



ANTH716

Culture, Illness and Healing

S1 Evening 2015

Dept of Anthropology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer

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Wednesdays 4-5pm, or by appointment

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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
Participation	15%	Weekly
Essay 1	20%	14 April
Illness Narrative	35%	Week 12
Essay 2	25%	Exam Week
Discussion Facilitation	5%	Assigned First Meeting

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.
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- 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.
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Illness Narrative

Due: **Week 12**

Weighting: **35%**

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

Discussion Facilitation

Due: **Assigned First Meeting**

Weighting: **5%**

Facilitating two seminar session discussions along with a co-facilitator.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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

Learning and Teaching Activities

1

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

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

Disruption to Studies Policy 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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

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) 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

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.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Illness Narrative
- Discussion Facilitation

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 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.
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the integrative factors (culture, politics, social structure, etc.) influencing their condition.

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- 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

- Essay 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay 2
- Discussion Facilitation

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 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.
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- 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

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay 2
- Discussion Facilitation

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 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.
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Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay 2
- Discussion Facilitation

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay 2
- Discussion Facilitation

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 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 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 task

- Illness Narrative