INTL 199: Wellbeing: Health, Education, Environment

Instructor: Dr. David Meek
Location: Tykeson 204
Time: MW 10-11:20 a.m.
Office hours: MW 8:30-9:50 a.m.

Course description:
This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to human wellbeing. We will take a thematic approach to analyzing the factors that impact wellbeing, focusing on health, education, and the environment. The course begins with an introduction, during which we will explore basic perspectives on wellbeing and whether or not something called “wellbeing” is a human universal. The remainder of the course is broken into three major (3-week) thematic sections. The first section focuses on health and wellbeing. Over three weeks, we will explore the relations between nutrition and wellbeing, body image and globalization, and the roles of industrial and alternative agriculture in shaping our bodies, health, and wellbeing. The second section centers around the linkages between education and wellbeing. This section begins by introducing theories from the study of comparative education, and moves on to explore the role of education in sustainable development. As part of this section, we will explore how global economic visions, such as neoliberalism, structure educational priorities. We will explore synergies between health and education by analyzing nutrition education and its linkages with wellbeing. This section will conclude with an exploration of how grassroots educational systems shape wellbeing. The third section of the course focuses on the connections between the environment and wellbeing. Through this section we will first explore the myriad contributions that a healthy environment makes to wellbeing. We will then analyze how connection with nature contributes to wellbeing. We will conclude the course with an examination of how climate change is impacting wellbeing, and how different communities are developing resilience to its impacts.

Course readings:
All course readings will be available online via Canvas

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:
1) Participation/Attendance (pop quizzes-10% and engagement in lecture-5%)– 15%
2) Reading Responses (Due before by midnight the evening before every class session; late responses will not be graded)– 20%
3) Thematic exams-40% (2 x 20% each)
4) Final exam –25%

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE (15%) There will be pop quizzes spread throughout the quarter. These quizzes will be either multiple choice, and/or short answer and will cover basic information from the readings and lecture. Pop quizzes will be used to assess engagement with the course material and monitor attendance. Contributing actively in class is an important means for sharing and refining ones’ ideas; engaging with other students and through responding to the professor’s questions in lecture is worth 5% of the final grade.
READING RESPONSES (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?

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

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.

Exams: There will be two exams during the quarter. These will be short exams that will combine multiple choice and short answer questions. Exams will take approximately half of a class period. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The final exam will be cumulative, but will be weighted proportionately with more questions from the final third of the course. The final will have the same format as the other exams. The final is worth 25% of the final grade.

IMPORTANT DATES
1st Mid-term Exam: January 23rd
2nd Mid-term Exam: February 24th
Final exam: March 17th

DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS:
If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, or if you have medical information you wish to share with me, please see me privately after class or in office hours.

EXAMS AND PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
You are expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits. Be proud of your work and avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty. In all of your assignment you may use words or ideas written by others but only with proper attribution. It means that you have fully identified the original source and extent of your use of the words or ideas of others that you reproduce in your work for this course usually in the form of a footnote or parenthesis. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class**

Outline of Course Topics and Assignments

*Reading Reflections due at midnight the night before each class session.
Week 1: Introduction to Wellbeing from International Perspectives

January 6th: Introduction


January 8th Cultural Construal of Wellbeing – Theories and Empirical Evidence


Section 2 Health and Wellbeing

Week 2: Eating and its Disorders: Body image, Culture, and Globalization

January 13th: Body Image, Culture, and Globalization


Parasecoli, F. Feeding Hard Bodies: Food and Masculinities in Men’s Fitness Magazines. Food and Culture. 284-299.

January 15th: Other ways of Knowing Food: Critical Perspectives on Nutrition and Wellbeing


Week 3: Public Health - What's Agriculture Got to Do with It?

January 20th: Industrial agriculture, Nutrition Transitions, and Pesticide Exposure

**January 22nd: Agroecological alternatives**


**Week 4: Animal Ecologies, Infectious Disease and Wellbeing**

**January 27th:** Foodborne Illness, Infectious Disease and the Politics of Development


**January 29th:** Animal welfare and Multi-species Perspectives

*1st exam*


**Section 2: Education and Wellbeing:**

**Week 5: Education, Globalization, and Sustainable Development**

**February 3rd:** Globalization and Education


**February 5th:** Education, and Sustainable Development


**Week 6: Education, Happiness, and Quality of Life**  
**February 10th**  


**February 12th: Education and Health**  

**Week 7: Nutrition Education and Social Change**  
**February 17th**  


**February 19th: Grassroots Perspectives on Education and Social Transformation**  


**Section 3: Environment and Well-being**  
**Week 8: Ecosystem services**  
**February 24th: Biodiversity and Ecosystem services**  
*2nd exam*  

February 26th: Happiness is our Nature: Biophilia and Beyond


Week 9: Landscapes, Wellbeing and Despair
March 2nd


March 4th


Week 10: Climate Change and Ecologies of Health
March 9th


March 11th


Final Exam: Tuesday March 17th