INTL 410/510
Ecology and Health

Professor: Dr. David Meek
Email: ddmeek@uoregon.edu
Class: Monday and Wednesday; 12:00-1:50
Class Location: 112 ESL
Office Hour: 10:30-11:45 M/Wed
Office: 365 PLC

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the social and ecological dimensions of human health. Recent years have seen a renaissance of scholarship within the social sciences using political ecology to examine human disease (Oppong and Kalipeni, 2005; Richmond et al., 2005; Sultana, 2006; Cutchin, 2007; Baer and Singer, 2008; Hanchette, 2008). Other work draws upon biopolitics to understand the human body in relation to structural determinants of health decision-making and vulnerabilities (Mansfield 2010, Guthman 2011). Additional studies are focused upon providing explicit attention to the complex interrelationships between the social and ecological dimensions of human health (King and Crews 2013). While human disease and health will be a central area of emphasis, students will be exposed to diverse theoretical frameworks for addressing human-environment interactions. The seminar will be useful for students in a wide range of fields including anthropology, geography, sociology, ecology, and natural resources and conservation. Topics to be covered in the course include health and environment interactions; bodies and health; climate change, and environmental justice. Course expectations include intensive reading, in-class discussions, and the completion of a research paper of individual interest.

Course materials
All required course readings are available online through Canvas. There are no required books for this course.

Attendance (5%): Students will be required to attend all classes and participate in discussions held in a seminar format. There is no mandatory attendance policy; however, each absence will lower the final grade by 1%. With a legitimate excuse and documentation (i.e. signed doctor’s note), partial make-up for missed classes can be arranged on an individual basis with the professor.

Class participation (10%): Class participation is expected from all students. Quality, not quantity, of opinions is what counts. Students should endeavor to limit their contributions to class discussion to a maximum of 3 or 4 comments per class in order to allow all students the chance to participate.

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS-20%
While reading is a critical part of learning, writing about what you have read is an opportunity to further develop your own ideas about a topic in a more systematic way. As scholars, it is important for us to learn how to critically engage with others’ work through written analysis. For every class you should make a post in that day’s discussion forum. Each discussion post is worth 3 points. Your post (worth 2 points) should contain two pieces of information:
1) Reflections about the readings-Did you agree with the author’s arguments? How did it relate to your personal experiences? Did this make you think about the topic in a new way? Mainly what was your personal EDUCATED opinion of the readings? (1 point)

2) 2 questions you had about the reading that you will pose to the class (1 point)

For full credit (an additional point), you are also required to:
3) Respond to another student’s post. Please make sure your comments are cordial, and constructive. This should not be a simple “I agree with you;” rather, you should offer a focused comment that builds upon the original post to open a discussion. (1 point)

Mid-term-20%

3-page analysis of contemporary public health crisis from a political ecology of health perspective- 20%

Final assignment-paper/power-point 25%

Grading Scale
100-90% = A (97-100 = A++; 94-96 = A; 90-93 = A-)
89-80% = B (87-89 = B++; 84-86 = B; 80-79 = B-)
79-70% = C (77-79 = C++; 74-76 = C; 70-73 = C-)
69-60% = D (67-69 = D++; 64-66 = D; 60-63 = D-)
59% - O = F

Graduate students: You will be held to a higher standard of analysis for classroom participation, and assignments. Throughout the course there will be several weeks when you will be assigned an additional reading or two.

Week 1: Introduction-A political-environmental approach to health

January 7th Towards Political Ecology


January 9th


Week 2: Histories of Globalized Health
January 14th: Global Health


January 16th: Global political ecology


Week 3: Development and Inequality
January 23rd (no class Jan 21st for MLK day)


Week 4: Landscapes and Human Health
January 28th


January 30th


Week 5: Infectious Disease & Development

February 4th


February 6th


Week 6: Pandemics & The Global
February 11th Midterm

February 13th


Week 7: Mosquito Landscapes
February 18th


February 20th


Week 8: Farmworkers & Contradictions of Healthy Landscapes
February 25th

Holmes, Seth M. “‘Oaxacans like to work bent over”: The naturalization of social suffering among berry farm workers." International Migration 45.3 (2007): 39-68.
February 27th


Week 9: Globalization, Obesity, and Mental Health
March 4th


March 6th Mental Health
Read draft of my Journal of Peasant Studies paper


Week 10: Nuclear Disasters
March 11th


March 13th Final Project Presentations
**Week ? Epigenetics/Genes vs. Environments**

**Week X: Gendered Bodies and Environmental Toxins**


**Week 2 (January 15): Political ecology: an introduction**

*Supplemental:*

**Week 3 (January 22): Political ecology: other views**

*Knowing Nature: Conversations at the Intersection of Political Ecology and Science Studies.*
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.


**Supplemental:**


Week 5 (February 5): Political ecology and health


Supplemental:


Week 6 (February 12): Health and environment interactions

Supplemental:


**Week 7 (February 19): Biopolitics and governmentality**


Slocum, R. 2008. Commentary on "public health as urban politics, urban geography" lecture.

**Supplemental:**


Week 11 (March 19): Politics of disease

Supplemental:

Week 12 (March 26): Ecologies and politics of health
Final paper proposal due

Supplemental: