

San José State University
CoSS/Anthropology
ANTH151, Modernity and Disease, Section 1, Spring 2023

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Elizabeth Weiss
Office Location: CL404R
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Office Hours: Thursdays 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 PM to 1:15 PM
Classroom: WSQ004
Prerequisites: ANTH012 or Instructors Consent

Course Description

Modernity and Disease explores the effects of the modern world on human biology, with specific emphasis on adaptations to the last several decades of environmental changes. Topics include reproduction, diet, and infectious, geriatric and environmental diseases.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

During the semester, students will acquire knowledge on how human health is impacted by our genes, evolution and the modern environment.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO 1 identify trends of bone health that have occurred in the last 100 years.

CLO 2 identify human evolutionary adaptations that are incongruent with modern lifestyles.

CLO 3 identify types of data used to understand changes in health through time.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Paleopathology in Perspective: Bone Health and Disease through Time. 2014. Elizabeth Weiss. Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN-10: 0759124426; ISBN-13: 978-0759124424.

- This book is available for free through the SJLibrary:
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sjsu/detail.action?docID=1901093>

Evolving Health: The Origins of Illness and How the Modern World Is Making Us Sick. 2002. Noel Boaz. John Wiley & Sons. ISBN-10: 0471352616; ISBN-13: 978-0471352617.

- This book, in hard copy form, is available for free through Course Reserves.

Other Readings

- Johnson, S. 2021. How Humanity Gave Itself an Extra Life. New York Times.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/magazine/global-life-span.html>
- Kolata, G. 2021. Intense Strength Training Does Not Ease Knee Pain, Study Finds. New York Times.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/health/knee-osteoarthritis-exercise.html>

- Thomas, K. 2020. The Story of Thalidomide in the U.S., Told Through Documents. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/health/thalidomide-fda-documents.html>
- Twohey, M. and Jewett, C. 2022. They Paused Puberty, but Is There a Cost? <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/health/puberty-blockers-transgender.html>
- University of Cambridge. 2021. Cancer rates in medieval Britain around ten times higher than previously thought, study suggests. Medical Express. <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-04-cancer-medieval-britain-ten-higher.html>

Course Requirements and Assignments

- There will be 3 quizzes (20% each) and a comprehensive final exam (25%).
- There will be 3 debates, on modern health issues, topics are listed below, but depending on events we may add topics that are of interest to students; each debate is worth 5% of your grade (15%). In these debates, students will be assigned a perspective that they will need to research, using a variety of sources, and be ready to civilly argue for:
 - Debate One Topics:
 - Should females wait until they are older for extreme athleticism?
 - Should minors make their own medical decisions, such as related to cross-hormone treatment, surgery, and vaccinations?
 - Should we use shame (including shaming parents) to reduce obesity?
 - Debate Two Topics:
 - Do surgeries help resolve joint problems, such as back and knee pain?
 - Should doctors avoid prescribing opioids for chronic pain?
 - Should public waters be fluorinated?
 - Debate Three Topics:
 - Are chronic diseases (e.g., cardiovascular diseases, diabetes) over-diagnosed?
 - Should pregnant women be able to choose abortion due to genetic screening results?
 - Did the government's COVID strategy (lockdowns, masks, mass testing, vaccinations, school closures) cause more harm than benefit?
- There will be extra credit opportunities based around preparedness for the review sessions; extra credit is worth one exam question.
- Read the assignments before class and ask questions when something is unclear.

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final will be a comprehensive in-class exam worth 25% of your grade; it will be closed book and no notes. The final exam will take place in the regular class location (WSQ004) and be held on scheduled final exam day. The University has not yet published its final exam schedule for Fall 2021, please see this link for more information and updated information: <https://www.sjsu.edu/classes/final-exam-schedule/fall-2021.php>

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

Grading Information

A	B	C	D
97% - 100% = A plus	87-89% = B plus	77-79% = C plus	67-69% = D plus
91-96% = A	81-86% = B	71-76% = C	61-66% = D
90% = A minus	80% = B minus	70% = C minus	60% = D minus

Make-up Work: Only students with a valid documented excuse will be able to take an exam late or turn in an assignment late. If you know in advance that you should be unable to attend a quiz or the final, contact me immediately by e-mailing.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Classroom Protocol

I consider my students adults. Punctuality is greatly appreciated. When you attend lecture, you should pay attention. If you cannot pay attention for the entire period (for whatever reason), then you should not attend class. To prevent distracting other classmates, all electronics (e.g., laptops, cellphones, etc.) should only be used for class-relevant activities, such as notetaking.

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ANTH151-01 / Modernity and Disease, Spring 2023, Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan. 26	Introduction & Greensheet: Public Health and Private Decisions Discussion
2	Jan. 31	Changes Through Time, Bone Biology: Weiss 1; Boaz 1
	Feb. 2	Bone Health: Malnutrition & Growth: Weiss 2; https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/health/puberty-blockers-transgender.html
3	Feb. 7	Bone Health: Losing Bone: Weiss 3
	Feb. 9	Bone Health: Reproductive Choices: Weiss 3
4	Feb. 14	Childhood Injuries: Weiss 4; Debate 1
	Feb. 16	Quiz 1 Review
5	Feb. 21	Quiz 1
	Feb. 23	Bipedality, Back Pain: Weiss 5; Boaz 11: 149-153
6	Feb. 28	Repetitive Stresses: Boaz 11: 155-160
	Mar. 2	Osteoarthritis: Weiss 6; https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/health/knee-osteoarthritis-exercise.html
7	Mar. 7	Gout: Boaz 10
	Mar. 9	Oral Health I: Dental Biology, Cavities, and Attrition: Weiss 7
8	Mar. 14	Oral Health II: Tooth Loss: Weiss 7; Debate 2
	Mar. 16	Quiz 2 Review
9	Mar. 21	Quiz 2
9	Mar. 23	Infectious Diseases I: Bacteria and Parasites: Weiss 8; https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/magazine/global-life-span.html
10	Mar. 28-30	SPRING BREAK
11	Apr. 4	Infectious Diseases II: Viruses: Boaz 4
	Apr. 6	Birth Defects: Weiss 9; Boaz 3: 44-53
12	Apr. 11	Birth Defects II: Boaz 3: 44-53; https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/health/thalidomide-fda-documents.html
	Apr. 13	Cancer and Evolution: Boaz 5, 6, 8; https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-04-cancer-medieval-britain-ten-higher.html
13	Apr. 18	High Blood Pressure: Boaz 7
	Apr. 20	Diabetes: Boaz 9

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
14	Apr. 25	Gut Diseases: Boaz 12; Debate 3
	Apr. 27	Evolution of Psychiatric Disorder: Boaz 13
15	May 2	Quiz 3 Review
	May 4	Quiz 3
16	May 9	Next Fifty Years: Weiss 10; Boaz 14
	May 11	Final Exam Review – Last Day of Class
Final Exam	May 18 th (Thursday)	WSQ004; 9:45 AM to 12 PM