

## **INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH STUDIES (HLTH B115)**

### *INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATIONS OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS*

We are thrilled to be working with each of you. As we come together this fall we first acknowledge our current context of an ongoing pandemic that continues to reveal and exacerbate existing inequities in our society. These are intense, difficult times. We value your well-being and understand that engaging with topics related to health and illness can be challenging, particularly at this time. We are all going to learn how to show grace to one another in different ways throughout this term. Welcome.

### **COURSE INFORMATION & SCHEDULE**

(Subject to Change as Necessary)

#### **INSTRUCTORS**

**Prof. Patty Kelly**

Haverford College

Anthropology/Health Studies

[pkelly@haverford.edu](mailto:pkelly@haverford.edu)

Student Hours (Zoom): TBD

**Prof. Adam Williamson**

Bryn Mawr College

Biology/Health Studies

[awilliams6@brynmawr.edu](mailto:awilliams6@brynmawr.edu)

Student hours (Zoom): [Calbird](#)

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to introduction to health studies, the multidisciplinary foundation for the health studies minor. In this course you will be introduced to theories and methods from the life sciences, social sciences, and humanities and will learn to apply them to problems of health and illness. Topics include epidemiological, public health, and biomedical perspectives on health and disease; social, behavioral, and environmental determinants of health; globalization of health issues; health inequalities, social justice, and health as a human right.

#### **COURSE FOUNDATION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Health studies is an interdisciplinary field at the confluence of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. After this course, you will possess the tools to meaningfully engage with scholarship across disciplines.
- We value the lived experience of individuals as truth in health studies in a unique way because our course is specifically focused on how different people navigate the world

- We acknowledge that research across disciplines is a reflection of and impacted by the inequalities of the society in which it occurs
- Written work in this course is an opportunity to connect core themes across a diverse set of health studies topics

### **CASE STUDIES THAT WE WILL DISCUSS THIS SEMESTER**

*Our five core case studies this semester are:*

- HIV/AIDS
- Mass incarceration as a public health crisis
- Heat and the built environment
- Melanoma and Cancer Immunotherapy
- Intimate Partner Violence

**Content warning:** We acknowledge that the content discussed in this class may be difficult or impossible for some students to engage in fully as a result of past or present harm or traumas. In our role as instructors we do not presume to know which materials present challenges for each student. We encourage you to review the list of case studies above and reach out to your instructors if you anticipate difficulty engaging with one or more of the topics. Please know the case studies are largely independent of one another and your engagement with alternate material and assignments during a case study will not impact your course grade.

### **COURSE LOGISTICS - WHAT TO EXPECT DURING A NORMAL WEEK IN HLTH B115**

We will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:55-11:15 am in **Old Library 110** at Bryn Mawr College. Class will start promptly at 9:55 am.

**Tuesdays:** Tuesday classes will usually include a brief opportunity to engage with news and current events related to the case study we are discussing followed by an interactive 30-45 min lecture from an instructor to help you connect with a topic, introduce you to terms or themes necessary to engage with material, and learn about a topic from different disciplinary perspectives. Students will also complete in class writing as means to generate discussion.

**Thursdays:** Thursday classes will usually be a highly interactive opportunity for you to engage with your colleagues in the class about health studies concepts related to each case study. For instance, you might engage in group work related to a map, graph,

piece of written material, video, or podcast and present your findings to the class in the form of an informal presentation.

Your instructors understand that one or more class meetings may fall on days of religious observance and other commitments you know of in advance. We also acknowledge the challenging and uncertain circumstances you're all working under in the midst of an ongoing pandemic. During the first week of class you will build a structured health studies support network of other students to enable you to catch up from class notes if you are not able to attend one or more classes.

### **COURSE AND DISCUSSION NORMS**

*In collaboration with your instructors and peers you will develop norms that will guide conversation during this course. Some overarching themes:*

- We value active listening and respect for and affirmation of the experiences of others
- We value your contributions to the learning space we will build this semester.
- Please engage with readings, documentary videos, podcasts, and other resources on the Moodle prior to each class in order to inform our conversation and your writing.

### **READINGS, VIDEOS, PODCASTS, AND OTHER RESOURCES**

**There are no required books to purchase for this course.** All readings, lecture slides, assignments, and other resources will be posted on the course Moodle. Short, in class lectures by Profs. Kelly and Williamson will explore themes related to the readings as well as other health studies topics and ground our discussions in class. **These conversations will be enabled and informed by 2-3 short readings, short videos, or podcasts each week.**

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Response Papers - 50% of final grade (5 response papers, each 10% of your final grade)**
  - You will complete five short response papers this semester (2 pages double-spaced maximum length) in response to prompts posted by instructors.

- Writing focus will depend on the content of course. On average you will complete a response paper every other week. You will have ~7 days to complete each response paper, enabling you to bring themes from different class sources and conversations into your writing.
- Prof. Kelly or Prof. Williamson will provide feedback and a grade for each written response using feedback features on Moodle.
- Each weekly entry accounts for 10% of your final grade

**Response Paper Grading Rubric (Responses graded out of 10 points):**

**10 points:** Outstanding work draws on sources from the course to support an argument. Clear, concise prose that is easy for an instructor to follow.

