

**History of Public Health (HILD 30)**  
**Summer Session I - Edinburgh, Scotland**  
**Professor Claire Edington**

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Office hours: By appointment or after class!

Ever since classical antiquity, people have sought to understand why epidemics happen. How does disease travel? What might explain why one person or group of people become sick and others do not? Does the state have a duty to protect the health of the public, even if that interferes with the rights of individuals? This history is vast, and students tend to learn about the triumphs and turning points that characterize the experience of Western societies, to the exclusion of other parts of the world. Rather than attempt to cover every possible topic, this course instead pursues a global history of epidemics in order to introduce students to the major shifts, themes and tensions that have animated historical scholarship about public health on a global scale. In particular, it will center the histories of Scotland, Britain and its empire, taking advantage of the rich history of scientific discovery in Edinburgh.

Why focus on epidemics? First, as highly visible, dramatic events, epidemics capture the public's imagination and provoke immediate, widespread response. They intensify fears about the threats posed by social outsiders and thereby reinforce hegemonic notions of citizenship, race and belonging. They also ignite periods of disruption that cause social norms to be rewritten, in terms of who gets to participate in the creation of knowledge and who benefits from that knowledge. In short, epidemics generate responses which both reflect and remake our social worlds. Second, epidemics draw our attention to the global expansion of disease through warfare, international trade and colonial conquest. Tracing the globalization of epidemic disease demonstrates how different parts of the world became connected through the movement of germs, people, ideas, and technology. It opens a window onto how different cultural understandings of health and illness came to interact and transform as a result of that interaction. It helps us to understand how colonial power became projected through the language and practices of public health, and also resisted. Finally, attending to the global nature of epidemic disease exposes the shared challenges and shifting geopolitics that have characterized the rise of the field of international, and later global, health.

As recent events have made clear, we are continually confronted by epidemics of new diseases for which we do not have the adequate knowledge or tools to combat them. Meanwhile, even when we do have the tools to mitigate harm in ongoing health crises, those solutions do not always reach those most at risk. This class will help make sense of where these public health tools came from, and why these global health disparities persist. It will provide a historical account of how societies have explained and confronted epidemics in the past—from the Plague of Athens to Covid-19—and what we can learn from these experiences moving forward.

**Learning Objectives.** At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) **Describe** the relationship between epidemics and warfare, colonial empires, the rise of the modern state and the growth of global trade networks in world history;
- 2) **Identify** the social, political and cultural factors that have shaped responses to epidemics over time'
- 3) **Think and write like historians** by engaging with both primary texts and reading seminal works in the field. Students will also learn how to ask good historical questions and to write well-reasoned, persuasive, empirically sound, essays;
- 4) **Evaluate** how our understanding of the past can be used as a tool for thinking about the future direction of policy.

**Grade breakdown.**

**Class Attendance and Participation. (20%).**

Attendance and participation is mandatory. Please arrive on time and prepared to discuss the readings and engage with your classmates. We will do a combination of general and small group discussion. If you cannot make class due to illness or emergency, please let Professor Edington know ahead of time.

**Short Quizzes. (4% each, 40% total)**

You will be asked to complete a short quiz related to the readings for each class meeting. You must complete the quiz by midnight the night before class. No trick questions, the point is to make sure you've grasped the fundamental talking points of the readings which will be the basis of our class lecture and discussion. It will involve a variety of true/false and multiple choice. Each quiz will also include one open response questions which will ask you to write a short response related to the reading (these will be graded on a sliding scale of 0-3 points). Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped from your final grade.

**Final Group Project. (40% total)**

For your final group project, I will ask you to make a digital, interactive map of the history of medicine and public health in Edinburgh. The idea is that you will associate certain historical events or actors [epidemics, public health policies, medical discoveries, the lives of individual people – both famous and not] with a specific physical location in the city. I will ask you to pin the site to a digital map and include links to images (both from today and in the past, if available) and other archival sources (such as reports, memoirs, newspaper clippings, posters, multimedia, etc). For each chosen site, I will ask you to write a summary (short essay of 400-500 words) providing background context and remarks on its historical significance.

