

**FRPG 187K: Reiff College
Plagues and Peoples
Fall 2007**

A. Instructor and Staff Information

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B. Course Description

When considering definitions of illness or wellness, Westerners since the Enlightenment have tended to assume a distinction between mind and body that people in other cultures do not assume. The “body” becomes an object of study, with all its attendant “symptoms” of “illness” to Western medical tradition. The “mind” is considered separate from “body” and from “brain,” which is an organ of the “body.” Hence we have created a tradition of different practitioners for “physical” and “mental” disorders. In other cultural traditions, one’s “body” is not separated from “mind,” or from the social fabric of daily life that connects an individual to other members of his or her society. This course will study cross-cultural approaches to wellness and illness that focus on concepts of the body, “personhood,” gender distinctions, definitions of “wellness” and “illness,” and the consequences these different belief systems have on approaches to “healing.” Primary examples include the historical construction of sex and gender in Western medicine; Kuru disease in Papua New Guinea and its relationship to Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease, and radioactive fallout contribution to cultural change in the Marshall Islands, Oceania. Students interested in health sciences or cross-cultural studies of humanity are encouraged to participate. **Students who take FYP 187S must co-enroll in Natural Science distribution lab science.**

*Find these readings on Angel (<http://angel.stlawu.edu>)

Week	Date	Topic	Readings/Video
1	30-Aug	Course Introduction; begin Unit 1: Disease in Context; YOW synopsis due -> Angel	Paul and Elder; Brooks, <i>Year of Wonders</i>
2	4-Sep	Human Origins, Variation, and Ecology	McNeil Intro, Ch 1, 2
	5-Sep	Workshop 1: Thesis + Organization + Grammar	Handouts + How We Grade
	6-Sep	Quiz 1; Human Adaptation: Past, Present, Future	McNeil Ch 3
3	11-Sep	Bubonic Plague and Civilization: Mesopotamia, China, and India	McNeil Ch 4
	12-Sep	Workshop 2: Types and Finding Sources; get McNeil asgmt.	McNeil Ch 5
	13-Sep	Quiz 2; The New World and Infectious Diseases	McNeil Ch 6
4	18-Sep	<i>Guns, Germs, and Steel</i> (DVD- Budd)	
	19-Sep	Workshop 3: How to Cite Sources; McNeil assignment due; get Assignment 1	
	20-Sep	Engaged Learning- Meet with all other FYPs	
5	25-Sep	How to read an ethnography	Lindenbaum Ch 1-4
	26-Sep	Workshop 4: Oral Communication	Lindenbaum Ch 5-7
	27-Sep	Quiz 4; Science, Technology, and Disease	
6	2-Oct	Biomedical Context of Prion Diseases: Kuru in the New Guinea Highlands (Melanesia)	Lindenbaum, Ch 8-9.
	3 Oct	Assignment 1 draft due	
	4 Oct	Political, Social, and Economic Impact of Kuru	Lindenbaum, Ch 10-11.
7	9-10 Oct	Oral Presentations; Assignment 1 due	
	11 Oct	Fall Break, no class	
8	16-Oct	Impact of Kuru continued; <i>Brain Snatchers</i> (DVD- IMD-2005-178); get Assignment 2	*Garrett, <i>The Coming Plague</i> Ch. 11
	17-Oct	Tracking an Epidemic- <i>And the Band Played On</i>	(DVD- Budd)
	18-Oct	Vulnerable Populations- <i>Miss Evers Boys</i>	(DVD- Budd)
9	23 Oct	Unit 2: Healing Philosophies and Practices: <i>Healers of Ghana</i> (DVD- Budd; IMV-98-056)	*Fridman, p139-165: Post-Soviet Shamans
	24-Oct	Assignment 2 outline due;	*Lyon, p121-137: Native American Healing
	25-Oct	Quiz 5; <i>Witchcraft among the Azande</i> (DVD-Budd)	*Churchill, p 324-333: Plastic Medicine Men
10	30-Oct	<i>White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men</i> (DVD-Budd)	*Brothwell & Sandison, Ch 53 673-701
	31-Oct	Assignment 2 draft due; organize oral presentation	
	1-Nov	Quiz 6;	
11	6 Nov	Discussion	
	7-8 Nov	Oral Presentations	
12	13-Nov	Unit 3: Disparities in Health Care Access;	Barker, Ch 1-4; get Assignment 3
	14-Nov	<i>Micronesia: Living with the Bomb</i>	(DVD- Budd)
	15-Nov	<i>The Case of the A-Bomb Footage</i>	(DVD-Budd; IMV-90-222)
		Thanksgiving Break	Bring Barker-finish
13	27-Nov	Impact of Radiation Sickness	Barker, Ch 5-7
	28-Nov	Assignment 3 outline due	
	29-Nov	Quiz 7; Political, Economic, and Social Impact	Barker, Ch 9, finish
14	4-Dec	Clean up, catch up, finish up	
	5-Dec	Assignment 3 draft due; organize oral presentation	
	6- Dec	Quiz 8; Peer Evaluation of Paper	
15	11-13 Dec	Oral Presentations	

