

**EMORY UNIVERSITY**  
**NELL HODGSON WOODRUFF SCHOOL OF NURSING**

<b><u>COURSE NUMBER &amp; TITLE:</u></b>	NRSG 335: Historical Foundations of Health Disparities in the U.S.
<b><u>PREREQUISITES:</u></b>	None
<b><u>CO-REQUISITES:</u></b>	None
<b><u>CREDIT ALLOCATION:</u></b>	3 credit hours Lecture 3 credits = 45 contact hours/semester (1:1)
<b><u>PLACEMENT:</u></b>	Fall
<b><u>COURSE DELIVERY MODE:</u></b>	In-Person
<b><u>TIME/LOCATION</u></b>	Tues/Thursday 1pm-2.15pm Tarbutton Hall Room 105
<b><u>LEAD FACULTY/INSTRUCTOR:</u></b>	Dr. Kylie M. Smith

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Students explore the American healthcare system and the relationship to discrimination along race, class, and gender lines, analyze historical decisions and laws that cause inequity, and examine how history informs actions and policies to move healthcare towards justice.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Understand the historical foundations of the U.S. health and medical system.
2. Analyze the way historical policies and laws have led to discrimination and disparities.
3. Develop strategies for equitable health policy and advocacy.
4. Examine the interconnection of historical structural and systemic forces and the social determinants of health.

---

**STUDENT HANDBOOK REFERENCES:**

Students should also refer to the Student Handbook for program information, school resources, other policies, and guidelines. Information on Religious Holidays, the Respect Statement, Accessibility Services, and information on the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are also found in the student handbook. The handbook can be found at: <http://www.nursing.emory.edu/audience-guides/students-audience-guide.html>.

---

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course is an introduction to the historical factors which have created disparities in American health care systems particularly in regards to race. Students will analyze the ways that categories such as “race” and ethnicity have been constructed and utilized in health science, research and practice and evaluate the legacy of racist medical beliefs and practices. Through an examination of past health care activism, students will also learn how local communities have sought to address disparities and

consider the way these activities can inform current movements towards health equity. The course will help students situate the development of health and medicine in the broader social context of American society since slavery and emancipation, and will facilitate the development of historical research and policy development skills.

### **READINGS**

There is no single set text rather each week will have a list of relevant resources with required readings of between 50-100 pages, and lists of other recommended sources. Journal articles and chapters from sample texts will be provided through Course Reserves. See the Weekly Schedule below for details of readings.

### **ASSESSMENT**

There are 5 assessable components of this course.

1. Participation 10%
2. Online posts 20%
3. Annotated bibliography 20%
4. Group Presentation 20%
5. Historically Informed Policy final project 30%

The assessments in this course are designed to support the development of the final project which is a historically informed policy brief for inclusion on the Historically Informed Policy Lab site (<http://thehiplab.org>). Students will form groups around areas of key disparities in health for example, Black women and reproductive health, immigrant and farm worker health, policing and mental health etc. Students can also suggest other areas they are concerned with. There are both group and individual components of this assignment. Individually, students will submit short discussion posts based on the readings, and an annotated bibliography of historical scholarship relevant to their area of interest. The group will then present their research process and findings towards the end of the course, and submit a final project related to historically informed policy recommendations.

## Structure and Content

This course is designed for two 75 minute classes per week (Tuesday and Thursday). The material in the course is organized into three main modules of three weeks of related content, interspersed with lessons on definitions, ethics, and positionality, as well as time for group work, workshops on policy writing, and group presentations. The three main modules and related content are listed below, and then detailed lists of readings for each class appear on subsequent pages.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
8/29	<i>Introductions and Welcome</i>	
9/3	<i>Race as a social construct</i>	
9/5	<i>Positionality, ethics, and group project set ups</i>	
<b>MODULE 1: The Impact of Colonialism</b>		
9/10	Death and illness on the frontier	
9/12	Policing infectious borders	
9/17	Health and healing on the plantation	
9/19	Slavery and reproduction	
9//24	Pathologizing race	
9/26	Creating medical knowledge	Online posts
<b>MODULE 2: Containing Racial Difference</b>		
10/1	Discovering the asylum	
10/3	Eugenics and disability	
10/8	The politics of racial uplift	
10/10	Negotiating Deluxe Jim Crow	
10/15-17	<i>FALL BREAK/Reading week</i>	
10/22	Confining Disability in Hawaii	
10/24	Reproduction on the Reservation	Annotated bibliography
10/29	<i>Group project workshop</i>	
10/31	<i>Group project workshop</i>	
<b>MODULE 3: Resistance, Rights and Activism</b>		
11/5	Rural Health Activism	
11/7	Taking Health to the Streets	
11/12	Disability rights and abolition	
11/14	<i>Group Project work</i>	
11/19	All health politics is local	
11/21	<i>Group project work</i>	
11/26-29	Group work/Thanksgiving	
12/3	Group presentations	Presentations
12/5	Group presentations	Presentations
12/10	In Conclusion	
12/18		HIP Lab projects due

## Weekly Reading Schedule

### **Week 1:**

Thursday August 29 - Welcome and Introductions

- Bailey ZD, Krieger N, Agénor M, Graves J, Linos N, Bassett MT. [Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions](#). *Lancet*. 2017; 389(10077):1453-1463.

### **Week 2:**

Tuesday September 3 – Race as a Social Construct

- Roberts, D. E. (2011). What's Wrong with Race-Based Medicine: Genes, Drugs, and Health Disparities. *Minn. J. L. Sci. & Tech.*, 12, 1.

