

Exploring Health and Medicine
Dynamics of Race, Class, and Gender within the Healthcare System
Fall 2007 Course # 01:090:120:38
Busch Campus, Piscataway, NJ

Instructor: Jennifer Luo

Office hours by appointment

Mailbox: Bishop House Room 308

Course website: www.sakai.rutgers.edu

Course Description

Within this First Year Interest Group Seminar (FIGS), you will explore the issues of health and medicine in regards to how it relates to you as an individual and society as a whole. Through this course you will be introduced and informed about the various medically related opportunities and programs available around the Rutgers campus. You will explore what health and medicine really means and what motivates your interest in this field. Furthermore, aside from considering medicine solely as the application of science, you will learn about different perspectives of health and medicine in relation to race, class, and gender issues.

Course Goals

The objective of this Health and Medicine First-Year Interest Group Seminar (FIGS) is:

- To guide first-year students through the transition of adjusting to the Rutgers community.
- To provide information about the variety of resources and opportunities that Rutgers University has to offer.
- To encourage class discussion and an open mind.
- To inform students about requirements and information about medical careers.
- To foster an environment of discussion and awareness about issues and trends in health and medicine.

Course grading and requirements

Grading (100 pts Total)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| • Attendance** | 20 pts |
| • Participation | 20 pts |
| • Current Events Presentation | 10 pts |
| • Reflection Papers | 20 pts |
| • Final Project | 30 pts |

**Policy on attendance and lateness: two incidences of late arrivals equal an absence.

This FIGS course is graded according to a PASS/ NO-CREDIT option. In order to earn the Pass, each student must earn a minimum of 75 points in order to pass the course.

Course Format

- 1) Arrive on time to class and remain for the entire class period.
- 2) Place cell phones on silent and do not text message while in class.
- 3) Class assignments will be submitted at the beginning of the class period. Points will be deducted for late papers.
- 4) Be prepared to participate in frequent discussions and activities.
- 5) Be respectful of each others differences in background and beliefs. Some topics of discussion within this course may be controversial.
- 6) Be open to new experiences and do not be afraid to ask questions.

Readings

No textbooks are required for this class. All readings can be found either within the “resources” tab on sakai.rutgers.edu or in the library e-reserve where you can search instructor as “Luo, Jennifer” to get the readings for this class.

Betancourt, Joseph R. “Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care: What Is the Role of Academic Medicine?” American College of Physicians. 81 (2006): 778-792.

Fadiman, Anne. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: a Hmong Child, her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997.

Gawande, Atul. Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science. New York: Metropolitan Books Henry Holt and Company, 2002.

Gawande, Atul. Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance. New York: Metropolitan Books Henry Holt and Company, 2007

Levinson, Wendy, and Nichole Lurie. “When Most Doctors Are Women: What Lies Ahead?” Annals of Internal Medicine. 141 (2004): 471-474.

Participation (20 pts)

Students will be awarded points according to participation in class discussions based upon class readings and weekly class topics. Students will also be graded based on participation within group activities conducted in class. Each student has the potential to earn 2 points per class.

Current Events Presentation (10 pts)

Each student will be required to present a short presentation 3-5 minutes regarding a current event article related to health and medicine. The presentations will be distributed throughout the semester, each class featuring 3-4 student presentations.

Reflection Paper Requirements (20 pts)

Each student will be required to write two reflection essays designated as homework after days of guest speaker presentations.

- Write an essay REFLECTING (do not provide a summary!) on the reading and lecture presented in class.
- Reflect on your original awareness of the material and discuss whether the reading and lecture provided you with a different perspective from your original assumptions.
- Present your opinion of the topic and explain if the reading and presentation changed your views.
- Formatting: 2 pages, typed, double-spaced 1 inched margin documents in Times New Roman or Arial font, 12 pt font.

