(HP, CC) RELI 88 Alternative Medicine and Religion
Dr. Ann Burlein

This course will introduce you to the religious roots of a variety of alternative medical systems such as homeopathy and Ayurveda. We will consider alternative notions of healing and cure in light of their social and historical context.

Required Texts for Purchase:

Course Schedule

M Jan. 26

W Jan 28 The Current State of Play
and
and

Nineteenth Century

M Feb. 2 and Feb 4
Whorter, *Nature Cures*, chapter 1-3, pages 1-76

Focus on Homeopathy
Wed Feb 11 Homeopathy in Calcutta
Mon Feb. 16 no classes President’s Day
Early Twentieth Century

Wed Feb 18 and Mon Feb 23

Late Twentieth Holistic Healing

Wed Feb 25 *Nature Cures*, chapter 10 and 12, pages 221-244 and 271-296.
Mon March 2 *Nature Cures*, chapter 11 on Acupuncture, pages 245-270.

Focus on Chinese Medicine
Wed March 4 and Mon March 9

Case Study: Ayurveda

Mon March 16 *Ayurveda in Medically Plural India*

Wed March 18 Overview and History

Mon March 23 and Wed March 25
Vasant Lad, *Ayurveda: A Practical Guide* -- Read chapter one “History and Philosophy,”
Chapter two “The Five Elements and Man,” chapter three “The Human Constitution” and
Mon March 30 Lad, *Ayurveda* – skim chapter six “Diagnosis,” read more carefully
chapter seven ‘Treatment,” pages 52-79.
Wed April 1 Lad, *Ayurveda* – read chapter eight ‘Diet,” chapter nine “Taste,” and
chapter ten “Lifestyle and Routine,” pages 80-103.
April 3-11 Spring Break
Mon April 13
Lad, Ayurveda – read chapter 11 “Time,” chapter 12 “Longevity” and the pages on
metals and gems in chapter 133, pages 104-28 and 141-47.

Wed April 15 Ethnography
Stefan Ecks, chapter two “Ayurveda: You are the Medicine,” in *Eating Drugs*, pages 69-105.

Mon April 20 and Wed April 22 – A Different Model?
Mon April 27 History Returns!

Wed April 29 To Market, To Market

Mon May 4 – discuss data evaluation assignment
Wed May 6 no class -- conversion to Friday schedule
May 7/8 snow study days -- Finals May 11-16 – data evaluation assignment due on scheduled exam day.

Assignments:

ONE. 50% of your final grade will come from five three-page papers (10% each) in which you 'break down' the following medical systems: homeopathy, chiropractic medicine, osteopathy, acupuncture and Ayurveda. These are not research papers: your goal is to draw on our readings and discussions to do an anatomy of the medical system in question:

1. History: your task here is to analyze how context shapes (but does not necessarily determine) a healing system. Context includes:
   a) roots and origins; but also
   b) other key moments in reception or development (by the latter I mean: Calcutta is the world capital of homeopathy but this is not because of Homeopathy’s origins in Germany; rather, it has everything to do with the British use of biomedicine to colonize India).
2. How does this system envision sickness or disease?
3. How is cure understood?
4. How is cure brought about? (what are its treatment practices?)
5. How, if at all, does religion inform this view of the body, healing and health? What does this system encourage people to ‘believe’ or ‘trust’ in?
You have the option of re-writing the first paper ONLY, as you learn how to ferret out the necessary information and acquire the requisite analytical skills.

TWO. 20% of your final grade. Your final project is a “data evaluation.” In our last week of class, I will hand out five “documents” (some real, some fake) designed to ‘educate’ readers about a particular medical system. Your task will be to assess the value of the information that the document provides. You must consider:

1. Is the information accurate, based on what we read in class? If there is a difference, how do you make sense of it?
2. Who wrote the information? What are their credentials? We are all both enabled and hampered by our training. Thus you must consider: What biases might be
structured into their position? What **kind(s)** of knowledge might they be likely to have, given their position?

3. What are the sources of the information? What kind of truth might those sources have? What kinds of information can those sources not provide?

4. What is the intent of the information? (What kind of education is this?)

CONCLUDE: by assessing the status of information that the document provides: what kind is it? how reliable is it? what can it teach a reader and what is it likely to not see?

THREE. 15% of your grade will come from class facilitation. On your day to facilitate class, prepare five to six OPEN-ENDED discussion questions regarding the readings for that day. As you prepare your questions, identify:

** a) the main points in the reading; AND**

** b) aspects of the reading that will help you write your 'break-down' or 'anatomy' paper(s). That is, your task is to be a ‘study group leader’ to help prepare your classmates to write their papers: what things should they think about?**

** c) places in the reading that need discussion – either because they are contain important concepts for writing your papers or because they are confusing (if you did not understand them, other people were lost too).**

FOUR. The final 15% of your grade will come from your INFORMED participation in class discussions (on days you are not facilitating). This includes being present. I will take roll every day. This includes not only being marked physically present in class but being mentally present (as opposed to sleeping, texting, working on computer, etc. for which you get no credit). This section of your grade should be your cushion: everyone starts with an A … and subtract from there. In other words, I assume you will almost always be in class, with the readings done, and that you will speak in ways that demonstrate your engagement with the course materials and with your colleagues: that is an A. For some of you, that means you must kick yourself in the butt to speak: if you always attend class and look aware and knowledgeable but never speak, you earn you a C for participation, which I consider ‘average’ in a large class. For others, that means you will have to learn to speak less so that others can speak and we have a more well-rounded discussion.

