Ms. Diana Shull
Rice Hall 315
Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-3:30; Thursdays, 1:00-2:30; also by appointment.
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Course Overview:

This course examines how diseases helped shape European history. As disease microbes exploited everyday life as well as the chaos of war, famine, and poverty, they did more than determine who lived and died. Diseases stimulated the creation of new technologies and institutions and shaped cultural values and beliefs. In turn, cultural values and beliefs shaped the way humans experienced disease. These disease-human interactions changed over time, as people continually modified their societies, environments, and behavior and interacted in new ways with diseases, plants, and animals. This course will examine this process in a series of case studies from the Black Death to HIV/AIDS.

The lectures, discussions, and readings for this course will focus on a number of themes:

1) How the different characteristics and cultures of different diseases depend on their origin and transmission, geographic and demographic distribution, symptoms, complications, morbidity and mortality rates, and how these characteristics changed over time.

2) Competing theories regarding the causation and treatment of disease.

3) The relationship between disease and the development of political and social institutions.

4) The prevailing ideas of class and race and how they intersected with ideas surrounding disease at various times and places in European history.

5) The relationship between disease and war.
Required Reading:

Text available at the bookstore:

For each class meeting you will also be responsible for reading a selection of articles, primary sources, and/or chapters from larger works. The assignments for each class are listed on the detailed reading schedules handed out periodically throughout the semester. Class participation is essential in this course. The questions on the syllabus will help you analyze each set of readings. Be prepared to discuss the readings in class either in small groups or in whole-class discussions.

Course Requirements and Policies:

Class Discussion: You **must** read the assigned primary sources, secondary sources, and textbook passages before coming to class and participate actively in class discussions. Your participation grade is primarily based on your willingness to engage in class discussion in a constructive and consistent manner.

Attendance: You cannot participate in class discussion if you do not attend class! Class meetings are mandatory. You may miss two meetings for any reason (I do not need to know the reason). Any further failure to attend will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

Extensions and Late Assignments: I do not give extensions except in case of an emergency. If you turn in an assignment late, your grade will drop by a third of a letter grade (for example from a ‘B’ to a ‘B-’) for every 24-hour period for which it is late. You must submit a hard copy of your late work.

Honor Code: All students are expected to adhere to the Oberlin Honor Code on all written assignments. You must write and sign the honor code pledge at the end of each assignment. You can review the honor code here: http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html.

Accommodations: If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Office of Disability Services in Peters G-27/G-28.

Assignments and Grading:
You will receive more information about these assignments in handouts later in the course.

*Class Participation (15%)

*Primary Source Analysis (10%): **Due 18 September in class.**

*2 short papers (25% each): **Due 7 October and 25 November in class.**

*Take-Home Final Exam (25%): **Due 7pm, 19 December in my office, Rice 315.**
Brief Topic Schedule:
You will receive separate, detailed reading assignment sheets.

Introduction to course
2 September, Tuesday

I. Understanding Disease from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment

Introduction to the history of disease and public health
4 September, Thursday

The Black Death and the Plague:
The Theory and Experience of Disease in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period
9 September, Tuesday
11 September, Thursday

Syphilis
16 September, Tuesday

Personal Hygiene in the Age of Enlightenment
18 September, Thursday **Primary Source Analysis due in class.**

Smallpox and the Controversy Over Vaccinations
23 September, Tuesday

II. Postulation, Paternalism, and Prevention in the Nineteenth Century

Urbanization, Cholera, and the Rise of the Public Health System
25 September, Thursday
30 September, Tuesday

Disease and War: Sanitary Reforms
2 October, Thursday

Prostitution and Disease
7 October, Tuesday **1st Short Paper due in class**

**9 October, Thursday, Yom Kippur: No Class**

Colonial Medicine and Disease
14 October, Tuesday
16 October, Thursday

**Fall Break: 20 to 24 October**
III. Individual Health and the Health of the Nation

Tuberculosis and the “Beautiful Death”
28 October, Tuesday
30 October, Thursday

Topic TBD
4 November, Tuesday
6 November, Thursday

Disease and War, II: The First World War
11 November, Tuesday
13 November, Thursday

The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-19: Economic and Social Changes
18 November, Tuesday
20 November, Thursday

Disease and War, III: The Second World War and the Holocaust
25 November, Tuesday **2nd Short Paper due in class**
Thanksgiving Break: 27-28 November
2 December, Tuesday

IV. The Landscape of European Health Post-1945

HIV/AIDS and European Society
4 December, Thursday
9 December, Tuesday

Implications for the Future: Bird Flu and other Potential Pandemics in the 21st Century and Beyond
11 December, Thursday

***Final Take-Home Exam Due Friday, 19 December At 7pm In My Office, Rice 315***