

Spring 2021

HSS 404-H02: Disease, Health and Social Justice

Stephen Pemberton

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hist-syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Pemberton, Stephen, "HSS 404-H02: Disease, Health and Social Justice" (2021). *History Syllabi*. 75.
<https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hist-syllabi/75>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the NJIT Syllabi at Digital Commons @ NJIT. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Syllabi by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ NJIT. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@njit.edu.

DISEASE, HEALTH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

HSS 404 Senior Seminar - Honors

SPRING 2021 SYLLABUS

Prof. Stephen Pemberton

Federated Department of History
New Jersey Institute of Technology

Class Meetings

Central King Building (CKB) 116 / Webex*

2:30 PM – 5:20 PM Mondays

**This course is a converged learning course with synchronous online course delivery and optional classroom instruction. Everyone attending class physically will be masked and observe social distancing as mandated by University policy and public health protocols.*

Office Hours

Wednesdays, 10:45 AM – 12 PM, and by appointment Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays.

All office hours will take place online by WebEx.

Office & Contact

Cullimore Hall 325, NJIT Campus

Phone: 973-596-5716

Email: stephen.pemberton@njit.edu

“Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”

Martin Luther King, Jr., 1966

Even as medicine and public health have witnessed unprecedented advances in the management of disease and health in the past hundred and fifty years, there remains a persistent gap between those who benefit from such “progress” and those who do not. This gap is not sufficiently explained by socio-economic factors alone and requires recognition of disparities along lines of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality that are deeply ingrained in the history and cultures of the United States and other nations.

This senior seminar in comparative medical and health history examines how race/ethnicity, culture, and politics have figured prominently in the management of disease and health in the United States. The course readings and assignments will focus on the health status of “non-white” and “white” communities during the twentieth century, with attention to the persistent disparities that people of color have experienced in health outcomes. Above all, the course focuses on the ways that American society has confronted, or failed to confront, social justice in medical treatment and research as well as public health.

The topics, readings, and assignments in this course will prepare each student to undertake and complete a research project on a significant health-related issue in the United States today. The course will therefore challenge the student to develop historical and critical perspective on their research subject.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- *Describe* and *interpret* how race and ethnicity, and/or class, gender and sexuality, have factored for better and worse into medicine and healthcare in the United States of America.
- *Identify* and *describe* key historical events and actors as they relate to health/disease and social justice and *communicate* their significance.
- *Write* effective essays that *describe* and critically *evaluate* the merits of a certain argument in a specific place and time.
- *Research, write, and orally present* an argument of social and/or historical significance using primary and secondary sources.
- *Demonstrate* information literacy consistent with being an upper-level undergraduate: including (1) locating, retrieving and evaluating information relevant to the writing of a college-level argumentative essay; (2) organizing, synthesizing and communicating that information in clear, persuasive prose; and (3) producing a finished research paper that employs principles consistent with the ethical and legal uses of information.

Prerequisites and Honors Credit

HUM 102 with a grade of C or higher, and 6 credits at the 300-level History and Humanities General Education Requirement with a grade of C or higher; 3 credits of the 300-level may be taken concurrently with this class. This class is an honors class. The student must be enrolled in the Albert Dorman Honors College or have permission from the professor to enroll.

Course Webpage (Canvas)

There is a Canvas webpage for this course that the professor and class will utilize throughout the semester. Please consult this website regularly, preferably at least once before every class meeting and/or assignment due date. The webpage contains the syllabus, assignments, readings, and other features that will enhance your learning experience. **Canvas access [here](#) with your UCID.**

Class Meetings

This course is a converged learning course with synchronous online course delivery and optional *classroom instruction with the professor*. In other words, every class meeting will take place online synchronously for this course with some meetings having a converged/hyflex (i.e., in person) component in accord with NJIT policy for converged courses. *Everyone attending class in person will be masked and observe social distancing as mandated by University policy and public health protocols*. Please consult the Canvas course webpage for announcements regarding what class meetings are converged.

We will meet using Webex throughout the course. The portal for accessing these regular class meetings and office hours can be found through the “Cisco Webex” tab on the Canvas course webpage. To meet the class or professor, login into Canvas first using your UCID, then find the “Cisco Webex” tab within the course page, then choose ‘Class Meeting’ and press the green “Join” button. Note: The very first time you attempt to login to a class meeting or office hours from within Canvas, you may be prompted to register yourself first via njit.webex.com. After

that first-time registration, you should be able to enter the 'Class Meeting' seamlessly from within the Canvas course webpage.

