

Plagues and People

Health and Disease in Human Society

Fall 2024

ANTH4022 | ANTH5005

University of Wyoming



Class description

In this course, we will study the impact of diseases such as plague, smallpox, polio, rabies, and coronaviruses on human society – from their effects on populations to how they have influenced the course of history. We'll identify social and cultural factors and conditions that influence or impede the rate of spread of contagious diseases. Additionally, we'll examine several ethical issues that arise concerning the treatment of the sick and policies to halt epidemics, both in the past and today. A final section of the course will discuss the contemporary threat of emerging modern diseases.

Learning outcomes: In this course you will develop an understanding of the impact of disease outbreaks and epidemics on human biology, evolution, society, and culture. By the end of the course, you should be equipped with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and tools necessary to understand how past and present disease outbreaks have shaped human society and their applicability to biological anthropology.

CLASS INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFO

Allison E. Mann, PhD |
amann11@uwyo.edu | George C.
Frison Hall, Room 210

CLASS MEETING TIMES

MWF 10:00 am – 10:50 am

George C. Frison Hall, Room 140

OPEN OFFICE HOURS

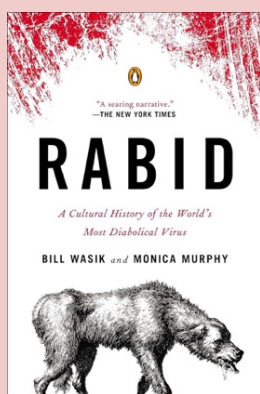
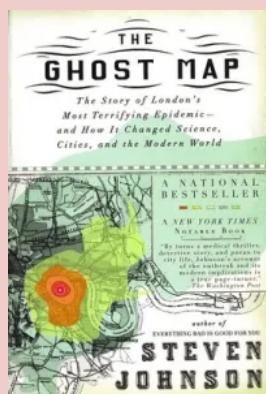
MWF 2:30 – 4:30 or by appointment

Required Texts

We will be reading two books in full throughout the course. All other required readings and other course material will be posted on WyoCourses.

Required Texts (alternative and electronic editions should be fine):

- Steven Johnson (2007). *The Ghost Map: The story of London's most terrifying epidemic.* Riverhead Books (320 pages)
- Bill Wasik & Monica Murphy (2012). *Rabid: A cultural history of the world's most diabolical virus.* Penguin Books (236 pages). This book is available as a **FREE** eBook in UW libraries!



Grading

Your grade for this course is based on four major components of the course that are each weighted so that 5% of your final grade is from attendance and participation, 67% from exams, 17% from your research paper, and 11% is from in-class quizzes and exercises.

Grade Breakdown:

Grade Item	Weighted Score
Attendance & Participation	5% of final grade (0.05 x (points earned/50))
3 highest scores of 4 exams	67% of final grade (0.67 x (points earned/450))
Research paper	17% of final grade (0.17 x (points earned/150))
Quizzes & exercises	11% of final grade (0.11 x (points earned/100))

Example Grade Calculation:

Assignment	Total Points	Example Points	Weighted Score
Attendance & Participation	50	40	0.04
Exams (top 3)	450	400	0.59
Research paper	150	120	0.13
Quizzes & exercises	100	85	0.09
		% Grade	0.86
		Letter Grade	B

Attendance & Absence Policy

It is important to come to class. Many of the course materials are posted on WyoCourses, but there is other important information that will only be presented in class. We also will have in-class quizzes and exercises that are an important part of your final grade. To track attendance, you will need to sign an attendance sheet every day. You will have two "freebee" unexcused absences, no questions asked. After these, however, you will lose 10 points per unexcused absence. If you can't avoid missing a class, please let me know in advance and provide documentation, if possible.

Assignments

Exams: Questions on exams may come from any of the class material (lectures, readings, discussions, etc.) and may include multiple choice, short answer, short essay (1-2 paragraphs), and fill-in-the-blank type questions. The fourth exam is not cumulative. You cannot reschedule a final exam except under the most extreme circumstances. I will drop you lowest exam score. This means that you can miss any one of the four exams with no penalty. Your final grade will include your three highest exam scores (plus the other course assignments).

Research Paper: There are different requirements for this assignment based on whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student. For **undergraduate students:** You will write a short (5-6 pages) paper based on either one of the two major reading assignments (The Ghost Map or Rabid) or on a topic of your choice (approved by the instructor) plus 5 or more additional sources that you find yourself. I will give you more information on a separate handout. Due dates for the paper are variable and listed below. As your research paper is self-assigned, I will not accept late papers.