Course Goals

There are five major objectives in this course:

- a. To learn the elements, standards and intellectual traits of critical thinkers,
- b. To read and understand different levels of literature (from primary to tertiary) that set the cross-cultural stage for your group research projects;
- c. To collaborate, cooperate, research, write, and present cross-cultural issues of healing based on intellectual traits as described by Paul and Elder.
- d. To utilize scientific method to augment your understanding of the cultural issues discussed.
- e. To learn some issues that challenge your current culture and develop personal responses to overcome obstacles in your interactions with people of all cultures.

Close reading, grammatically and compositionally correct writing, confidence in public speaking, consideration of what makes a good critical thinker and increased cultural competence, are all “tools” of incalculable intellectual worth. The intent of learning these “tools” in this format is to orient your thinking in a way that prepares you to ask questions outside of regular course content and personal experience. Most importantly, our course will provide you with additional “tools” to navigate your life journey with peoples from all cultures.

Skills Goals

Research, speaking, writing, and interpersonal interactions are related activities. You will:

- a. Use library resources to search collections, databases and on-line sources to develop an in-depth and critical understanding of assignment questions,
- b. Work with peers, mentors, faculty, and university staff in a professional manner to conduct this work,
- c. Demonstrate your understanding through a sequence of collaborative oral presentations and individual draft papers,
- d. Submit your assembled work in your personal end-of-semester portfolio in which you will describe your personal growth in intellectual traits using your assembled work as evidence.

First Year Program Goals

- a. Be introduced to ways of conducting productive and imaginative inquiry and research in order to become a part of the various conversations surrounding issues.
- b. Learn to differentiate among the various ways that information is presented, between popular and scholarly journals and books, between mainstream and alternative publications, between primary and secondary sources.
- c. Learn how to evaluate and synthesize information, whether gathered from traditional sources, e.g., books and journals, or from websites or electronic media.
- d. Begin to develop the skills of critical analysis in the interpretation and use of information gathered from any source.
- e. Be introduced to the ethical obligations that scholars have to both their sources and readers. To learn, and be held responsible for the proper use of, the conventions of scholarly citation and attribution.

Required Texts: The following books are required texts, listed in American Association of Physical Anthropology style. They are available for purchase at Brewer Bookstore or amazon.com:

Barker, HM. 2004. Bravo for the Marshallese: Regaining Control in a Post-Nuclear, Post-

Colonial World. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thompson.

Brooks, G. 2001. Year of Wonders. New York: Penguin Books.

Hacker, D. 2004 A Pocket Style Manual. 4th Ed. New York: Bedford.

Lindenbaum, S. 1979. Kuru Sorcery: Disease and Danger in the New Guinea Highlands.
Palo Alto: Mayfield.

McNeil, WH. 1976. Plagues and Peoples. New York: Doubleday.

Paul, R. and L. Elder. 2003. Miniature guide to critical thinking: concepts and tools. California:
The Foundation of Critical Thinking.

C. Course Structure

The Plenary Session for FYP 187S will meet T Th 10:10-11:40 in Valentine 205-206.