Final Project Requirements (30 pts)

Research paper submission 15 pts
Presentation participation 15 pts

You will be assigned in groups of 3-4 people to prepare a 10-15 minute presentation informing the class about the healthcare system of another country compared to the United States. Research the healthcare policies within the selected nation. Find out about the dynamics of race, class, gender within that country's healthcare system in relation to both the side of the staff within the healthcare system (physicians, administration, nurses, technicians, etc.) and the patient population.

- Your group should use props, poster, create a skit, or a PowerPoint presentation, etc.**
- Prepare to submit a works cited page from which you have obtained all your references.
- Be creative in your presentation and have fun with it!

**Please indicate to me earlier on whether your group will require special equipment such as PowerPoint projection, television, etc.

Course Schedule**

- **Week 1- September 11, 2007**

Introduction to FIGS: Taking Advantage of what Rutgers has to Offer

- Course introduction
- About Rutgers
- Homework:
 - Reading:
 - Dr. Joseph R. Betancourt's article: "Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care: What Is the Role of Academic Medicine?"

- **Week 2- September 18, 2007**

Personal Wellness & Gaining Exposure to the Medical Field

- Class discussion on reading
- Personal Wellness
- Research/Volunteer experience
- Homework:
 - Reading:
 - Dr. Wendy Levinson and Dr. Nicole Lurie, "When Most Doctors Are Women: What Lies Ahead?"
 - TBA, current event articles from [New York Times Science Section, etc.]

- **Week 3- September 25, 2007**

Medical Current Events and Utilizing Library Resources

- Discussion on reading and current event articles
- Utilizing library and online resources
- Homework:
 - Readings:
 - "When Doctors Make Mistakes," Excerpt from Dr. Atul Gawande's book, *Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science*.

- **Week 4- October 2, 2007**

Requirements for Graduate School

- Class discussion on reading
- Course requirements for graduate school
- Homework: 4 year college plan/ schedule
 - Readings:
 - "The Doctors of the Death Chamber," Excerpt from Dr. Atul Gawande's book, *Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance*.

- **Week 5- October 9, 2007**

Bioethics and Résumé Writing

Assignment due: 4 year college plan/ schedule

- Class discussion on reading
- Overview of bioethical issues related to stem cell research, medical technology, and euthanasia, etc.
- Overview on creating a résumé
- Homework: Compose a draft résumé
 - Readings:
 - “What Doctors Owe,” Excerpt from Dr. Atul Gawande’s book, *Better: A Surgeon’s Notes on Performance*.

- **Week 6- October 16, 2007**

Types of Medical Careers

Assignment Due: Draft Résumé

- Class discussion on reading
- Trip to Eric B. Chandler Health Center (EBCHC)
 - Gain overview information about various occupations within medicine.
- Homework: Reflection essay on trip and exposure to Eric B. Chandler Health Center (EBCHC). Write about your plans and ideas about the type of medical occupation/ area of medicine you would like to enter into.
 - Reading:
 - “When Good Doctors Go Bad,” Excerpt from Dr. Atul Gawande’s book, *Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science*.

- **Week 7- October 23, 2007**

Reflections from Upperclassman

Assignment Due: Reflection Essay I on trip to the Eric B. Chandler Health Center

- Class discussion on reading
- Rutgers students panel discussion
 - Students from wide range of majors/involvement
- Homework: Prepare questions for guest speaker.
 - Reading:
 - “The Life or the Soul,” Excerpt from Ms. Anne Fadiman’s book: *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*.

- **Week 8- October 30, 2007**

Dynamics of Race, Class, and Gender Issues in Medicine

- Class discussion on reading
- Guest speaker: Professor Ann Jurecic
- Homework: Reflection paper on Professor Jurecic's presentation and topics discussed in class.

- **Week 9- November 6, 2007**

Assignment Due: Reflection paper II on Professor Jurecic's presentation

Final project presentation I

- Class discussion on reading
- Presentation of final projects

- **Week 10- November 13, 2007**

Assignment Due: Reflection paper II on Professor Jurecic's presentation

Final project presentation II

- Presentation of final projects
- Course conclusion

**Schedule subject to change.