



Course Description

How do societies understand illness? How do they restore good health?

In this course, we explore how communities have confronted disease throughout Africa's history. During the first six weeks, we read about the changing role of specialist healers since the 1700s, including shamans, malams, nurses, and drug peddlers. The second half of the course turns to the history of specific diseases including malaria, AIDS, and Ebola through regional case studies. Particular emphasis is placed on pre-colonial and traditional healing, medical education, colonial therapeutics, and the impact of environmental change.

Throughout the course of the semester, participants will be able to hone their historical research skills through primary source labs. The research labs will incorporate analysis of historical documents and artifacts related to particular aspects of therapeutics and sickness in Africa.

Overall, this course offers participants a nuanced, historical perspective on the current health crisis in Africa. Staggering figures place the burden of global disease in Africa; not only AIDS and malaria, but also pneumonia, diarrhea and mental illness significantly affect the lives of everyday people. Studying the history of illness and healing in African societies provides a framework with which to interpret the social, political, and environmental factors shaping international health today.

No previous coursework in African history is expected. Course participants will make two oral and written reports on weekly assignments. There will also be one longer research paper (8-10 pages) on the history of a particular health concern.

Course Goals

After completing History 350L "Medicine in Africa" you should be able to:

- 1) Identify 3 key cultural influences on African healing strategies since the 1800s.
- 2) Describe generally the changing relationships between society, disease and environment in the context of 5 illnesses in African history.
- 3) Conduct basic research on the history of African health using multiple sources.
- 4) Describe in detail the history of a specific illness, or category of healing in an African country or region.

Flags:

This course is designated as fulfilling the requirements for a **Global Cultures Flag**. At least one third of the course content requires an in-depth examination of the broader cultural context and perspectives of one or more non-U.S. communities, countries, or coherent regional groupings of countries, past or present.

It is also designated as fulfilling the requirements for a **Writing Flag**. At least one third of the course grade depends on writing. Course participants will produce regular written projects and receive feedback on their writing assignments from the instructor.

Course Marking:

Course participants are required to attend all class meetings and to contribute fully to discussions.

Unexcused absences will result in the drop of half a letter grade (-5 points). Excused absences require 24 hour advance notice to the instructor, **and** a written statement from a physician. Alert the instructor if you anticipate any conflict with course meetings for religious reasons.

The overall grade for this course depends on active class participation and quality of written work:

Contributions to class discussions and quizzes.....	40 points
Final project.....	40 points
Oral Report/ Response Paper #1.....	10 points
Oral Report/ Response Paper #2.....	10 points

Total Maximum = 100 points

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	69-60%
Failing:	Below 60%

Description of Course Assignments:

Class Discussions (40 points)

To prepare for class, set aside time to read the assigned books and articles **at least** two days in advance of the class meeting. Depending on how fast you read and your familiarity with historical texts and African history, it will take between 2 to 8 hours to digest the roughly 200 pages for each week. You may find it helpful to type or write down questions and points of interest as you read or shortly afterwards. **Be sure to print out any e-reserves and highlight key ideas.**

During class, each participant will have a chance to respond to the readings and raise questions and thoughts. Be considerate of others, but be sure your opinions are heard!

Oral Reports/Response Paper (20 points total)

Each participant will make two brief reports on assigned readings throughout the course of the semester. Oral reports should be no more than 3 to 5 minutes in length.

The idea is not to provide an exhaustive summary of readings. Rather aim to highlight the main points of each reading and explain any criticisms you have of the author's approach. At the end of the oral report, provide a general question that links together all the week's readings.

Response papers are to be submitted the day of the class when oral reports are made on Canvas. Each response paper should be 1-2 pages double spaced (12 point font with 1 ½" margins). Each should be a well written, closely argued statement that synthesizes and connects the week's readings. It is not necessary, however, to use any outside sources to supplement your discussion of the assigned books and/or articles.

Final Paper (40 points)

Each participant is responsible for one mid-length paper on the history of a particular health concern or category of healing from a region or country in Africa (6-8 pages double spaced, 12 point font with 1 ½" margins). **Final projects are due at 5 pm on Canvas Monday Dec 8.** Late submissions will result in -10 points/day.

