Course Syllabus

Department:  Social Science

Date:  11/30/15

I. Course Prefix and Number:  HIS 265

   Course Name:  The Black Death and Beyond: How Disease Has Changed History

   Credit Hours and Contact Hours:  3 Credit Hours and 3 Contact Hours

Catalog Description including pre- and co-requisites:

This course investigates the manifold ways in which disease has shaped western history from antiquity to the 21st century, and how human civilization, in turn, has influenced the development of disease. From the 5th century B.C. “Plague of Athens,” through the medieval Black Death and the ‘Spanish Flu’ pandemic of 1918, disease has transformed societies and economies, contributed to the rise and fall of world empires and altered the course of military campaigns. At the same time, human activities (growing population, urbanization, imperialism, medical intervention, and environmental change) have exerted a profound effect on the development and transmission of new diseases. While historical scourges like plague, leprosy, cholera and scurvy have been largely conquered in the modern period, new maladies like SARS, Ebola, Avian Flu and HIV-AIDS, and the prospect of bio-terrorism pose serious threats to the 21st century world.

Prerequisite: Placement into ENG 101 or successful completion of ENG 090 or ENG 095 with a grade of C- or better.

Relationship to Academic Programs and Curriculum including SUNY Gen Ed designation if applicable:

May be taken to fulfill the 3-Credit SUNY General Education requirement for the Western Civilization Knowledge and Skills Area, and for most degrees this course can be taken to fulfill a Social Science elective, a Liberal Arts elective or a General Elective requirement.

II. Course Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic narrative of the medical and surgical history of western civilization, from ancient Greece to the present.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the manifold ways that disease and epidemics/pandemics have helped to shape the history of western civilization.
• Demonstrate an understanding of the manifold ways that human civilization and human conduct (population growth, war, urbanization, imperialism, medical intervention, environmental change etc.) have fundamentally altered the disease picture, 500 B.C. to the present.

• Demonstrate an understanding of the global exchange of medical ideas and diseases, as well as the nature, course and impact of the history’s great pandemics.

• Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate college-level primary and secondary source readings in the field of medical history.

• Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the field of medical history, and, in their own writing, demonstrate well-reasoned and evidence-supported arguments when interpreting historical subject matter.

• Demonstrate the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, use and share information from a range of published/printed and electronic historical resources.

**College Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course:**

| X writing | X computer literacy |
| □ oral communications | □ ethics/values |
| X reading | □ citizenship |
| □ mathematics | X global concerns |
| X critical thinking | X information resources |

### III. Assessment Measures (Summarize how the college and student learning outcomes will be assessed):

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<tr>
<th>List identified College Learning Outcomes(s)</th>
<th>Specific assessment measure(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Writing Competency</td>
<td>• Student knowledge of the basic narrative of the medical and surgical history of western civilization (from ancient Greece to the present), will be assessed using quizzes, written assignments and/or essay examinations.</td>
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- Student knowledge of the manifold ways that disease and epidemics/pandemics have helped to shape the history of western civilization, will be assessed using quizzes, written assignments and/or essay examinations.

- Student knowledge of the manifold ways that human civilization and human conduct (population growth, war, urbanization, imperialism, medical intervention, environmental change etc.) have fundamentally altered the nature of the disease picture (500 B.C. to the present) will be assessed using quizzes, written assignments and/or essay examinations.

- An assigned research paper will be employed to assess students’ ability to identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the field of medical history. In their papers, students will demonstrate well-reasoned and evidence-supported arguments when interpreting historical subject matter.

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<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Quizzes and/or essay examinations will be employed to assess students’ ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate primary and secondary source readings in the field of medical history.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Global Concerns</td>
<td>Quizzes and/or essay examinations will be employed to assess students’ understanding of the global exchange of medical ideas and diseases, as well as the nature, course and impact of history’s great pandemics</td>
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<td>Information Resources</td>
<td>An assigned, computer-generated paper (critical book review or research paper) will be employed to assess students’ ability to gather</td>
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IV. Instructional Materials and Methods

Types of Course Materials:

Textbook, published primary source reader (or electronic equivalent), assigned historical monograph(s), College learning management system, web-based historical material.

Methods of Instruction:

Lecture, reading and discussion

V. General Outline of Topics Covered:

Why Medical History? Themes, Sources and Interpretations

Disease & Early Human History and in Ancient Near Eastern Civilization (Mesopotamia and Egypt)

Ancient Greek Medicine

Typhoid Fever (the ‘Plague of Athens’)

Medicine in the Age of Alexander the Great (Hellenistic Era)

Malaria

Roman Medicine & Surgery

Roman Medicine II: Medical Explanations for the Fall of Rome

Justinian’s Plague and the Medical History of the Byzantine Empire

Medieval Medicine: Faith & Superstition, Leprosy, Hospitals, and the Crusades

The Golden Age of Islamic Medicine

The Black Death, 1347-1351
Medicine and Anatomy in the Age of the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution

The Columbian Exchange I: Syphilis

The Columbian Exchange II: Smallpox

Scurvy: Scourge of the Sea

Typhus: Napoleonic Scourge

Diseases of the Industrial Revolution I: Cholera

Diseases of the Industrial Revolution II: Tuberculosis (TB)

Medical Revolution of the 19th Century I: Pasteur, Koch and the Bacteriological Revolution

Medical Revolution of the 19th Century II: Surgery (Anesthesia & Antisepsis), Sanitary Reform and Nursing

Medicine in the Age of Total War I: WWI and the ‘Spanish Flu’ Pandemic of 1918

Medicine in the Age of Total War II: Medical Developments in WWII

Post-Second World War Medical Triumphs

Disease Threats of the 21st century: HIV-AIDS, Ebola, West Nile, SARS, Swine and Bird Flu and Bio-Terrorism