For **graduate students:** You will be required to write an independent research paper (15-20 pages) that covers a topic related to the course and your own research. In addition, you will submit a paper topic proposal (1 page) near the middle of the semester. I will give you more information on a separate handout.

Quizzes and Exercises: (5 – 20 points each): These are generally not announced in advance. Exercises may be in class or take home.

Important Dates:

- Exam I → September 20th
- Exam II → October 18th
- Exam III → November 15th
- Final Exam → TBD
- Final Paper → Variable (See course schedule)

Other class policies

Missed exams: If you accidentally miss an exam, you cannot make it up. If you miss an exam because of a documented emergency or because of a legitimate documented schedule conflict (e.g., mandatory participation in a university-sponsored event), you may be able to reschedule an exam. If possible, make arrangements ahead of time. Otherwise, you must contact me on the day of the exam, preferably before the scheduled exam time, to let me know what happened and ask for permission to make up the exam. The best ways to contact me are by email or coming to open office hours.

Grade review: Occasionally instructors make errors in grading. If you feel your test or paper has been graded unfairly, you are welcome to submit it for grading review. If you do this, however, be aware that your entire exam or paper (not just one or two questions) will subsequently be reviewed for grading errors, including errors that may have originally been in your favor.

Classroom Behavior Policy: It is a requirement for this course that all students act in a respectful, civil, and professional manner at all times and do not engage in behaviors that disrupt the learning environment. This includes arriving on time, completing work in a timely and professional manner, following instructions, and adhering to the course deadlines. While the expression of different views, spirited debate are an expected and supported part of the course, disrespectful, demeaning, degrading, hateful, harassing, abusive, profane, vulgar, lewd, personal attacks, name-calling, dismissive gestures, and similar kinds of behaviors, whether they be verbal, physical, or of any other nature, will not be tolerated, nor will any other activities and behaviors that fundamentally disrupt the classroom and/or the learning environment.

Failure to abide by the classroom behavior rules may result in your immediate dismissal from the class. Repeated violations may result in permanent dismissal from the course and a failing grade.

Additionally, the University of Wyoming Student Code of Conduct applies to this course. The Code of Conduct can be found at:

<https://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct/index.html>. Each student is expected to read and adhere to the code at all times. Failure to do so may result in a student being subject to Code of Conduct proceedings and university-level discipline.

AI Technology: Students are not permitted to use advanced automated artificial intelligence or machine learning tools on assignments in this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others (unless noted), including automated tools.

Course Schedule:



TOPIC	DATE	READING/HOMEWORK
MODULE 1: FUNDAMENTALS OF HEALTH AND DISEASE		
WEEK 1: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EPIDEMICS, CASE STUDY: EBOLA	8/26	- Good Germs, Bad Germs, Prologue & Chapter 1 (pp. 1 - 32) [We'll discuss this reading in a couple weeks, but it's listed here to give you a head start]
	8/28	- Hewlett & Hewlett. 2008. <i>Outbreak ethnography. The anthropologist's toolkit</i> . Ebola, culture, and politics: The anthropology of an emerging disease (pp. 19-36)
	8/30	- BBC News, How Ebola Changed the World: https://www.bbc.com/news/health-31982078
WEEK 2: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EPIDEMICS, CASE STUDY: KURU	9/2	Labor Day: No Class
	9/4	- Wiley & Allen. 2013. <i>Infectious Diseases: pathogens, hosts, and evolutionary interplay</i> . Medical Anthropology. A Biocultural Approach (pp. 226-235)
	9/6	- Good Germs, Bad Germs, Chapter 2 "Life on Man" (pp. 35-71)
WEEK 3: MICROBES, IMMUNITY, AND THE MICROBIOME	9/9	- Callahan. 2006. <i>Infections: Where we get them</i> . Infection: The uninvited universe (pp. 3-14)
	9/11	- Wiley & Allen. 2013. <i>Variation in Pathogen Virulence</i> . Medical Anthropology. A Biocultural Approach (pp. 258-262)
	9/13	- Good Germs, Bad Germs: Chapter 3 "Too clean" (pp. 73-102)
WEEK 4: THE HYGIENE HYPOTHESIS	9/16	- Zimmer. 2010. <i>How microbes defend and define us</i> . NY Times
	9/16	- Lee. 2013. <i>Why I donated my stool</i> . NY Times
	9/18	- Rabid, Chapter 1 & 2. <i>In the Beginning, The Middle Rages</i> (pp. 15-62) [We'll be discussing this in the next few weeks, but this is to get you started]
	9/20	Exam I
MODULE 2: HEALTH AND DISEASE IN PREHISTORY AND ANCIENT HISTORY		
WEEK 5: EPIDEMIOLOGICAL TRANSITIONS AND THE BLACK DEATH	9/23	- Hays. 2009. <i>The Great Plague Pandemic</i> . The Burdens of Disease (pp. 37-61)
	9/25	- Rabid, Chapter 3 & 4: <i>A Virus with Teeth? Canicide</i> (pp. 65-117)
	9/27	- Quammen. 2012. <i>Pale horse</i> . Spillover, Animal infections and the next human pandemic (pp. 13-49)
WEEK 6: ANIMALS AND HUMAN DISEASES, RABIES AND OTHER ZONOSSES	9/30	- Rabid, Chapters 5 – 6. <i>King Louis, The Zoonotic Century</i> (pp. 119 – 178)
	10/2	- Rabid, Chapter 7 – 8. <i>The Survivors. The Island of Mad Dogs</i> (pp. 181 – 223)
	10/4	- Rabid chapters Conclusion. <i>The Devil Leashed</i> . (pp. 225 - 238)
	10/7	- No readings
WEEK 7: VACCINATION DEBATES AND DISEASE ERADICATION (SYPHILIS, SMALLPOX, YELLOW FEVER)	10/9	- Fenn. 2001. [Excerpt on smallpox inoculation in the 18 th century U.S., pp. 27-43]. <i>Pox Americana. The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82</i>
	10/11	- The Ghost Map, pp. 1 - 55 [We will be discussing this book in a couple weeks but this will get you started]
	10/14	<i>Paper topic proposals due by 11:59 p.m. (graduate students and undergraduate students that chose this option only)</i>
	10/14	Indigenous Peoples Day: No Class

