = 5th absence above). Exams missed due to an excused absence must be made up within a week of returning to classes. Talk to your professor immediately after your return.

**Academic Honesty**
Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Pablo de Olavide University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism (which includes copying from the Internet) are clear violations of academic honesty. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person's intellectual property as his or her own. The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is a failing grade for the assignment/exam and a failing grade for the course. Avoid plagiarism by citing sources properly, using footnotes and a bibliography, and not cutting and pasting information from various websites when writing assignments.

**Learning Accommodations**
If you require special accommodations, you must stop by the International Center to speak to Carmen G. Hernández (the Faculty coordinator: cgheroje@acu.upo.es) to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it. The deadline is February 21st. Carmen will explain the options available to you.

**Behavior Policy**
Students are expected to show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner at all times. A student's attitude in class may influence his/her participation grade. The professor has a right to ask a student to leave the classroom if the student is unruly or appears intoxicated. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, that day will count as an absence regardless of how long the student has been in class. Cell phone use is not allowed and animals (except seeing-eye dogs) are not permitted in the classrooms.

**Course contents**
- Culture and the subject. Body Conceptions.
- Eating disorders and anthropology.
- Traditional anthropologist and political economy anthropologist. The case of HIV. Social determinants of health.
- Reproductive Health. Culture and health. Mental health in different cultures. Healing in different cultures

### Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course presentation</td>
<td>No readings required</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to Medical Anthropology</td>
<td>Kleinman, A. (2010), Four Social Theories for Global Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Medical Pluralism</td>
<td>Tilburg, Jon C and G. Miller, Franklin. Responding to Medical Pluralism in Practice: A Principled Ethical Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Culture and the subject</td>
<td>Scheper-Hughes, &amp; Lock, The mindful body, 6-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Non-Western disease etiologies</td>
<td>Foster, G (1976) Disease etiologies in Non-Western medical systems, 773-782</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Social Determinants of health</td>
<td>Marmot, M (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Taboos and invisibilisation. The role of medical anthropology</td>
<td>Boddy J (2016). The normal and the aberrant in female genital cutting: Shifting paradigms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Traditional anthropologist and political economy anthropologist. The case of HIV</td>
<td>Ramien, Brodie. Anthropology speaks to medicine: the case of HIV/AIDS in Africa</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Social determinants of health and mid-term preparation</td>
<td>No readings required</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mid-term exam (March, 17th) Lectures 1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Culture and health</td>
<td>Kleinman, Culture and depression, 951-952.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mental health in different cultures</td>
<td>Kleinman, Culture and depression, 951-952.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Healing in different cultures</td>
<td>No readings required</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Intercultural competence</td>
<td>Kleinman, ‘Catastrophe and Caregiving: The Failure of Medicine as an Art’, The Lancet, 371</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Interventions</td>
<td>Van der Geest, S. Training shopkeepers and schoolchildren in medicine use: experiments in applied medical anthropology in East Africa, pp 253-255</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Experimental subjects, ethics I (House: episode 8 “informant consent”)</td>
<td>No readings required</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Medical Anthropology Presentations 1 (non-participant observation) (Personal reflection deadline, May 7th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Medical Anthropology Presentations 2 (non-participant observation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Medical Anthropology Presentations 3 (non-participant observation)</td>
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**Important dates**
- Essay/Paper Submission: Students should hand in a hard copy of the essay to Elena González by April, 2nd 2020.
- Midterm Exam: March, 17th
- Personal reflection: May, 7th
- Final Exam: TBC

**Holidays**
- Thursday, February 27: “Puente.” No classes will be held.
- Friday, February 28: Día de Andalucía.
- Monday, March 2: “Puente.” No classes will be held.
- Sunday, April 5 - Sunday, April 12: Semana Santa (Holy Week).
- Friday, May 1: Labor Day.
- Saturday, April 26 - Sunday, May 2: Feria de Abril (Seville’s April Fair).

*Note: This syllabus is subject to change.*