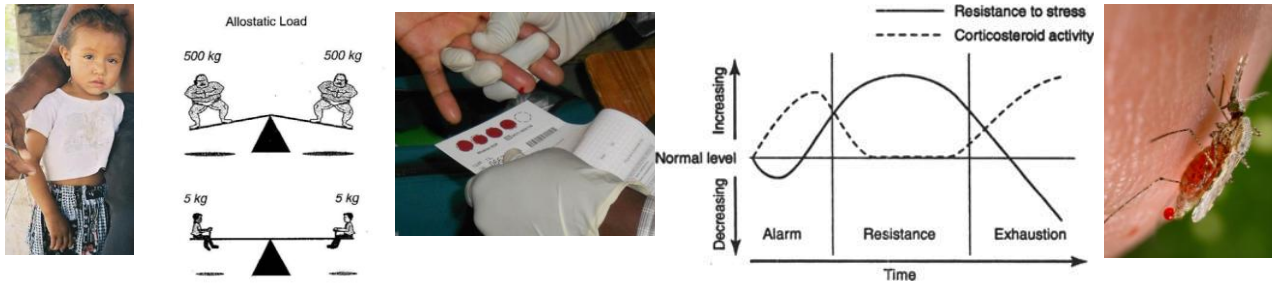


# Archaeology 533-02: Biological Anthropology Perspectives on Health (Winter 2014)



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**Lecture:** Weds, 2:00-4:45, EDC 172

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**Office hours:** Weds. 11:00-12:00 *and* by appointment

## Course Themes and Goals

In Brazil, we find that the health of indigenous Amazonians lags far behind that of other Colombians. Among the Makushi of Guyana, we find that the health of girls is significantly better than the health of boys. Among British Civil Servants, we find that those in higher-status positions have lower rates of chronic disease. In Tanzania, we find that the health of poor, urban children is superior to that of more-traditional, pastoralist populations. In both Canada and the United States we find that the health of those with darker skin is significantly worse than those with lighter skin. In Canada's Maritime Provinces, we find that non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus is far more prevalent than in other Canadian Provinces. In developed countries, children who grow up on farms have a lower rate of autoimmune diseases than do children who grow up in urban areas. How might we explain these health disparities? Where to begin?

Clearly, many disciplines generate helpful understandings of human health inequities. Anthropology, a discipline which emerged from a desire to understand human variation, is poised to provide holistic answers to questions about health disparities. Within this discipline, the sub-discipline of biological anthropology takes a biocultural perspective to understand human phenotypic variation. The biocultural perspective "...considers the social, ecological, and biological aspects of health issues and how these interact within and across populations" (Wiley and Allen 2013:8). As such, biological anthropologists interested in health consider both long-term, evolutionary processes and environmental variables, with an emphasis on culture.

The goal of this seminar is to provide you with exposure to the biocultural study of human health. We will do so via a critical consideration of work by biological anthropologists concerned with health among contemporary and past populations. We will begin with a general consideration of anthropology and anthropological perspectives on health and proceed through cross-cultural studies of health and healing, dietary impacts on health, growth and development, reproductive health, aging, infectious disease, innate and acquired immunity, and the impact of

stress on physical and mental health. Where feasible, we will learn some of the protocols used by biological anthropologists to document health outcomes and possible predictive variables. Upon completion of this course you should have an enhanced understanding of the variables which explain human health disparities. As well, you should have improved your abilities to think critically and to persuasively communicate your conclusions.

## Course Conventions

**1. Class:** The course is organized as a seminar. Often, there will be no formal lecture. Participants will be expected to have done the appropriate readings, set the agenda and contribute to the discussion. On the final day of class we will hold a mini-research symposium. In order to meet the goals of the seminar you have to attend class each week and arrive on time. You must be prepared to discuss the assigned topic. You are responsible for assigned material and any announcements concerning changes in schedule, etc. Because we meet only once a week and this seminar requires your active input, if you have more than two unexcused absences your overall participation grade is automatically a '0'.

**2. Reading:** The readings for this course will be sent to you each week. You must plan accordingly to ensure that you obtain all of the readings with sufficient time to read them prior to each class. A careful and critical read of the assigned material is required. Keep in mind that you are not finished with the reading assignment until you thoroughly understand it. This will often require you to read an assignment more than once.

Required Text: Wiley, Andrea S. and John S. Allen (2013) *Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach*. Oxford University Press, New York.

