

HISTORY HIS 2812E
Plague, Pox and Flu: Epidemics and Pandemics in History
Fall/Winter 2020-21

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This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.

This course will be offered in a virtual, asynchronous format – online with no scheduled meeting time.

Course Description:

This course examines the role of disease in history, exploring how disease swept through cities, devastated populations, and transformed politics, public health and economies. Spanning from antiquity to present day, this global survey investigates society's experience with, and response to, such diseases as the plague, leprosy, smallpox, syphilis, cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, influenza, AIDS/HIV, SARS, and ebola.

Course Syllabus:

How does a disease become an epidemic? Epidemics do not always become pandemics, but they can. How does a pandemic end? Death and disruption have been brought on by the current COVID-19 pandemic, and many individuals have asked how governments, scientists and society have navigated past epidemics and pandemics. Is COVID-19 the most deadly or disruptive pandemic in history? How does this pandemic compare with the Black Death of the 14th Century or the “Spanish” influenza pandemic of 1918-1919? Are we doomed to repeat history? Would you be surprised to learn that the COVID-19 pandemic measures of reporting disease cases and death numbers, imposing stay-at-home and travel restrictions, closing schools and businesses, practicing vigilant hand-washing, wearing face masks and promoting social distancing (the “gentler cousin” to isolation and quarantine) are not new? Flattening the curve was necessary to prevent overwhelming our health care system – was that because hospital systems had collapsed before during epidemics? COVID-19 is a killer disease and medicine offers no curative treatment or preventative vaccine ... yet. Has medicine and science always ‘saved’ the day with disease answers and innovative treatments when confronted with an epidemic? These are some of the questions that this course will address.

Epidemics and pandemics provide a lens through which to explore political, economic and socio-cultural practices in different places and times. Pandemics are stress tests, exposing cracks in the systems, such as problems with health care delivery and access, socio-economic inequities, political leadership challenges, medical uncertainties, and more. It is misleading to consider diseases as equal-opportunity threats since outbreaks can be catastrophic for marginalized and vulnerable populations. Fearmongering, blaming, and stigmatizing disease sufferers or suspected disease carriers occur at the same time as ‘hero’ narratives and valuable community mobilization emerge during pandemic times. In exploring different disease outbreaks in history, you may connect

various political decisions, economic repercussions and social behaviors of the past with contemporary COVID-19 responses.

This course will examine different disease outbreaks in history, focusing on epidemics and pandemics. When a disease outbreak spreads rapidly to many people and over a large geographic area, it becomes an **epidemic**, as in the case of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa in 2014-16. An epidemic that spreads globally is a **pandemic**, with the most recent example being the COVID-19 pandemic. This course will make connections, identify themes, and tease out issues between various epidemics and pandemics in history. It will offer a narrative account of past disease events, encourage you to compare-and-contrast as you accumulate content, and entice you to explore interesting individuals and vignettes. This course will also ask you to consider changing historical interpretations, contrasting points of view, as well as new methods and theories used by historians to gather and evaluate historical evidence. How do historians know what they know about the past? Are we 'living through history' now, and if so, what will future scholars say about our understanding and response to the COVID-19 pandemic? Students will be exposed to a variety of primary and secondary sources throughout this course.

This course is open to all students. History students, students planning to major in science or medicine, or other students in the social sciences, health sciences, or arts and humanities are welcome. Students do not need a background in science, medicine or even history to take this course.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students should be able:

- To appreciate the role played by disease in shaping the past, specifically the impact of epidemics and pandemics on political structures, the economy and society
- To identify changes and continuities (historical shifts and patterns) in disease understanding, public health approaches, and medical initiatives, and how this relates to human agency, government involvement, community response and expectations, the role of science, issues of power and authority, class, race, gender and sexuality
- To understand that medicine and society's understanding and responses to disease are shaped by time and place;
- To understand some of the methodologies and approaches involved in investigating historical events;
- To analyze critically various source materials – both primary and secondary sources – from which to understand epidemics and pandemics in history;
- To formulate and communicate an effective argument, demonstrating good research and writing skills;
- To use (possibly) historical analysis to discover useful perspectives on the continuing challenges of epidemics and pandemics today, notably COVID-19 insight and relevancy

Course Materials:

Course Texts:

- Mitchell L. Hammond, *Epidemics and the Modern World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019)
Available in Paper and eBook <https://utorontopress.com/ca/epidemics-and-the-modern-world-2>

Assignment Texts:

- TBD

Methods of Evaluation:

Online Discussions	20 % Weekly (See schedule)
Online Quizzes (for Units 1,2,3,4; each worth 5%)	20 % Upon unit completion
Essay Assignment #1	15 % Due Nov 9 (1000-1250 words)
Essay Assignment #2	20 % Due Mar 8 (2000-2500 words)
Final Exam (take-home)	25 % April exam period

Accommodation for missed midterms with a Self Reported Absence:

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a makeup test on one of the two time slots available in each term:

Fall Term

- Tests scheduled before November 1 – the makeup will take place Monday, November 9 at 9:30am.
- Tests scheduled between November 9 and December 3 – the makeup will take place Friday, December 4 at 12:30pm.