WEEK 8: VACCINATION DEBATES, CONTINUED	10/16	- No readings
	10/18	Exam II
MODULE 3: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MORTALITY TRANSITIONS		
WEEK 9: THE BIRTH OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, CHOLERA	10/21	- The Ghost Map, pp. 57 – 109
	10/23	- The Ghost Map, pp. 111 - 156
	10/25	- The Ghost Map, pp. 159 – 228 <i>If you plan on writing your essay on Rabid, it is due no later than 10/25 at 11:59 p.m. in WyoCourses</i>
WEEK 10: THE RISE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, TUBERCULOSIS	10/28	- The Ghost Map, pp. 231 - 256
	10/30	- Snowden. 2020. <i>Tuberculosis in the Romantic Era of Consumption</i> . Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present. (pp. 269 – 291)
	11/1	- Snowden. 2020. <i>Tuberculosis in the Unromantic Era of Contagion</i> . Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present (pp. 292 – 331)
WEEK 11: THE RISE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CONTINUING CHALLENGES, TB AND POLIO	11/4	- Aleksanyan. 2016. <i>When my brother got TB, doctors said there was no hope. How could that be?</i> Washington Post.
	11/6	- Read at least two personal accounts posted at: http://tinyurl.com/q9nnt7t and come to class prepared to talk about them. This site belongs to Chuck Felton, the gentleman who is the focus of the documentary on Cresson we'll watch in class today.
	11/8	- Dentler. 2024. <i>Celebrating a Polio-free India, Dreaming of a Polio-free World</i> . Polio Global Eradication Initiative - Pond. 2024. <i>Closing the gap: the Afghan women gaining ground against vaccine refusals and zero dose children</i> . Polio Global Eradication Initiative
WEEK 12: POLIO, CONTINUED. EPIDEMIC DISEASE AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY	11/11	- Chappell. 2024. <i>Paul Alexander, forced into an iron lung by polio in 1952, dies at 78</i> . NPR
	11/13	- No readings
	11/15	Exam III
MODULE 4: EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES		
WEEK 13: INFLUENZA AND THE PLAGUES OF OUR OWN MAKING	11/18	- Zimmer. 2021. <i>Looking Down from the Stars</i> . A Planet of Viruses (pp. 24 – 30)
	11/20	- Barry. 2009. <i>The Great Influenza</i> . (pp. 98-115, 231-252, 320-350) [We'll discuss this next class but this is to get you started]
	11/22	- No readings <i>If you plan on writing your essay on The Ghost Map, it is due no later than 11/22 at 11:59 p.m. in WyoCourses</i>
WEEK 14: EMERGING INFECTIONS, CORONAVIRUSES, HIV, AND THE RISE OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE	11/25	- Good Germs, Bad Germs pp. 105 – 148. <i>A Killer in the Nursery</i> . [This section looks at antibiotic resistance in bacteria, which is a factor in several emerging infectious diseases] - Zimmer. 2021. <i>The Young Scourge</i> . A Planet of Viruses (pp. 75 – 84)
	11/27	Fall Holiday: No Class
	11/29	Fall Holiday: No Class
	12/2	- Walsh. 2020. <i>Covid-19: The history of pandemics</i> . BBC - Zimmer. 2021. <i>The Pandemic Age</i> . A Planet of Viruses (pp. 95 – 107)