**3. Evaluation:** Evaluations will be based on six components:

Class participation_____	33%
Journal article review_____	8%
Leading a class 1_____	10%
Leading a class 2_____	14%
Research presentation_____	11%
Term Paper_____	24%

**Class Participation: Discussion & Questions**                      **33%**                      **Due date: weekly**

Each week a selection of readings and questions will be assigned. Questions will be designed to ensure comprehension of the material and to facilitate discussion. Although I will only occasionally collect your answers to evaluate your understanding of the assigned material, you should always assume I will collect your work and come prepared to hand it in. The discussion should reflect a critical evaluation of the material presented. A critical evaluation requires a clear understanding of the evidence presented and a careful consideration of alternative explanations for the outcomes. It is to your advantage to cite relevant literature when discussing particular papers and topics.

**Journal Article Review**                      8%                      Due date: to be determined  
Details concerning this assignment are provided in the Assignments section on the course Blackboard Site.

**Leading a class (first time)**              10%                      Due date: depends on class lead  
-choose from seminars 3 through 7

**Leading a class (second time)**              14%                      Due date: depends on class lead  
-choose from seminars 8 through 12 (In choosing a topic for the second class, you should choose one that is of interest to you, but *not the topic you wish to cover in your term paper.*)

Leading a class requires you to do the following:

1. *Select articles for the class* (final selection due 9 days prior to the class):

These articles should provide the students with a bit of history on the topic as well as the state of the science. The class leader must send the articles selected to me at least 11 days prior to the class so that I have a bit of time to evaluate them before you post them for the other students. I generally have a list of papers which will provide you with a starting point on the topic. For the first class that you lead, you will have a less flexibility in choosing articles as I want to ensure that the seminal pieces on each topic are covered.

2. *Write discussion questions* (due 8 days prior to the class):

These questions should lead the rest of us to write a summary and critique of the each assigned reading and to stimulate discussion. It is often a good idea to ask your peers to compare and contrast articles which reach different conclusions. You may wish to ask provocative questions to stimulate discussion. While questions asking for a description of the studies in question can help to ensure comprehension, they do not often generate discussion. Please send your questions to me electronically.

3. *Write an introduction to the topic* (due 8 days prior to the class):

The introduction must summarize why the topic is relevant, how it ties in with topics covered in other class meetings, and what you hope will be achieved in the class. This should be roughly one paragraph. Please send the introduction to me electronically.

4. *Introduce the topic in class*:

This should be designed to give the students some background on the topic and last 15-20 minutes. While you will want to provide relevant history and perhaps more detail than is available in the readings, you need to avoid covering the material we will discuss as a class; that is, don't answer the questions which have been provided to stimulate class discussion.

5. *Facilitate discussion*:

This is often the most challenging aspect of leading the class as it requires you to think on your feet, asking the class questions to stimulate critical evaluation of the topic covered.

You might ask for alternative explanations of observed outcomes, what we can learn from the author(s) research methods, and how we might improve upon the study.

**Research Presentation**                      **11%**                      **Due date: 9 April**

This presentation will be based on your research paper and be presented in a mini-research symposium held in the last class (or last two classes, depending on numbers). It will be presented in conference style (total length 20 minutes with 15 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for questions).

**Term Paper**                                      **24%**                                      **Due date: 16 April**

Participants are to develop a research term paper around one or more of the themes in the course. This can be related to your own research interests and may even take the form of a research proposal if it is useful to you. A paper proposal of no more than 250 words will be due by February 28, 2014. An annotated bibliography with 15 references is due on March 7, 2014 and a second on March 14, 2014. Detailed instructions for the annotated bibliography are provided on the course Blackboard site.

Letter grade assignment: At the end of the course, the numerical marks will be summed and a final letter grade will be assigned based on the following scheme:

<u>Percentage range</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>	<u>Percentage range</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>
95 or higher	A+	68-72	C+
90-94	A	64-67	C
85-89	A-	59-63	C-
81-84	B+	54-58	D+
77-80	B	50-53	D
73-76	B-	49 or lower	F

You must provide advance notice to me if you are unable to complete an assignment by the due date. All requests for deferral of a due date for/due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferred due date. Deferred due dates will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student. A passing grade is not required on any particular component for the student to pass the course as a whole; that is, a student may fail, for example, the journal article review or any other component and, assuming their overall average percentage earned for the course is above 49, they will pass the course.