Winter Term

- Tests scheduled before February 13 – the makeup will take place Monday, February 22 at 9:30am.
- Tests scheduled between February 22 and April 1 – the makeup will take place Friday, April 2 at 12:30pm

No other make-up opportunities will be provided. Students who fail to write a makeup test in the designated time slots will receive a grade of zero.

Students in online courses will write the make-up test through OWL over a 24-hour period beginning at the time noted above.

Students should be aware that course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup test slots.

Accommodation for missed assignment deadlines with a Self Reported Absence:

If a student reports a SRA for an assignment (i.e. an essay) the new due date will be 48 hours after the SRA was submitted. For example, if you complete a SRA on March 19 at 3pm, your new due date will be March 21 at 3pm.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week	Lecture Topic	Readings with each Lecture	Online Discussion
Fall Term			
#1 Sep 14	Introduction		
#2 Sep 21	Pandemics, COVID-19 and the Role of History	TBD	TBD
#3 Sep 28	Unit 1 – Plague Hippocrates, Thucydides and the Great Plague of Athens	TBD	TBD
#4 Oct 05	Unit 1 – Plague Galen, the Antonine Plague and the Justinian Plague	TBD	TBD
#5 Oct 12	Unit 1 – Plague The Black Death in Europe and the Middle East, 1347-1351 (Part 1)	TBD	TBD
#6 Oct 19	Unit 1 – Plague The Black Death in Europe and the Middle East, 1347-1351 (Part 2)	TBD	TBD
#7 Oct 26	Unit 1 – Plague The Great Plague of London, 1665 Upon Unit Completion: Unit 1 Quiz	TBD	TBD
#8 Nov 2	Fall Study Break		
#9 Nov 09	At beginning of this week: Assignment #1 due Nov 9 Unit 2 – Smallpox New World Peoples, Old World Diseases, 1492-1650 (Part 1)	TBD	TBD
#10 Nov 16	Unit 2 – Smallpox New World Peoples, Old World Diseases, 1492-1650 (Part 2)	TBD	TBD
#11 Nov 23	Unit 2 – Smallpox Disease Mitigation, 18 th C Inoculation and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu	TBD	TBD
#12 Nov 30	Unit 2 – Smallpox 'The Enlightenment,' Science and Edward Jenner	TBD	TBD
#13 Dec 7	Unit 2 – Smallpox Smallpox: The World's First (and Only) Eradicated Disease Upon Unit Completion: Unit 2 Quiz	TBD	TBD
Winter Term			
#14 Jan 4	Unit 3 – 19th C Epidemics Yellow Fever, Walter Reed and Controlling the Mosquito	TBD	TBD
#15 Jan 11	Unit 3 – 19th C Epidemics Cholera, John Snow and Sanitary Reform	TBD	TBD
#16 Jan 18	Unit 3 – 19th C Epidemics Tuberculosis, Class and ... Romanticism? (Or a pretty way to die?)	TBD	TBD

#17 Jan 25	Unit 3 – 19th C Epidemics “Typhoid Mary”: The Legacy of a ‘super-spreader’ disease carrier (Or contact tracing and isolation gone awry?) Upon Unit Completion: Unit 3 Quiz	TBD	TBD
#18 Feb 01	Unit 4 – Influenza Killer Flu: The 1918 Flu Pandemic (Part 1)	TBD	TBD
#19 Feb 8	Unit 4 – Influenza Killer Flu: The 1918 Flu Pandemic (Part 2)	TBD	TBD
#20 Feb 15	Winter Study Break		
#21 Feb 22	Unit 4 – Influenza Influenza Pandemics since 1920: A never-ending threat? Upon Unit Completion: Unit 4 Quiz	TBD	TBD
#22 Mar 01	Unit 5 – 20th C and 21st C Epidemics Poliomyelitis, Vaccines and the Public Debate	TBD	TBD
#23 Mar 08	At beginning of this week: Assignment #2 due Mar 8 Unit 5: 20th C and 21st C Epidemics HIV-AIDS and Global Implications	TBD	TBD
#24 Mar 15	Unit 5: 20th C and 21st C Epidemics SARS, 2003: Politics and Vulnerabilities	TBD	TBD
#25 Mar 22	Unit 5: 20th C and 21st C Epidemics Ebola, Zika, Measles: Making History or Repeating History?	TBD	TBD
#26 Mar 29	Wrap Up: The COVID-19 Pandemic and History (or unpacking the phrase ‘We’re Living Through History’)	TBD	TBD
April Exam Period	Final Exam (take-home)		

Additional Statements

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Medical Issues

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

to read about the University's policy on medical accommodation. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation should be requested. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once the instructor has made a decision about whether to grant an accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for tests, assignments, and exams.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation.

Please visit https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html to view all updated academic policies regarding medical accommodations.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are another writers ideas.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in "A" above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in "A" above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Copyright

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.

Health and Wellness

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Heidi Van Galen, Administrative Officer, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84963 or e-mail vangalen@uwo.ca.