Each group must complete this task for four sites provided by the professor (the same sites for every group), and then the group must choose *four additional sites*. This is an opportunity to get creative, get out into the city, and put words and images together while also demonstrating core skills in historical research, analysis and writing.

You will be evaluated on the creativity of your site selection, the quality and depth of the research, the clarity of the writing, and the overall final impression of the map. Each member of the group should expect to receive the same grade unless participation is uneven, in which case individual grades will be adjusted accordingly.

### **Breakdown of tasks:**

**Week 1:** Arrange your group or asked to be placed in one.

**Week 2:** Submit a proposal to Professor Edington for the complete list of 8 sites for approval (including the 4 provided by Professor Edington).

**Week 3:** Research the historical sites using resources from University of Edinburgh Library and Special Collections, online resources, etc;

**Week 4:** Visit the sites themselves; complete site summaries (you may opt to do some collectively, divide up others to be completed individually).

**Week 5:** Complete the digital map; make a group presentation to the class; complete a self-assessment about your contributions to the group.

### **Policies.**

#### **Academic Honesty.**

All written material must be the original work of the student. Any words and ideas that are taken from the work of others must be cited appropriately. Any student found to be plagiarizing will face disciplinary action.

*"Academic Integrity is expected of everyone at UC San Diego. This means that you must be honest, fair, responsible, respectful, and trustworthy in all of your actions. Lying, cheating or any other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated because they undermine learning and the University's ability to certify students' knowledge and abilities. Thus, any attempt to get, or help another get, a grade by cheating, lying or dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office and will result sanctions. Sanctions can include an F in this class and suspension or dismissal from the University. So, think carefully before you act by asking yourself: a) is what I'm about to do or submit for credit an honest, fair, respectful, responsible & trustworthy representation of my knowledge and abilities at this time and, b) would my instructor approve of my action? You are ultimately the only person responsible for your behavior. So, if you are unsure, don't ask a friend—ask your instructor, instructional assistant, or the Academic Integrity Office. You can learn more about academic integrity at [academicintegrity.ucsd.edu](http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu)." (Source: Academic Integrity Office, 2018)*

For more information on University policies, please visit the Academic Integrity Office's website at: <http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>

### **Deadlines.**

All deadlines are firm. Except in the case of medical or family emergency or religious observance, I give no individual extensions. If, due to such an emergency, you cannot meet a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible so that we may work out an alternative schedule. Because of the compressed summer schedule, I will not be accepting late work unless arranged beforehand.

\* \* In general, more communication is better! If you are struggling in the course and need additional help, please let me know as soon as possible so we can get you the support you need. \* \*

**\*\* All readings will be available on the Canvas course site under each weekly module. You are not required to purchase any textbooks for this class. Dates on the Calendar indicate the day that the reading is due.**

**Please make sure you know how to access the VPN in order to access all online library resources. \* \***

### **Calendar.**

#### **Week 1.**

##### **Monday, July 3. Covid-19 and the Anti-Lessons of History.**

Robert Peckham. "COVID-19 and the Anti-Lessons of History" *The Lancet*. Published online March 2, 2020.

Keith Wailoo. "Spectacles of Difference: The Racial Scripting of Epidemic Disparities." *Bulletin of the Journal of the History of Medicine* (2020) 94:602-626.

##### **Wednesday, July 5. Plague of Athens and Hippocratic Medicine.**

*Primary sources:* Excerpts from Hippocrates. *Airs, Waters, Places*; Thucydides, "The Plague of Athens" from *The History of the Peloponnesian War*.

*Excursion* (Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup>): Tour of the Anatomical Museum.

**Week 2.****Monday, July 10. The Black Death: Europe.**

Paul Slack. "Responses to Plague in Early Modern Europe: The Implications of Public Health," *Social Research* 55/3 (1988): 433-453.