Office Hours

My regular office are Wednesdays, 10:45 AM – 12 PM, and by appointment Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays. Students who wish to meet with the professor individually outside of the regular class meetings or office hours are always welcome to do so. If you would like an individual appointment, please email me to arrange that meeting. Office hours and individual meetings will take place on my personal WebEx page. The link is prominently displayed on the Canvas course homepage for ease of access. All you need to do is click that WebEx link during my regular Office hours or at the individual meeting time we have previously arranged.

Readings

The required readings for this course include one book and a variety of shorter readings. Students should follow the semester schedule in the syllabus or Canvas course page to determine what readings to complete for each class period.

Short Readings: Short readings are newspaper or magazine articles, scholarly essays, articles, or book chapters. These will be posted on the course webpage as pdfs or weblinks. Full descriptions and proper citations of these readings appear in the course schedule below on the class day they are due to be read and discussed.

Book: The following book is required reading in this course.

- David Herzberg, *White Market Drugs: Big Pharma and the Hidden History of Addiction in America* (University of Chicago University Press, 2020) [ISBN # 9780226731919](#)

Copies are available at the [NJIT Campus bookstore](#) or through [online booksellers](#). Audiobook and electronic versions can be purchased as well.

Assignments and Grading

The primary goal of this course is to promote critical thinking about health, disease in its relation to society, both past and present. All students will be evaluated on their written and oral communication over the course of the semester. This requires that you do the reading and writing assignments dutifully. In addition to in-class participation, the student will complete a series of weekly assignments while conducting a research project in consultation with the professor.

Participation

The class participation grade will reflect both the student's presence in the virtual classroom and their consistency and improvement in engaging the subject matter across the course. Students should promptly communicate any concerns about their ability to meet the following requirements with the professor. Participation will count **10%** of the final course grade; consistent effort and improvement are weighted heavily in grading participation.

Attendance Policy. This course is taught online with a university-mandated minimum requirement that students attend "synchronously" at the appointed meeting times. Missing even a single class is not recommended. However, each student is allowed to miss one full class period without penalty to their participation grade. It is highly recommended that you consult with the

professor about any missed class time beyond one absence. Class time missed beyond the one “excused” class will result in substantial reductions in the student's participation grade (as calculated as a percentage of formal contact hours for the semester). The professor will consider excusing repeat absences under extraordinary circumstances that can be verified by the Dean of Students Office. See policy on “Student Accommodations” below for further details. Overall, attendance will constitute half of the student’s participation grade.

Student Engagement. The student's verbal and non-verbal engagements with online classroom activities account for the other half of the participation grade. Each student should come to class promptly and regularly, actively listen to the online presentations, and be prepared to ask questions and discuss the readings assigned for the day. Students should respect the learning environment by arriving on time and staying the full term of the session. Students who participate regularly and constructively in discussion will be rewarded with higher grades in their final participation grade. The student must contribute to the learning environment to receive full credit in this area. Meeting the professor in office hours also counts positively toward participation. The professor will also consider improvement and other factors in his assessment of each student’s participation grade, and he reserves the right to award extra credit to students who make substantial contributions to the learning environment.

Quizzes / Reading Responses

The professor will evaluate the student’s competency in the weekly assignments, in part, by assessing student performance on quizzes (usually comprised of multiplechoice questions) or reading responses (usually comprised of short written responses). The act of doing these regular assignments is an important and comparatively easy way for students to see if they are grasping the main subject matter and/or key points from the relevant course reading or class presentation. If (as a student) you receive less than a B on any given quiz, then you should review the material with attention to what you missed. If the correct answers remain unclear to you after your review of that course material, please reach out to the professor for help. Collectively, these assignments will count **20%** of the final course grade.

Midterm Essay

This essay will address a major course theme in the first half of the course. A topics and guidelines for the writing assignment will be distributed on Canvas at least two weeks before the assignment is due. The essay will be short (4-5 pages) and will be used to help the student and professor assess progress in understanding the subject matter and communicating effectively in college-level writing. The grade on this assignment will count **10%** of the final course grade.

Research Project

Each student will conduct an individual research project in consultation with the professor.

