

LIBS 320B: HEALTH AND HEALING

This course will explore the economic, environmental, scientific, and psychological dimensions of health and healing. We will begin with an overview of the economics of health care and a brief examination of the relationship between individual, social and environmental health. The majority of the course will focus on developing an understanding of the major systems of the body, drawing on the Western scientific and medical tradition, as well as perspectives drawn from Eastern traditions, focusing specifically on the East Indian chakra system and the Chinese meridian system. We will contrast the foundations and approach of the modern medical model with those of alternative approaches to healing, and explore the mind/body connection through an inquiry into the psychological and spiritual components of wellness and disease. An important consideration in this process will be to explore the way in which each tradition defines the key elements in the human system. Students will gain some familiarity with basic physiology as well as a basis for making informed choices in relation to their own health.

Objectives:

- 1) To develop a greater awareness of economic, political and social factors in the practice of medicine as well as in the experience of illness and disease;
- 2) To explore the parallels between individual health and the health of the environment;
- 3) To gain a basic understanding of the organ systems of the body;
- 4) To examine the scientific assumptions inherent in modern medicine and to contrast these with alternative approaches to healing, particularly with regard to the connection between mind and body;
- 5) To practice mindfulness regarding one's own state of well-being, including physical, emotional, and mental dimensions.

Required Reading:

Texts (available at Northlight Books):

John Robbins, Reclaiming Our Health: Exploding the Medical Myth and Embracing the True Source of Healing (1996)

Anodea Judith, The Sevenfold Journey: Reclaiming Mind, Body and Spirit Through the Chakras (1993)

Thich Nhat Hanh, Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life (1992)

Reader (available at College Center Copy Shop, on E. Cotati Ave. at Camino Collegio)

Course Requirements (see next page for details):

1. Regular attendance, punctuality, and participation in seminar. Two absences will result in lowered grade, three absences in No Credit. Three lates (10 minutes) count as an absence.
2. Weekly Journal
3. Weekly News Reports
4. Personal Assessment - Due Feb. 12

5. Reflection Paper – Due Feb. 26
6. Research Project/Group Reports
7. Creative Project - Due Apr. 30
8. Final Synthesis: Journal Summary and Brief Essay on Core B - Due May 21

Description of Assignments

Seminar Participation (30%)

Weekly Journal

You are expected to keep a weekly journal in which you reflect on the questions and exercises presented in the readings. In addition, you are encouraged to keep a daily record with a brief commentary on diet, exercise, sleep, and emotional state. While you will not be required to hand this in, it will provide the basis for your final synthesis, due on May 21.

Weekly News Reports (5%)

Each student will be responsible for bringing news articles addressing current health-related issues. On the first day of class you will be asked to sign up for a particular day. You will present a brief summary of the articles at the beginning of class on that day.

Personal Assessment (3 – 5 pages /5%) - DUE Feb. 12

This is an opportunity to evaluate your current state of health. It should include reflections on your own medical history as well as that of your family members (parents and siblings in particular) along with an assessment of emotional patterns inherited from your childhood. In addition, it should include an examination of your own current physical, emotional, and mental well-being, identifying areas of particular concern.

Reflection Paper on First Four Readings (3 – 5 pages/10%) – DUE Feb. 26

Research Project/Group Reports (25%) – Tentative

The research project will be an opportunity to learn about the different systems of the body and to present a summary of basic physiological processes to the rest of the seminar. Each group will be expected to explain the functions of the specific organ/system along with related pathologies and possible treatment modalities (both allopathic and alternative). In particular, you are expected to explain the basic chemistry of the interactions that are involved in the functioning of the specific system. We will discuss the details of this assignment in greater detail as the semester progresses. The order of the reports is coordinated with readings on the chakra and meridian systems.

Bladder and Kidney (Chakra Two)

Digestion – Stomach, Spleen and Pancreas (Chakra Three)

Assimilation – Gall Bladder, Liver, Small and Large Intestine (Chakra Three)

Respiration and Circulation – Heart and Lung (Chakra Four)

Regulation – Endocrine, Nervous, and Immune Systems (Chakra Six)

Creative Project (5%) - DUE Apr. 30

This is an opportunity to create a meaningful artistic expression of your reflections on the

material covered in the class. While you will not be judged on your artistic ability, you will be expected to put some effort into this project and to create something that you will want to keep and that will have meaning for you in the future.

Final Synthesis (7 – 10 pages/20%) - DUE May 21

The final summary should address insights you might have gained into your own health, as well as the relationship between your own health and that of the larger society and the natural environment. In addition, you are asked to reflect on how your perspective on the role of science in society has evolved over the course of the semester.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments should be completed prior to class on that date.
Numbers in parentheses refer to number of pages in reading assignment.