(April  
24, 2020)

Paula Findlen, "What Would Boccaccio Say About COVID-19?" *The Boston Review*

**Wednesday, July 12. Black Death: Ottoman World**

176-  
189.

Nukhet Varlik. The plague that never left: restoring the Second Pandemic to Ottoman and Turkish history in the time of Covid-19. *New Perspectives on Turkey* no. 62 (2020):

**Week 3.****Monday, July 17. Slavery, race and medicine in the British Atlantic.**

Rana Hogarth. The Myth of Innate Racial Differences Between White and Black People's Bodies: Lessons from the 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. *American Journal of Public Health* (2019) 109,10: 1339-1342.

*Primary source:* Richard Allen and Absalom Jones. A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People during the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the Year 1793 and A refutation of some censures, thrown upon them in some late Publications. (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1794.)

Listen to podcast: "How Slavery and War shaped Epidemiology" with Dr. Jim Downs

*Possible excursion:* University of Edinburgh Libraries Special Collections. TBD.

**Wednesday, July 19. Mapping Cholera in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Britain and Its Empire.**

Pamela K. Gilbert. "The Victorian Social Body and Urban Cartography" in *Imagined Londons* State University of New York Press, 2002.

Robert Peckham. "Symptoms of Empire: Cholera in Southeast Asia, 1820-1850" in *The Routledge History of Disease*. Routledge, 2017, 183-201.

*Primary source*: International Sanitary Convention, signed in Paris on December 3, 1903.

*Excursion*: Wed, July 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm: Visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens. Founded as a physic garden to grow medicinal plants in 1670, the Royal Botanic Gardens – much like Kew Gardens outside London – played an important role in the growth of knowledge about tropical nature, botanic conservancy and tropical medicine.

### MIDTERM ESSAY DUE FRIDAY, JULY 21 AT 12 PM

#### Week 4.

##### Monday, July 24. Tropical medicine in the age of empire.

Ruth Rogaski. The Manchurian Plague and Covid 19: China, the United States and the "Sick Man," Then and Now. *American Journal of Public Health* 111 (2021): 423-429.

*Primary sources*: Patrick Manson "The necessity of special education in tropical medicine"; Wu Lien-The "Inaugural Address on Plague," Delivered at the International Plague Conference, Mukden, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1911.

##### Wednesday, July 26. Eradication and the end of epidemic disease?: international health in the postwar era

Nancy Leys Stepan. "Chapter 6: Could we/should we eradicate mosquitoes? The case of the yellow fever vector" (pp. 73-86) in *Mosquitopia: The Places of Pests in a Healthy World*.

*Taylor and Francis*, September 2021.

Randall Packard. "Malaria Dreams: Postwar visions of health and development in the Third World." *Medical Anthropology* 17,3 (1997): 279-296.

*Primary source*: Alma Alta Declaration (1978).

#### Week 5.

##### Monday, July 31. HIV/AIDS and the global movement for human rights.

Allan Brandt. How AIDS invented Global Health. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 386,23 (2013): 2149-2152.

Mandisa Mbali and Jessica Rucell. African voices in global health: Knowledge, creativity accountability, *Global Public Health* 12: 12, 3993-4001.

*Primary sources:* Browse the online Edinburgh and Lothian HIV/AIDS collections, covering the period 1983-2010 which document the “medical and social responses to the disease at a local level, combining the records of the NHS, local government, charities and campaign groups.”

*Guest lecture:* Dr. Lukas Engelmann, Senior Lecturer, History and Sociology of Biomedicine, University of Edinburgh.

### **Wednesday, August 2. (Re)emerging epidemic diseases and the future of public health.**

P. Wenzel Geissler and Ruth J. Prince. “Layers of epidemy: Present pasts during the first weeks of COVID-19 in Western Kenya.” *Centaurus* (pub online 27 July 2020).

Simukai Chugudu. “From Cholera to Corona: the politics of plagues in Africa.” Available online: <https://africasacountry.com/2020/03/from-cholera-to-corona-the-politics-of-plagues-in-africa> (Last accessed 03.24.2020)