Modern Medicine: A Historical Introduction
MWF 10:30 am – 11:20 am
PHSC 224

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Course Description:

This course examines the history of medicine in Europe and America from antiquity to the present (with a few forays into the non-Western world). We will explore the different ways in which people have answered questions like: how does the human body work? what causes us to get sick? what can we do to restore health? Throughout the course we will seek to connect medical ideas and medical practices to the broader social and cultural contexts in which they were developed and we will discuss a range of issues in contemporary medicine.

During some class periods I will lecture and during others we will have discussions. These are noted in the syllabus. Discussion will be based on the assigned reading, so it is essential that you do the reading assigned for discussion days before you come to class. There will be a midterm and a final exam, both consisting of short answer questions and a longer essay question. The possible essay questions will be distributed at least a week before each exam. The final is comprehensive. You will also write three short (5-page) papers on assigned topics.

Further information and many of the course readings are available on-line at learn.ou.edu. Please use your OU email account, or arrange for email to be forwarded from that account to the one you use. This will ensure that you receive course-related emails. I encourage you to check the course web site regularly. I will continue to add material throughout the semester, including assigned readings and links to relevant web sites.

Required Texts:
Lynn Payer, Medicine and Culture
Anne Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down
Paul Farmer, Haiti After the Earthquake
Robert Veatch, Transplantation Ethics
J. Eric Oliver, Fat Politics
Nancy Ehrenreich, The Reproductive Rights Reader