WEEK 15: THE FUTURE OF PANDEMICS

12/4

- Witt. 2020. *The Sanitationist State*. American Contagions: Epidemics and the Law from Smallpox to COVID-19 (pp. 13 – 33)
- Witt. 2020. *Masked Faces Towards the Past*. American Contagions: Epidemics and the Law from Smallpox to COVID-19 (pp. 107 – 137)

12/6

- **No readings**

If you plan on writing your essay on an approved topic, it is due no later than 12/6 at 11:59 p.m. in WyoCourses

Student resources

Classroom Statement on Diversity: The University of Wyoming values an educational environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. The diversity that students and faculty bring to class, including age, country of origin, culture, disability, economic class, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, linguistic, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, worldview, and other social and cultural diversity is valued, respected, and considered a resource of learning.

Disability Support: The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a disability, including but not limited to physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, and would like to request accommodations in this course due to your disability, please register with and provide documentation of your disability as soon as possible to Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 128 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at (307) 766-3073 or udss@uwyo.edu. It is in the student's best interest to request accommodations within the first week of classes, understanding that accommodations are not retroactive. Visit the DSS website for more information at: www.uwyo.edu/udss

Academic Dishonesty Policies: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with UW Regulation 2-114. The penalties for academic dishonesty can include, at my discretion, an "F" on an exam, an "F" on the class final project, and/or an "F" in the entire course. Academic dishonesty means anything that represents someone else's ideas as your own without attribution. It is intellectual theft – stealing – and includes (but is not limited to) unapproved assistance on examinations, plagiarism (use of any amount of another person's writings, blog posts, publications, and other materials without attributing that material to that person with citations), or fabrication of referenced information. Facilitation of another person's academic dishonesty is also considered academic dishonesty and will be treated identically.

More Resources:

- Cheap books: www.booksprice.com
- Disability Support Services: udss@uwyo.edu, 766-3073, 128 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/udss
- Counseling Center: uccstaff@uwyo.edu, 766-2187, 766-8989 (after hours), 341 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/ucc
- Academic Affairs: 766-4286, 312 Old Main, www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs
- Dean of Students Office: dos@uwyo.edu, 766-5179, 128 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/dos
- UW Police Department: uwpd@uwyo.edu, 766-5179, 1426 E. Flint St, www.uwyo.edu/uwpd

Duty to Report: While I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with issues you may be struggling with or concerns that you may be having, please be aware that I have some reporting requirements that are part of my job requirements at UW.

For example, if you inform me of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination, I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to talk to those offices directly, you can contact Equal Opportunity Report and Response (Bureau of Mines Room 319, 766-5200, report-it@uwyo.edu, www.uwyo.edu/reportit). Additionally, you can also report incidents or complaints to the UW Police Department. You can also get support at the STOP Violence Program (stopviolence@uwyo.edu, www.uwyo.edu/stop, 766-3296) or SAFE Program (www.safeproject.org, campus@safeproject.org, 766-3434, 24-hour hotline: 745-3556).

Another common example is if you are struggling with an issue that may be traumatic or unusual stress. I will likely inform the Dean of Students Office or Counseling Center. If you would like to reach out directly to them for assistance, you can contact them using the information below or by going to www.uwyo.edu/uwyocares.

Green Dot Program at UW: Here at The University of Wyoming, we are committed to reducing and preventing power-based personal violence such as sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking. Green Dot is a bystander intervention program to reduce these forms of violence with one thought; If everyone does one thing, no one will have to do everything. A Green Dot is your choice at any movement to make campus safer by promoting safety for everyone and letting others know that you will not tolerate violence. A Green Dot is any behavior, choice, word, or attitude that sends a clear message that:

1. Violence is not okay with you, and
2. Everyone is expected to do their part.

Additional information on Green DOT training and resources are available at: www.uwyo.edu/greendot