**8-9 points:** Strong work that connects to course material. Argument or prose challenging for instructor to follow.

**6-7 points:** Complete work related to prompt.

**6 points and below:** Brief response that does not connect to course material or prompt

**Provisional schedule of writing assignments (subject to change)**

Writing Assignment 1 - Posted Thurs. 9/2, Due Tues. 9/7 (labor day)

Writing Assignment 2 - Posted Thurs. 9/9, Due Mon. 9/13

Writing Assignment 3 - Posted Thurs. 9/23, Due Mon. 9/27

Writing Assignment 4 - Posted Thurs. 10/28, Due Mon. 11/1

Writing Assignment 5 - Posted Thurs. 11/11, Due Mon. 11/15

**2. Disease ecology final project 20% of final grade**

- Explore a disease or condition from a diversity of disciplinary perspectives with a small team of other students. This is a small group collective project but *your individual contribution* is the graded component.
- More information about the disease ecology project is posted on the course Moodle page ("Disease Ecology Project" section below the case studies).

**3. Reflection and peer review of disease ecology projects - 15% of final grade**

- The final assessment for this course is a piece of work comprised of reflections about your own disease ecology project in the context of this course as well as peer review of a selection of the other group projects.
4. **Documenting your own built environment - 15% of your final grade**
- As part of the Heat and the Built Environment module, you will have the opportunity to document a built environment from your past or present. This assignment can take the form a map, set of images, or text description. More information about this assignment will be made available later in the term.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTORS**

- **Routine questions about course material, due dates, and assignments should be posted on the course Piazza to ensure as quick a response as possible**, questions sent via email to instructors likely will not be answered immediately. You have the option to post anonymously to Piazza but please know your identity is visible to your instructors (not other students)
- Questions you would rather not be visible to the whole class can be sent directly to your instructors ([pkelly@haverford.edu](mailto:pkelly@haverford.edu) and [awilliams6@brynmaur.edu](mailto:awilliams6@brynmaur.edu)) but please know our responses may not be immediate, especially if your email is sent outside the days/hours of M-F/9am-5pm EST

### **GRADES AND PROVISIONAL GRADE SCALE**

This course will likely be graded as follows:

93 - 100% = 4.0

90 - 92% = 3.7

87 - 89% = 3.3

83 - 86% = 3.0

80 - 82% = 2.7

77 - 79% = 2.3

70 - 76% = 2.0

**Grades on Moodle:** The overall course grade visible on Moodle is not a reflection of your current grade for the course. We understand this is confusing for students. So why is it this way? The Moodle gradebook requires the instructor to enter percentages for each assignment prior to the term and is somewhat inflexible if changes are required

during the semester. As we continue to work together under uncertain circumstances your instructors require flexibility to make changes to assignment percentages if necessary.

## **ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

Your instructors are committed to support your learning and foster a learning environment where you are able to contribute and thrive. If you have any questions about access or accommodations please contact your instructors who will schedule a time to discuss any concerns you might have confidentially. In addition, we will support any documented accommodations communicated to Bryn Mawr or Haverford access services that you require to participate fully in this course. **Please note that this course does not require you to complete timed, graded quizzes or exams.**

### **TITLE IX STATEMENT** (*Italicized text Bryn Mawr College Provost*):

*Bryn Mawr/Haverford College is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive living and learning environment where all can feel secure and free from harassment. All forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic violence, and dating violence are violations of Bryn Mawr/Haverford's policies, whether they occur on or off campus. Bryn Mawr/Haverford faculty are committed to helping to create a safe learning environment for all students and for the College community as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination, harassment, or violence, know that help and support are available. Staff members are trained to support students in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more.*

*The College strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of sexual misconduct. Please be aware that all Bryn Mawr/Haverford employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors, clergy, and healthcare providers) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the Bi-College [Title IX Coordinator](#).*

*Information about the College's Sexual Misconduct policy, reporting options, and a list of campus and local resources can be found on the College's website:*

[Bryn Mawr Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)  
[Haverford Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

**FALL 2021 COURSE SCHEDULE**  
(Subject to Change if Necessary)

**(All readings, videos other resources, and assignments that support each week will be posted on the course Moodle)**

**Week 1 (8/31, 9/2): Week 1: Health Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Health, Disease, and Social Justice**

**Week 2 (9/7, 9/9): HIV/AIDS - Part 1**

**Week 3 (9/14, 9/16): HIV/AIDS - Part 2**

**Week 4 (9/21, 9/23): Mass Incarceration as a Public Health Crisis - Part 1**

**Week 5 (9/28, 9/30): Mass Incarceration as a Public Health Crisis - Part 2**

**Week 6 (10/5, 10/7): Heat and the Built Environment - Part 1**

**FALL BREAK 10/9 - 10/17 - TAKE A BREAK!**

**Week 7 (10/19, 10/21): Heat and the Built Environment - Part 2**

**Week 8 (10/26, 10/28): Melanoma - Part 1**

**Week 9 (11/2, 11/4\*): Melanoma - Part 2**

**Week 10 (11/9, 11/11): Intimate Partner Violence - Part 1**

**Week 11 (11/16, 11/18): Intimate Partner Violence - Part 2**

**Week 12 (11/23): Health Studies Documentary Film Screening**

**Week 13 (11/30, 12/2): Disease Ecology Project Work Week**

**Week 14 (12/7, 12/9): Disease Ecology Project Research Symposium**