Jan. 29 **INTRODUCTION TO COURSE**

FILM: Science Odyssey/Matters of Life and Death

Feb. 5 **PERSPECTIVES ON THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN THE U.S.**

Robbins, *Reclaiming Our Health*, Ch. 1 (14)
Williamson, *The Healing of America*, Preface and Introduction (reader - 13)
Bezruchka, “Is Our Society Making You Sick?” (reader - 1)

(Note that the following selections are out of order in the reader:
Duhl, “Healthy Cities and Wellness” (reader - 6)
Asubel, “The Coming Age of Ecological Medicine” (reader - 6)

Meditation: Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace is Every Step*, pp. 5 - 15

Feb. 12 **ON MANAGED CARE**

Annas, “Human Rights and Health” (reader - 4)
Ad Hoc Committee to Defend Health Care (reader - 7)
Himmelstein and Woolhandler, “Healthy Profits, Unhealthy Care” (reader - 10)
Brown, “The Health Care Industry” (reader - 4)
Birenbaum, “What is Managed Care?” (reader - 14)
Gray, “The Evolution of Investor-Owned Hospital Companies (reader – 11)
Himmelstein and Woolhandler, “A National Health Program for the United States”
(reader – 13)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 15 - 23

DUE: Personal Assessment

Feb. 19 **POWER AND PROFIT**

FILM: “Hoxsey”

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 23 - 31

Feb. 26 **CANCER: A METAPHOR FOR OUR TIMES**

Robbins, *Reclaiming Our Health*, Ch. 12 - 14 (86)

Batt and Gross, “Cancer, Inc.” (reader - 7)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 31 - 41

DUE: Reflection Paper on First Four Readings

Mar. 5 **THE CHAKRA SYSTEM: A TOOL FOR INTEGRATING MIND AND BODY**

Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Introduction (30)

Northrup, *Women’s Bodies, Women’s Wisdom*, Introduction, Ch. 1, 2 (reader - 55)

Gerber, *Vibrational Medicine*, Introduction, Ch. 1 (reader - 34)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 41 - 48

DO: Chakra Assessment Test (Reader, pp. 11 - 13)

Questions for Self-Examination (Reader, pp. 17 – 22)

Mar. 12 **CHAKRA ONE: THE FOUNDATION**

Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra One (40)

Robbins, *Reclaiming Our Health*, Ch. 10 (21)

Hammond, “Chiropractic: The Development of an Alternative Medical Model” (20)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 48 - 56

DO: Exercises in Judith, pp. 47 – 61

Mar. 19 **CHAKRA TWO: RELATIONSHIP, SEX, AND REPRODUCTION**

Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Two (42)

Robbins, *Reclaiming Our Health*, Ch. 2 - 5 (91)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 56 - 64

- DO:** Exercises in Judith, pp. 91 – 102
- Mar. 26 **CHAKRA THREE: FOOD, DIGESTION, ASSIMILATION, AND ENERGY**
- Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Three (34)
- Meditation: Hanh, pp. 64 - 73
- DO:** Exercises in Judith, pp. 134 – 140
- Apr. 2 **CHINESE MEDICINE: THE MERIDIAN SYSTEM**
- Beinfeld and Korngold, *Between Heaven and Earth*, Ch. 2, 3 (reader - 28)
Acupressure and the Meridians, Reader pp. 23 – 46 (24)
- Meditation: Hanh, pp. 73 - 81
- Guest Lecture: Fran Wellgood (tentative)
- Apr. 9 **SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS**
- Apr. 16 **CHAKRA FOUR: RESPIRATION AND CIRCULATION**
- Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Four (38)
- Meditation: Hanh, pp. 81 - 91
- DUE:** Group Reports
- Apr. 23 **CHAKRA FIVE: CREATIVITY AND SELF-EXPRESSION**
- Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Five (26)
- Meditation: Hanh, pp. 91 - 106
- DUE:** Group Reports
- Apr. 30 **CHAKRA SIX: THE MIND/BODY CONNECTION**
- Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Six, (30)
Ullman, *Discovering Homeopathy*, Introduction, Ch. 1 (reader - 38)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 106 - 116

DUE: Group Reports

May 7 **CHAKRA SEVEN: INTEGRATION AND TRANSFORMATION**

Judith, *The Sevenfold Journey*, Chakra Seven, Conclusion (38)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 116 – 125

DUE: Creative Projects

Guest Lecture: Anodea Judith (tentative)

May 14 **A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

Robbins, *Reclaiming Our Health*, Ch. 15 - 16 (58)

Meditation: Hanh, pp. 125 - 134

May 21 **FINAL SYNTHESIS**

DUE: Final Synthesis