



ANTH716

Culture, Illness and Healing

S1 Evening 2018

Dept of Anthropology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the cultural, socio-economic, and political dimensions of disease and health. Notions of disease causality and healing practices vary enormously across societies, and an understanding of the dynamics of these factors is crucial not only for theoretical advancement, but also for applied intervention in the field of international public health. In addition to surveying the key conceptual developments in the field of medical anthropology, we look at how anthropological perspectives and methods can be used in applied settings (for example, to improve communication between health practitioners and patients). We also explore issues 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? And how might medical anthropology shape global health policies and interventions.

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	Hurdle	Due
Seminar Attendance	5%	Yes	Weekly
Discussion Guides	10%	No	Weekly
Essay Exam 1	25%	No	25 April
Illness Narrative	35%	No	30 May
Essay Exam 2	25%	No	17 June

Seminar Attendance

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **5%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Active attendance and engagement with seminar discussions. You must attend 9 of the 12 weeks of seminars to pass 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.

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Discussion Guides

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **10%**

Students are expected to complete a Discussion Guide for each seminar. Use the discussion guide to help formulate questions and examples to discuss during the seminar. Each discussion guide will be assessed according to the quality and accuracy of the description, critique, and/or analysis. Your questions will be evaluated according to how thoughtfully they are formed and how relevant they are to the readings and/or weekly theme. Each guide will receive a mark between 1 and 10. Papers that receive a mark between 8 and 10 will explore the implications of arguments in insightful or original ways, clearly represent the author(s) arguments, offer compelling analysis and/or critique, and are clearly written. Papers between 5 and 7 demonstrate a basic to good grasp of the material, present identifiable themes/issues, and attempt to offer original analysis or critique. There are 11 opportunities to submit a discussion guide this semester (the first seminar and reading week are not eligible for discussion guide submission). You can miss one seminar and/or forget one discussion guide without penalty. You will turn in 10 discussion guides.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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health, health systems, and patterns.

- 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 Exam 1

Due: **25 April**

Weighting: **25%**

A selection of essays based on the readings and seminars from the first half of the semester

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.
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Illness Narrative

Due: **30 May**

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.

- 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.

Essay Exam 2

Due: **17 June**

Weighting: **25%**

A selection of essays based on the readings and seminars from the first half of the semester

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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Delivery and Resources

Please access further details for this unit in 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

See iLearn for further details

Week	Date	Lecture	Assessment
1	28 Feb	Introduction and the Scope of Medical Anthropology	
2	7 March	Belief, Healing, Meaning	
3	14 March	Ethnomedicine	
4	21 March	The Illness Experience I: Constructing Disorder, Experience, and Meaning	
5	28 March	The Illness Experience II: Illness Narratives and Finding Culture and Stress in Talk	
6	4 April	Critical Perspectives and the Social Determinants of Illness	
7	11 April	The Culture of Biomedicine	Take home exam due (15 April)
Semester Break: 16 April to 29 April			
8	2 May	Clash of Cultures: Biomedicine and Cultural Competency	
9	9 May	Gender Diversity, Sexualities, and Health	
10	16 May	Biocultural Approaches	
11	23 May	Research and Reading Week (no seminar)	
12	30 May	Global Health	Illness Narrative (27 May)
13	6 June	Culture and Mental Health	
Exam week	17 June		Take home exam due (17 June)

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](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources 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.
- Apply the theories and concepts of medical anthropology to critically evaluate one's own culture and determinants of illness and health.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar Attendance
- Illness Narrative

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

- Seminar Attendance
- Discussion Guides

- Essay Exam 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay Exam 2

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

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Assessment tasks

- Seminar Attendance
- Discussion Guides
- Essay Exam 1
- Illness Narrative
- Essay Exam 2

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

- 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.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar Attendance
- Illness Narrative

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

- 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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Assessment tasks

- Seminar Attendance
- Illness Narrative

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

- 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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Assessment tasks

- Seminar Attendance
- Discussion Guides
- Illness Narrative