- (1) The student will identify a topic and source material early in the semester.
- (2) The student will write a paragraph proposal statement and annotated bibliography.
- (3) The student will write a short essay using at least one primary document source for the purposes of feedback on the project. This assignment is the “sources” essay.
- (4) The student will develop and present the research project in a short presentation to the class and receive feedback from their peers as well as the professor.
- (5) The student will write a final paper based on the research done and feedback received across the course.

The instructions and tutorials for each component of the research project will be available on the Canvas course webpage well in advance of each assignment due date. In total, the student’s

research project amounts to **60%** of the course grade, albeit broken into its constituent components as designated by the star (*) in the table below.

<u>Assignments</u>		<u>Grading Scale for Assignments</u>
Participation	10%	A = 89.5 to 100
Quizzes/Reading Responses	20%	B+ = 86.5 to 89.4
Annotated Bibliography*	10%	B = 79.5 to 86.4
Midterm Essay	10%	C+ = 76.5 to 79.4
Source/s Essay*	10%	C = 69.5 to 76.4
Research Presentations*	20%	D = 59.5 to 69.4
Final Research Paper*	20%	F = 59.4 to 0
<hr/> Course Grade		100%
Consistent effort and improvement are weighted heavily in grading.		
Passing this class with a B or higher is unlikely without completing each assignment in a timely fashion.		

Respect for Persons and the Learning Environment

In the interest of an open exchange of ideas and collegiality, everyone participating in the class should strive to respect their classmates as persons. The professor will make every effort to facilitate a respectful environment for learning, but students should keep in mind their own responsibilities in the classroom. The same rules apply in the virtual and physical classrooms.

The professor reserves the right to ask you to leave the virtual classroom for any behaviors that do not meet the expectations of a proper, professional learning environment.

Web-surfing, texting and social media usage that is unrelated to class is disruptive of a respectful learning environment. Students are therefore expected to limit cell phone, tablet, and lap top use to class-related activities only during our designated class times.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is enforced in this course. Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found [here](#).

It is the instructor's professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu.

Students are also responsible for upholding the integrity of NJIT by reporting any violation of academic to the [Dean of Students Office](#). The identity of the student filing any academic integrity violation will always remain anonymous.

Tutorials that explain acceptable academic writing for this course are available at the Van Houghton library website, [here](#). The Library also maintains another web page on how to cite sources in your academic writing, [here](#). Proper citation will help you avoid plagiarism. I prefer that students use the author-date citation format from the [Chicago Manual of Style \(CMS\)](#) in their writing for this course.

Tutorials on how to evaluate appropriate online source material can be found [here](#).

Tutorials appropriate to doing coursework in a history class, such as this one, can be found [here](#).

NJIT Librarian David Scharf is the expert to contact to field your questions about how the library's resources can help you succeed in this class. Her contact information is [here](#).

Again, all students are expected to abide by the norms outlined in these websites, this syllabus as well as the course webpage for this class, and students will be penalized for failure to do so. Please consult the professor if you have any concerns about academic integrity, academic reading, writing and citation, plagiarism or their meanings in actual practice.

Students will also be required to submit their original written work to [Turnitin.com](#), an online service used by NJIT instructors to detect plagiarism and irregularities in sourcing and citation of the written word and claims.

All of the above links can also be accessed on the course webpage.

Student Accommodations and Privacy

If a student needs accommodation for illness, disability, death in family, religious reasons, etc., University Policy dictates that the student must inform the [Dean of Students Office](#). Instructors can only accommodate a student at the direction of the Dean's Office.

Students with disabilities should also contact NJIT's [Student Disability Services \(SDS\)](#) for any necessary accommodations related to their disability [here](#). SDS will communicate your specific needs to the professor, ensuring that your disability-related accommodations for the class and assignments are met without your having to divulge any private health information to the professor or anyone else in the class.

Students who have concerns that might impact their learning experience beyond the issues stated above may identify the nature of that concern with the professor so that he may advise you appropriately. The professor will hold all individual communication with students in confidence.