Quality of the final paper (40 points total) will depend on:

- Creative use of available sources, both primary and secondary (10 points)
- Attention to course themes (10 points)
- Historical accuracy (10 points)
- Effective style, spelling, and grammar (10 points)

Readings (available at the campus bookstore):

Required:

1. Michael Heaton, *Black Skin, White Coats: Nigerian Psychiatrists, Decolonization, and the Globalization of Psychiatry* (Ohio, 2013)
2. Kris Holloway, *Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years with a Midwife in Mali* (Waveland Press, 2006)
3. Julie Livingston, *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic* (Duke, 2012)
4. Malidoma Patrice Some, *Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual, Magic and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman*
5. Megan Vaughan, *Curing their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Stanford, 1991)

Syllabus 2018/8/29 (subject to revision)
Links to readings on Canvas

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Aug 29	No class	Wednesday: No class
Sep 3 – no class Sep 5	Introduction: Multiple Heritages of Healing in African Societies	Monday: Labor Day Holiday (no class) Wednesday: Introduction to the class
HEALING & HEALERS		
Sep 10 Sep 12	African Traditional Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bannerman-Richter (1987) <i>Mmoetia: The Mysterious Little People</i>, excerpts• Rattray (1930), <i>Ashanti Art & Religion</i>, excerpts.
Sep 17 Sep 19	Traditional African Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some, <i>Of Water and the Spirit</i>, pp. 1-170.• Osseo-Asare, "Writing Medical Authority: The Rise of Literate Healers in Ghana, 1930-1970," <i>Journal of African History</i> <p>➤ Wednesday: Historical Writing Exercise in Class</p>
Sep 24 Sep 26	Islamic Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Langwick, <i>Bodies, Politics, and African Healing</i>, Ch. 4• Owusu-Ansah, "Prayer, amulets, and healing" in <i>The History of Islam in Africa</i> <p>➤ Wednesday: Watch short documentary film in class</p>
Oct 1 Oct 3	Missionaries and Healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vaughan, <i>Curing their Ills</i> (Ch. 7)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wednesday: watch film in class Bassek Ba Kobhio, <i>Le Grand blanc de Lambaréné: The great white man of Lambaréné</i> (1995)
Oct 8 Oct 10	Nationalism and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Langwick, <i>Bodies, Politics, and African Healing</i>, Ch. 5 ("Traditional Birth Attendants as Institutional Evocations") ➤ Monday: Short Map Quiz (15 minutes) ➤ Wednesday: Historical Writing Exercise in class
ILLNESS CASE STUDIES		
Oct 15 Oct 17	Peace Corps + Reproductive Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holloway, <i>Monique and the Mango Rains</i>
Oct 22 Oct 24	Mental Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heaton, <i>Black Skin, White Coats</i> ➤ Wednesday: Identify 4 primary sources to use for your paper and bring copies of each source to class
Oct 29 Oct 31	Malaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frenkel and Western, "Pretext or Prophylaxis? Racial Segregation and Malarial Mosquitos in a British Tropical Colony: Sierra Leone," <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>, Vol. 78, No. 2 (Jun., 1988) • Osseo-Asare, <i>Bitter Roots: The Search for Healing Plants in Africa</i> Ch. 4 • Webb, "Malaria and the peopling of early tropical Africa," <i>Journal of World History</i> 16 (3)
Nov 5	**Paper Title and Research Question due on Canvas**	
Nov 5 Nov 7	AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS readings on Canvas ➤ Thursday: Identify 4 secondary sources to use for your paper and bring copies of each to class. Type up a one sentence description of each source.
Nov 12 - (no class) Nov 14	Cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livingston, <i>Improvising Medicine</i> ➤ Wednesday: Library assignment in class
Nov 19 Nov 21 - (no class Thanksgi ving Break)	Ebola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harden, "Dr. Matthew's Passion," <i>The New York Times</i> Feb 18, 2001 • Additional readings on Canvas ➤ Watch film, Mitman, <i>In the Shadow of Ebola</i>

Nov 26 Nov 28	Final Paper Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monday– meet at PCL ➤ Wednesday: Bring several copies of your 5 paragraph paper draft to class
Dec 3 Dec 5	Final Paper Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monday: Bring several copies of your 10 paragraph paper draft to class ➤ Wednesday: Bring several copies of your 15 paragraph paper draft to class
Dec 8	No class	
Dec 8	**Final Project Due On Canvas by midnight**	