Rules for plenary:

- a. Attendance = you show up ready to work, pencil in hand, attentive and not bleary-eyed. You are now a professional academic.
- b. Preparation = you have done the assigned readings/assignment, written your outlines/notes/reflections utilizing the elements and standards of critical thinking, and have thought about how you will share those ideas, questions, and reflections with the plenary group. You will keep organized records of these outlines/notes/reflections as evidence of your progress in critical thinking for inclusion in your portfolio, an end of semester, evidence-based document handed in for credit (see Major Assignments, Portfolio, below).
- c. Participation = active engagement in the activities of the plenary session. These activities will be varied and depend on the particular readings assigned.

You will do an average of 100 pages of critical readings per week over the course of the semester.

The Seminar Session for FYP 187S will meet on W 1:30-3:00 in Valentine 204 and 207 as needed. Rules for seminar = read rules for plenary and replace plenary with seminar.

The seminar will parallel the plenary but will be explicitly devoted to teaching the research skills necessary for writing college level papers using mostly primary literature as resources to document breadth and depth. The seminar will allow you time to work on your group's unit assignment. These assignments are problem-based, that is, you will be given substantial background information on a particular topic relevant to the plenary unit that raises questions. Your group will then define several questions raised by the background information. Each group member will take one substantive question to research. The group will reconvene in seminar, plenary, or outside of class to collaborate and design a presentation to teach their peers about their assignment. To accomplish these assignments, the seminar will meet in a computer classroom and focus on activities that assist you in preparing your papers and oral presentations.

The plenary and seminar work will take longer for the first unit as we guide you through progressively more complex tasks that require you to utilize previous skills to complete upcoming assignments.

D. Major Assignments

1. **Portfolio** = end of semester document either hard text (collected in a 3 ring notebook) or digital (example ePortfolio).

Your portfolio contains two essential pieces; the narrative and the evidence.

- a. The narrative is a written paper that examines your progress in developing the eight essential intellectual traits of a critical thinker (humility vs. arrogance, courage vs. cowardice, empathy vs. close-mindedness, autonomy vs. conformity, integrity vs. hypocrisy, perseverance vs. laziness, reason vs. distrust of reason and evidence and fair-mindedness vs. unfairness).
- b. The evidence is a collection of **all** your work done in this course over the semester usually placed as appendices at the end and in support of the narrative. You could present your evidence 1) chronologically, 2) by assignment types (ex. *Unit 1*: critical reflections on readings, research papers used vs. not used, paper development, oral presentation development, *Unit 2*: etc), or 3) by assignment type over the whole semester (example, technical and compositional improvements in your writing *over the course of the semester*, development of oral and written peer evaluations *over the course of the semester*, refinement of research note taking *over the course of the semester*, evolution of your close reading and critical reflections on readings *over the course of the semester*, etc.). It is your choice. Make your choice and the structure of your portfolio explicit in both the narrative and evidence sections.

2. **Research Papers (3 papers)**

The semester is divided into three units: 1) Plagues, 2) Healing Practices, and 3) Disparities in Health Care Access. One major focus of each unit is a final, double-spaced paper requiring progressively more pages and primary literature as we progress through the semester. **These papers are to be written individually.** The paper will be the result of your group's response to the questions posed in the unit assignments. The unit assignments will be assigned in plenary. There are specific stages to the writing of a major research paper and we will work out the details of this process during the semester. You should expect the first paper to take more of our instruction time so that all aspects of preparation are presented and practiced prior to our assumption that these practices will be included in subsequent papers. Drafts of the stages will be collected and graded by peers, mentors, and instructors, and used by you to augment your final papers. An absolutely integral aspect of writing well is getting feedback, feedback, feedback. The faculty assumes that you will use the mentor and writing center to obtain feedback prior to having peers or faculty give you feedback. Having done a thorough research analysis, you will be the resident expert on the specific question you researched. As the resident expert, you will be asked to make impromptu remarks based on your understanding of your topic throughout the semester as necessary.

3. **Oral Presentations (3 oral presentations)**

As the resident expert, you will share the basic science, cultural constructs, ethics, health policy, and any other related aspects related to your unit assignment question during plenary and/or seminar time in a group formal presentation. Again, performance of an oral

presentation takes practice. Tasks will be assigned in a stepped manner to increase your confidence and competence as the semester proceeds. You will submit your finished paper just prior to the group delivery.