Thursday September 5 – Positionality, ethics, and group project set up

- Historical Fluency article by D. Goldberg (in press)
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/universal-health-care-racism.html>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/racial-differences-doctors.html>
- <https://www.nature.com/immersive/d41586-021-00943-x/index.html>

## **MODULE 1: THE IMPACT OF COLONIALISM**

### **Week 3:**

Tuesday September 19 – Death and illness on the frontier

- David S. Jones, “Frontiers of Smallpox” from *Rationalizing Epidemics: Meanings and Uses of American Indian Mortality since 1600* (EBook)

Thursday September 12 – Policing Infectious Borders

- Van Natta, M. (2023). *Medical Legal Violence: Health Care and Immigration Enforcement Against Latinx Noncitizens* (Vol. 16). NYU Press.
- Weil, A. R. (2021). Borders, immigrants, and health. *Health Affairs*, 40(7), 1023-1025A.

### **Week 4:**

Tuesday September 17 – Health and healing on the plantation

- Sharla Fett (2002) in *Working Cures: Healing, Health and Power on Southern Slave Plantations*, UNC Press (EBook) (Chapter 7: Fooling the Master)

Thursday September 19 – Slavery and reproduction

- Deirdre Cooper Owens, *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*, Introduction-Chapter 2
- <https://nursingclio.org/2020/10/22/constructing-the-modern-american-midwife-white-supremacy-and-white-feminism-collide/>
- <https://nursingclio.org/2018/04/04/remembering-the-mothers-of-gynecology/>

### Week 5:

Tuesday September 24 – Pathologizing Race

- Samuel Cartwright (1851) “Report on the Diseases and Physical Characteristics of the Negro Race” New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal (PDF)

Thursday September 26 – Creating Medical Knowledge

- Willoughby, C. D. (2022) *Masters of Health: Race science and slavery in US Medical Schools*, UNC Press. Chapters 1, 2 and Epilogue (EBook).

## **MODULE TWO: CONTAINING RACIAL DIFFERENCE**

### Week 6:

Tuesday October 1 – Discovering the Asylum

- Gonaver, W. (2019). *The peculiar institution and the making of Modern psychiatry, 1840–1880*. UNC Press Books. Intro and Chapter 1
- <https://southernspaces.org/2021/psychiatry-wake-racism-and-asylumed-south/>

OR

- Burch, S. (2021). *Committed: Remembering native kinship in and beyond institutions*. UNC Press Books. Introduction and Chapter Two.

Thursday October 3 – Eugenics and Disability

- Dorr, G. M. (2006). Defective or Disabled?: Race, Medicine, and Eugenics in Progressive Era Virginia and Alabama. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 5(4), 359-392.

Tuesday October 8 – The Politics of Racial Uplift

- W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/2018 Penguin Edition) *The Souls of Black Folk*. Chapter III.
- Nuriddin, A. (2021). Engineering Uplift: Black Eugenics as Black Liberation. In *Nature Remade* (pp. 186-202). University of Chicago Press.
- <https://nursingclio.org/2017/06/01/the-black-politics-of-eugenics/>

Thursday October 10 – Negotiating Deluxe Jim Crow

- Thomas, K. K. (2011). *Deluxe Jim Crow: civil rights and American health policy, 1935-1954*. University of Georgia Press. (EBook) Introduction and Chapter 1.

OR

- McBride, David (2019) *Caring for Equality: A History of African American Health and Healthcare*, Rowman and Littlefield. Chapter 3: The Black Medical World.

OR

- Hine, D. C. (1987). *Black women in white: Racial conflict and cooperation in the nursing profession, 1890–1950*. Indiana University Press. (Ebook) Chapter 1 and 3.

## **Week 7: FALL BREAK OCTOBER 15-17 NO CLASS THIS WEEK**

### Week 8:

Tuesday October 22 – Confining Disability In Hawaii

- Imada, A. L. (2022). *An Archive of Skin, An Archive of Kin: Disability and Life-Making during Medical Incarceration*. Univ of California Press. Introduction/Chapter 1

Thursday October 24 – Reproduction on the Reservation

- Theobald, B. *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century*. UNC Press. (Introduction to Chapter 1: Childbirth and Childrearing)

**Week 9: October 29 and 31 Group Project Workshops in Class Both Days**

### **MODULE THREE: RESISTANCE, RIGHTS and ACTIVISM**

**Week 10:**

Tuesday November 5 – Rural health activism

- Beatrix Hoffman (2019) "¡ Viva La Clínica!": The United Farm Workers' Fight for Medical Care. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 93(4), 518-549.

OR

- Susan Smith *Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired*: Chapter 5 The Public Health Work of Poor Rural Women – The Black Midwives of Mississippi

Thursday November 7 – Taking Health to the Streets

- Fernández, J. (2019). *The Young Lords: A Radical History*. UNC Press Books. Chapter 9: The Lincoln Offensive – Towards a Patient Bill of Rights

OR

- Nelson, A. (2011). *Body and soul: The Black Panther Party and the fight against medical discrimination*. U of Minnesota Press. Chapter 4: The Politics of Sickle Cell Anemia

**Week 11:**

Tuesday November 12 – Disability rights and abolition

- Ben-Moshe, L., Chapman, C., & Carey, A. C. (Eds.). (2014). *Disability incarcerated: Imprisonment and disability in the United States and Canada* (p. 83). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 1 and 5 (PDF)

Thursday November 14 – Group Project Work

**Week 12:**

Tuesday November 10 – All Health Politics is Local

- Chapter 5 in Chowkwanyun, M. (2022). *All Health Politics is Local: Community Battles for Medical Care and Environmental Health*. UNC Press Books.

Thursday November 12 – Group Project Work

**Week 13: November 26-29 Group meetings and Thanksgiving**

**Week 14: December 3 and 5 Group Presentations**

**Week 15:**

Tuesday December 10: In Conclusion

- Feedback, evaluation, next steps