Semester Schedule

Mon, Jan 25. Introduction to “Disease, Health, & Social Justice”

In-Class Activities

Thurs, Jan 28. Mid-Week Assignment

Reading: Selections from Randy Shilts, *And The Band Played On* (1987 orig.)
Randy Shilts’ obituary in *The New York Times* (1994)

Complete Quiz 1 and Reading Response 1

Mon, Feb 1. AIDS in America: Interpreting the First Decade

Reading:

Everyone reads one of Crimp’s 1987 essay closely and skims the other:
Douglas Crimp, “How to Have Promiscuity in an Epidemic” (1987)
Douglas Crimp, “Randy Shilts’ Miserable Failure” (2002)

Everyone also reads:
Win Travossos, “Tearing Down the Lazaretto” (1994)
Rachel Maddow, “Identifiable Lives: AIDS and the Response to Dehumanization” (1994)

In-Class: *How to Survive a Plague* (2012 Documentary Movie)

Thurs, Feb 4. Mid-Week Assignment

Complete Quiz 2 and Reading Response 2

Mon, Feb 8. AIDS Activism

Complete Quiz 3

Reading: Dan Royles, *To Make the Wounded Whole: The African American Struggle Against HIV/AIDS* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020), pp. 17-46. (30 pages)

Charles O’Malley, “The Roots of African American AIDS Activism: On Dan Royles’s ‘To Make the Wounded Whole’” (2020)

Guest Speaker: Jason Chernesky, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Thurs, Feb 11. Mid-Week Assignment

Complete Reading Response 3

Mon, Feb 15. The American Health Dilemma: Undertreated and Overmedicated

Reading: Selections from Keith Wailoo, *Pain: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015)

Everyone reads: Wailoo, “Introduction” (11 pages)

Everyone skims this chapter to identify main argument: “Gates of Relief” (21 pages)

Group A also reads: “Conservative Case Against Learned Helplessness” (33 pages)

Group B also reads: “Oxycontin Unleashed” (34 pages)

Thurs, Feb 18. Mid-Week Assignment

Complete Reading Response 4 / Topic Choice Due / Sign Up for Individual Meetings

Mon, Feb 22. White Market Drugs I (No Class Meeting) / Individual Meetings Feb 22-26

Reading: Selections from David Herzberg, *White Market Drugs: Big Pharma and the Hidden History of Addiction in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020).

Everyone reads pp 1-45 closely (45 pages)

Everyone skims pp. 46-132

Thurs, Feb 25. Mid-Week Assignment

Complete Reading Response 5

Mon, Mar 1. Primary & Secondary Sources / White Market Drugs II

Reading: Selections from Herzberg, *White Market Drugs*

Everyone skims pp. 133-238

Everyone then picks one of the chapters in that section of the book (pick chapter 4, 5 or 6) and reads that chapter closely enough to say what interests you about that chapter and what you think it is saying.

Thurs, Mar 4. Mid-Week Assignment

Proposal Paragraph with Annotated Bibliography Due

Mon, Mar 8. White Market Drugs III / Group Discussion

Reading: Herzberg, *White Market Drugs*. pp 239-293 closely (54 pages)

Sally Satel, “White Market Drugs’ Review: Addiction by Description” (2020)

Sally Satel, “I Am a Racially Profiling Doctor” (2002)

Thurs, Mar 11. Mid-Week Assignment

Essay I Due

SPRING BREAK!

Mon, Mar 22. Sickle Cell Anemia and the Legacies of Scientific Racism

Reading: Alondra Nelson, “Introduction: Serving the People Body & Soul” and “The Spin Doctors” in *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), pp. 1-22, 115-152.
[60 pages total]

Wed, Mar 24. Honors Colloquium with Prof. Melissa Creary (230-4 pm)*

Thurs, Mar 25. Mid-Week Assignment

Reading Response 6 with Extra Credit Option*

Mon, Mar 29. Diabetes, Race, Ethnicity

Reading: Selections from Arleen Tuchman, *Diabetes: A History of Race and Disease* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020).

Thurs, Apr 1. Mid-Week Assignment

Essay II Due

Mon, Apr 5. Is Whiteness Good for Your Health?

Reading: Selections from Jonathan Metzl, *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment is Killing America’s Heartland* (New York: Basic Books, 2019).

Thurs, Apr 7. Mid-Week Assignment

Complete Reading Response 7

Mon, Apr 12. Workshop / Student Presentations*

Mon, Apr 19. Student Presentations*

Mon, Apr 26. Student Presentations*

Mon, May 3. Student Presentations* / Workshop

Mon, May 10. FINAL PAPER DUE

* Students will be doing individual presentations, presenting their research to their peers in class, in advance of completing their final papers by May 10. Each student will be required to attend the presentations, participate in the Q&A portions of the presentation, and participate in the online discussions associated with these presentations.