You have two excused absences. If you exceed your two allowed absences, for each absence you lose a fraction of a point: for example, if you participated at an A level on the days you are present BUT were absent 3 times, you earn an A-; if you were absent 4 times, you get a B+; and so forth down the scale. If you started with a C (because you are attentive and seem prepared but do not speak because you hate to speak in such a large group) but are absent three times, then you earn a C-; if you are absent 4 times, you earn a D+ and so forth down the scale.

**Academic Honesty:**
Hofstra University Honor Code: “As a member of the Hofstra community I pledge to demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of my life, both inside and out of the classroom. I understand that I am accountable for everything I say and write. I will not misrepresent my academic work, nor will I give or receive unauthorized assistance for academic work. I agree to respect the rights of all members of the Hofstra community. I will be guided by the values expressed in the P.R.I.D.E Principles. I accept the responsibility to follow this Honor Code at all times.”

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious ethical and professional infractions. For information regarding Hofstra’s statement of principles with respect to academic honesty, examples of violations, procedures for handling violations, as well as a student’s right to appeal a charge, see Faculty Policy Series #11 for undergraduate students (http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate_FPS_11.pdf)

Students With Disabilities:

If you believe you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, qualified individuals with disabilities will not be discriminated against in any programs, or services available at Hofstra University.

Individuals with disabilities are entitled to accommodations designed to facilitate full access to all programs and services. SSD is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will provide students with documented disabilities accommodation letters, as appropriate.

Please note that accommodations may require early planning and are not retroactive; please contact SSD as soon as possible. All students are responsible for providing accommodation letters to each instructor and for discussing with him or her the specific accommodations needed and how they can be best implemented in each course. For more information on services provided by the university and for submission of documentation, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities, 040 Memorial Hall, 516-463-7075.

Deadlines: Please be mindful of University deadlines. See www.hofstra.edu/deadlines.

Incomplete Policy:

Hofstra’s policies regarding Incomplete grades, default grades, and associated deadlines can be found in the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Bulletins (http://bulletin.hofstra.edu/).

Notice On Campus Sexual Assault And Discriminatory Harassment
University policy and federal laws such as Title IX, Title VI and the ADA make it clear that sexual violence and harassment based on any protected characteristic are strictly prohibited and are subject to standards of accountability at the University. If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted or subjected to discriminatory harassment, the University offers multiple resources to support you and has policies and procedures to address these offenses. For more information, contact:
** the University Title IX Coordinator, Jean Peden-Christodolou, at 516-463-6815, Jean.C.PedenChristodoulou@hofstra.edu;
** the University Equal Rights & Opportunity Officer, Jennifer Mone, at 516-463-1800, eroo@hofstra.edu; or
** refer to the applicable University policy atwww.hofstra.edu/oe.

This course fulfills the following Religion Department Goals:

Goal # 3. Students will be able to **analyze** the social implications of religion.

**Objectives**
   a) Students will explain the inseparability of religion and its social context
   b) Students will give examples of the links between religion and other dimensions of social life (gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, politics, economics, science, technology etc.)

Goal # 5. Students will be able to **evaluate** religious phenomena.

**Objectives**
   a) Students will describe differences ... between religions and movements not normally thought of as religious (e.g. science, nationalism, sport, gardening etc)
   b) Students will express opinions formed by an engagement with scholarship in the field

This course fulfills the following goals in your General Education:

**Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively.**

**Learning Objectives:**

1a. Clearly and accurately summarize and evaluate the facts, presumptions, viewpoints, values, and arguments presented in a text or creative work.
1d. Critically analyze one's own thinking by identifying one's presumptions, values, and viewpoints as well as problems, inconsistencies, and unanswered questions.
1e. Conceive and defend alternative hypotheses and viewpoints; offer and explain reasons for provisionally rejecting or accepting them.
Goal 2. Students will apply analytical reasoning across academic disciplines.

Learning Objectives:

2a. Read with comprehension, and critically interpret written work in discipline-specific contexts.
2g. Describe, comprehend, and analyze the role of philosophical ideas, historical movements, or ethical debates in the development of civilizations.

Goal 3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in written communication.

Learning Objectives:

3a. Compose grammatical sentences.
3b. Use various sentence forms to effectively modulate style and tone.
3c. Compose a sequence of paragraphs that develop a point.
3d. Summarize, quote, and respond to reliable texts to support and develop claims; apply relevant standards for citation.

Goal 5. Students will develop an awareness of and sensitivity to global issues.

Learning Objectives:

5b. Demonstrate knowledge of the intellectual, social, political, economic, or cultural practices of at least one of the peoples in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, or of the indigenous peoples of the Americas and Australia.

Goal 6. Students will demonstrate information literacy.

Learning Objectives:

6b. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate the relevance and utility of different sources.
6c. Integrate sources effectively and ethically through proper citation.

Bibliography for Alternative Medicine


Schneirov, Matthew, and Geczik, Jonathan David. *A Diagnosis for Our Times:*
(Oxford: Oxford Univ, 2002).