The History of Medicine and Public Health: 
Changing Concepts of Health and Disease

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This course will be devoted to examining the conceptual categories in the history of public health and medicine. It will focus on how changing definitions of health and disease, gender and the body, and race and ethnicity have shaped our understanding of the health of individuals, specific populations and the public.

Evaluation:
Participation: 40 % of grade

The class will be conducted in a seminar format. Students will be expected to participate fully in the discussions. Each week, individual students will prepare 5 minute responses to one of the readings. The summaries are oral presentations to be delivered at the beginning of the class.

Research Papers: 60 % of the grade

Students will also be expected to write a 20-25 page paper that uses primary sources and is relevant to one of the topics discussed in class. Students are expected to discuss the topic with the instructor prior to beginning research. By October 21, it is anticipated that all students will have a defined research topic. Students are expected to begin research by the end of October. All papers are due December 9th.

Readings marked with an asterisk will be available at the Health Sciences Campus Bookstore
I. Changing Definitions of Health and Disease

September 13

The Social Determinants of Health and Disease


The Declaration of Alma-Ata International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma-Ata USSR 6-12 September 1978.


September 20

Framing Disease


September 27

The Reality and Meaning of Plagues


* Albert Camus, The Plague (NY: Knopf 1977)

October 4

**The Case of Tuberculosis**


October 11

**The Case of Mental Illness**


**II. Changing Definitions of Gender and the Body**

October 18

**Disease and Gender: The Construction of Hysteria**


October 25
Reconstructing the Body


November 1

Enhancing the Body


November 8

The Construction of Breast Cancer: Women’s Perspectives


III Constructing and Deconstructing Race and Ethnicity:
November 15

**Scientific Racism: Its Origins and Challenges**


November 22

**Race and Ethnicity in America**


November 29

**Race, Human Rights and AIDS**


December 6

**Race, Ethnicity, and Genetic Testing**


December 13

**Summary**

Papers Due