



# ANTH716

## Culture, Illness and Healing

S1 Evening 2014

*Anthropology*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Aaron Denham

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the cultural and socio-economic dimensions of disease and health. Notions of disease causality and healing practices vary enormously across societies, knowledge of which is crucial to the field of international public health. We look at how anthropological knowledge and methods can be used in applied settings, for example, to improve communication between health practitioners and patients. We also address questions in critical medical anthropology, such as: How do global inequalities and violence affect health in developing countries? What larger social transformations accompany the rise of biomedicine, including recent biomedical technologies?

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Introduce students to the scope of medical anthropology and to analyse and discuss the literature and central theories related to medical anthropology and the broader study of illness and healing practices in their social and cultural contexts.

Understand how biology, culture, politics, and ecology interact to shape illness and health, health systems, and patterns.

Interview, analyse, and represent the illness experience of another person, emphasizing

the integrative factors (culture, politics, social structure, etc.) influencing their condition. Apply the theories and concepts of medical anthropology to critically evaluate one's own culture and determinants of illness and health.

To understand how healing systems often cut across categories of religion, medicine, and social organization.

To understand how illness and health (and normality) are constructed within particular social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts.

Understand and identify how inequality, social hierarchy, and structural violence generate unequal and often unique health determinants in the global and transnational context.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Participation</a>	15%	Weekly
<a href="#">Essay 1</a>	20%	14 April
<a href="#">Illness Narrative</a>	40%	Week 12
<a href="#">Essay 2</a>	25%	Exam Week

### Participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **15%**

**Active attendance and engagement with discussions and a discussion guide based on the readings will be turned in at the conclusion of each class**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Introduce students to the scope of medical anthropology and to analyse and discuss the literature and central theories related to medical anthropology and the broader study of illness and healing practices in their social and cultural contexts.
- Understand how biology, culture, politics, and ecology interact to shape illness and health, health systems, and patterns.
- Interview, analyse, and represent the illness experience of another person, emphasizing the integrative factors (culture, politics, social structure, etc.) influencing their condition.
- Apply the theories and concepts of medical anthropology to critically evaluate one's own culture and determinants of illness and health.

- To understand how healing systems often cut across categories of religion, medicine, and social organization.
- To understand how illness and health (and normality) are constructed within particular social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts.
- Understand and identify how inequality, social hierarchy, and structural violence generate unequal and often unique health determinants in the global and transnational context.

## Essay 1

Due: **14 April**

Weighting: **20%**

**A 1,500-2,000 word essay based on topics, questions, or themes related to the unit.**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Introduce students to the scope of medical anthropology and to analyse and discuss the literature and central theories related to medical anthropology and the broader study of illness and healing practices in their social and cultural contexts.
- Understand how biology, culture, politics, and ecology interact to shape illness and health, health systems, and patterns.
- Apply the theories and concepts of medical anthropology to critically evaluate one's own culture and determinants of illness and health.
- To understand how healing systems often cut across categories of religion, medicine, and social organization.
- To understand how illness and health (and normality) are constructed within particular social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts.
- Understand and identify how inequality, social hierarchy, and structural violence generate unequal and often unique health determinants in the global and transnational context.

## Illness Narrative

Due: **Week 12**

Weighting: **40%**

**Interview a friend or family member about an illness and write a paper illustrating their illness experience.**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand how biology, culture, politics, and ecology interact to shape illness and

health, health systems, and patterns.

- Interview, analyse, and represent the illness experience of another person, emphasizing the integrative factors (culture, politics, social structure, etc.) influencing their condition.
- To understand how healing systems often cut across categories of religion, medicine, and social organization.
- To understand how illness and health (and normality) are constructed within particular social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts.

## Essay 2

Due: **Exam Week**

Weighting: **25%**

**A 2,000-2,500 word essay based on topics, questions, or themes related to the unit.**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Introduce students to the scope of medical anthropology and to analyse and discuss the literature and central theories related to medical anthropology and the broader study of illness and healing practices in their social and cultural contexts.
- Understand how biology, culture, politics, and ecology interact to shape illness and health, health systems, and patterns.
- Apply the theories and concepts of medical anthropology to critically evaluate one's own culture and determinants of illness and health.
- To understand how healing systems often cut across categories of religion, medicine, and social organization.
- To understand how illness and health (and normality) are constructed within particular social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts.
- Understand and identify how inequality, social hierarchy, and structural violence generate unequal and often unique health determinants in the global and transnational context.

## Delivery and Resources

Please access the official and final version of the unit guide via iLearn.

The course convener will use the first half of the seminar to introduce concepts, provide background information or examples, or offer an overview of the key issues under discussion. The second half of the seminar will be devoted to discussing the issues and readings.

Seminar attendance and participation are mandatory. Students are expected to be active participants and demonstrate that they have actively engaged the readings and material presented.

All other required readings will be available electronically on iLearn.

## Unit Schedule

Please access the final and official schedule via the unit guide link in iLearn

Week	Date	Lecture
1	5 March	Introduction to and Scope of Medical Anthropology
2	12 March	Belief, Healing, Meaning: "Why me? Why now?"
3	19 March	The Illness Experience I: Constructing Disorder, Experience, and Meaning
4	26 March	The Illness Experience II: Illness Narratives and Finding Culture and Stress in Talk
5	2 April	The Culture of Biomedicine
6	9 April	The Critical Perspective: Pathologies of Power, Structural Violence, and Health as Human Right
7	30 April	Global Health
8	7 May	Cultural Competency
9	14 May	The Body and Embodiment
10	21 May	Research and Reading Week
11	28 May	Organ Transplantation and Trafficking
12	4 June	Global Mental Health

13	11 June	Doctors of Two Worlds?: Applying Medical Anthropology
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## Learning and Teaching Activities

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Seminar participation and discussion

2

Interview and interview analysis

3

Essay writing

4

Critical engagement with readings

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

### Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.