**4. Retrieving Assignments:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor’s office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during the seminar, or during the instructor’s office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

**5. Office Hours:** I enjoy having visitors during my office hours and am happy to schedule additional times as necessary. These hours are yours and I encourage you to take advantage of them, whether you are having difficulty with some aspect of the course, or if you would like to discuss in greater detail something that was touched on in the seminar.

**6. E-mail:** Students are encouraged to use the lectures and office hours to ask questions. For after-hours questions, the use of email is acceptable. Please write 'ARKY 533' in the 'Subject' portion of the email. I receive numerous e-mails every day. By clearly identifying the subject of your email, you will help me reply more efficiently to your emails. Note that if I think that your question and related answer is of general interest, I may decide to post them on the course Blackboard space (your name will not appear).

**7. Writing Across the Curriculum:** Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and may use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/writingsupport/>, tel. 220-5881) can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students free of charge.

**8. Academic Accommodation Policy:** The purpose of academic accommodation is to provide students with documented disabilities equal opportunity to master the essentials of a post-secondary education. Students with disabilities at the University of Calgary have met all admission requirements but may have done so with the use of accommodations. Similarly, they are expected to meet all academic and non-academic requirements. Adaptive technology and other academic accommodations do not relieve students of their responsibility to develop the essential skills and abilities expected of all students. Please refer to the following web link for detailed information: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/71>

**9. Disability Resource Centre Accommodations:** It is the responsibility of the student to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at (403) 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Students are also required to discuss their needs with the instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

**10. Academic Misconduct:** Academic dishonesty is an unacceptable activity at the University of Calgary and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section of the University Calendar. Quite often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are:

- 1) Presenting another student's work as your own
- 2) Presenting an author's work or ideas as your own without proper referencing

### 3) Using work completed for another course

This activity will not be tolerated and students conducting themselves in this manner will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the University Calendar.

For detailed information on what constitutes academic misconduct, please refer to the following link: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

## Deadlines to keep in mind

Deadlines are part of the assignments. Late work will not be accepted. Question sets for each week's readings must be complete and printed prior to class each week. While you are free to add notes to your completed question set in the seminar, you may not use that time to complete your answers. All other assignments are must be sent to me electronically no later than 5:00 pm on the due date. If I do not, within 24 hours, confirm the receipt of your work, please write to me to find out if I received it.

- 1 day before your *journal article review* is presented in the seminar- e-mail me your review
- 2 weeks before the *seminar you will facilitate*, contact me for ideas about readings
- 9 days before the *seminar you will facilitate*, provide me with the list of readings for the seminar.
- 28 February (Fri.): *250-word proposal* for your term paper due
- 7 March (Fri.): first *annotated bibliography* for your term paper due
- 14 March (Fri.): second *annotated bibliography* for your term paper due
- 9 April (in class): *research presentation* due
- 14 April (Wed.): *term paper* due

## Schedule<sup>1</sup>

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings<sup>2</sup></b>
1	08-Jan	Introduction: Ways of knowing.	
2	15-Jan	Foundations: Illusion of attention, adaptation, health?, approaches to health.	Chabris & Simons-Ch. 1, Mazess 1978, W&A-Ch. 1 & 2, Izquierdo 2005, Stevenson & Worthman 2013.
3	22-Jan	Healers and healing	W&A Ch. 3, Fadiman- <i>The Spirit Catches You</i>
4	29-Jan	Diet, health, growth and development	W&A-Ch. 4-5
5	05-Feb	Gender & reproductive health	W&A-Ch. 6
6	12-Feb	Aging, life course & life history approaches	W&A-Ch. 7
19-Feb		Reading break	
7	26-Feb	Infectious disease- immune function, hygiene hypothesis	W&A-Ch. 8
8	05-Mar	Infectious disease- epidemiological transitions	W&A-Ch. 9
9	12-Mar	Evolutionary medicine	Trevathan 2007
10	19-Mar	Stress & health inequities	W&A-Ch. 10, Dressler et al. 2005
11	26-Mar	Mental health & illness	W&A-Ch. 11
12	02-Apr	Bioarchaeology of health	Goldstein 2006
13	09-Apr	Research symposium	

<sup>1</sup> Note, the schedule of topics may change, but due dates for the assignments will not change.

<sup>2</sup> The reading assignments shown here are complete for only classes 2 & 3. W&A stands for Wiley & Allen's *Medical Anthropology*, the course textbook. Additional readings for classes 4-12 will be determined by both the student leading the class and me.