E. Course Policies

Courtesy, Communication and Concern for Others These are attributes that you learned in elementary school. They apply here. A useful model for these behaviors is PEGS. P = positive regard for every person's worth, E = empathy (not sympathy), G = genuineness, and S = specificity concerning others' behaviors. It is always about behaviors, not judgment about a person's worth.

Attendance is mandatory because we rely on your expertise as a participant. There are, however, times when you will be unprepared. Perhaps you just had two exams the same day or, for unfortunate circumstances, you are ill. Out of courtesy, communicate your circumstances to us so that we can manage the daily exercise and not appear absolute fools. Our assumption is that you are an adult.

If you arrive late, we expect your entrance into class to be discreet, with an attempt not to disturb the flow of activity. You are responsible for joining the group and getting yourself up to speed. It is appropriate to discuss the reason for the lateness with a faculty person prior to leaving the classroom. This is part of communication.

Late Policy

- a. Due dates are hard deadlines.
- b. You are responsible for punctuality, completeness and integrity of all work done.
- c. We reserve the right to refuse late work.
- d. If we do accept late work, we will deduct one whole grade point. For example, a 3.0 paper will receive a 2.0.

Academic Misconduct You have signed a pledge of academic honesty. Our assumption is that materials submitted by you are records of your voice. Please do not change this assumption. Again, our assumption is that you are an adult. Violations will be addressed by the University Honor Council.

F. Grades

Contribution of Assignments to Final Grade

<u>Assignment/Activity</u>	<u>Percentage of Final Score</u>
Portfolio	10%
Research Papers (3)	40%
Oral Presentations (3)	25%
Class Grade	25%
Total	100%

University Grading Scale

The University assigns grades based on a 4.0, 3.75, 3.5, 3.25, 3.0, 2.75 etc. scale.

Class grade = Quiz average + attendance + participation in class + preparation for class

First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2007-08

The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the first steps in a four-year process of helping you meet the University's Aims and Objectives and the broader goals of a liberal education. The faculty of the FYP and FYS see themselves as partners and mentors in the process of working with you to acquire the intellectual habits of mind, the writing, speaking, and research skills, and the ethical self-reflexiveness that are at the core of a liberal education. The FYP and FYS will ask you to consider new perspectives on the world and your place in it and will challenge you to confront many of the hidden assumptions you bring to college with you. We hope to open you to new ideas, help you to see the complexity of the way in which knowledge gets produced and used in society, and encourage you to see yourself as an active contributor in making the world a better place. The course topics, the texts you will read, listen to, and watch, the in-class and out-of-class activities you will engage in, and the writing, speaking, and research assignments you will work on are all designed to introduce you to the depth of critical thinking and the quality and complexity of the communication skills that will be expected of you at SLU and as a citizen of an increasingly diverse society.

First and foremost among our goals are those related to your abilities as a communicator. The work of the FYP and FYS asks you to design and deliver written, spoken, performed and/or visual texts that demonstrate basic skills in the relevant modes of communication and with an increasing degree of rhetorical sensitivity. Our focus on "rhetorical sensitivity" means that we expect you to cultivate the awareness that all of your communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, aural or visual. To become a good communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of meaningful and powerful written, spoken, performed, or visual texts involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, and the social and ethical context of the content, matter a great deal in creating such texts. One important way to become a better communicator is to become a better critical reader, viewer, and listener, which is why we will ask you to engage challenging materials in a variety of forms and work with you to learn how to interpret them.

Learning to read, listen, write, speak, do research and/or perform well also requires feedback. As faculty, we submit our work for feedback from colleagues all the time, and giving and receiving constructive feedback from both friends and strangers is central to collaborative work in any field and is itself a form of critical thinking and learning. We further recognize that this feedback process is not linear and that good communication requires that you continually rethink, restructure, and revise your work in order for it to be your best. This is why we require that your writing, speaking, and performance assignments be "projects" that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in the texts that you produce. Furthermore, we see all of these forms of communication as complementary and intertwined, which is why many of your assignments will ask you to integrate elements of the written, spoken, performed, and visual. Finally, developing good habits of critical inquiry and communication also means reflecting on the ethical dimensions of how your work represents that of others, thus one of our goals is to help you to understand both the nature of academic integrity and the social processes by which knowledge is produced and represented.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that foster the writing, speaking, research, and critical thinking goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.