HIS 167 M

Unequal Unjust

100 Years of Racism in American Public Health and Medicine

Fall 2021

T/TH 14-1515

Instructor: Mical Raz, MD, PhD micalraz@rochester.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays at 1pm in person, zoom office hours by appointment

Course Synopsis:

Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking,” argued Martin Luther King Jr. over half a century ago. Racial disparities in health outcomes, in access to healthcare, are a persistent feature of America’s fractured healthcare system. This course is designed to use historical tools of inquiry to address major challenges in current health policy. Its goal is two-fold: on the one hand, to deepen students’ understanding of historical processes in American healthcare, and on the other, to enrich current debates over American health care policy making. Students are encouraged to draw on their historical learning in this seminar to develop informed opinions on current issues in health policy. The focus of this seminar is on current racial disparities, and on the many processes that shaped these racial inequities over the course of the past century. Required readings include both secondary sources in history and thoughtful analyses in current medicine and public health journals and newspapers of current health policy questions.

The course is structured around key topics, and for each topic, students will read and discuss historical analysis, and then read current policy analyses and engage in debates with practitioners and scholars on the current challenges that arise from the legacies of these historical episodes.

The College’s credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week. Students enrolled in HIS 167 are expected to devote at least one hour each week to identifying the main lines of argument in course readings, working alone or in groups, and to researching in depth their topics for the final seminar paper.

Seminar Participation and Grading:

This is a seminar course in which active, well-prepared student participation is expected. Reading should be done in advance of the seminar, not during, and students should come prepared for an informed discussion.

Students should be prepared to read, write and think deeply about the topics at hand, and engage respectfully with each other and with the visitors.

All readings will be posted on blackboard or are available as e-books through the library.

Grade Breakdown

**Verbal Participation**: Total 15%

Participation: 10%

Leading an in-class discussion: 5%- come prepared to summarize some of the main arguments of the reading and with questions to help shape the discussion.

**Written Engagement**: Total 25%

Discussion board posts – upload to blackboard an approx.350- 500 word analytic response to the historical readings (if you’re not sure, you can ask, it’s the longer book chapters). 4 times each 4.5 points. =18 pts

*These are due by 8pm the evening prior to the seminar.*

Responses to discussion board posts (Respond 4 times at least): 2%

Reflections on the guest visits on blackboard (*after the visit, before 8pm the night before next class*) – approx. 250 words, 2.5 points each, respond twice in the semester. 5%.

**Op-Ed Assignment:** Total 20%

Op-Ed: 20%

**Research Paper:** Total 40%

Detailed topic proposal and bibliography: 5%

Final Research Paper: 35%

**Important Dates: (5 pm is deadline )**

Wednesday October 6 – draft of op-ed due

Monday October 18 – Final Op eds due

Nov 8– submit topic proposal and bibliography

December 15 – final papers due

Academic Honesty: All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Anyone who engages in such activities will be turned over to the College Board on Academic Honesty for disciplinary action, as outlined at <http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/.> For a helpful discussion of plagiarism (including subtle instances), see the American Historical Association’s “Defining Plagiarism,” <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism>.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Students with Disabilities: The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the [Office of Disability Resources](http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/index.html) at: [disability@rochester.edu;](mailto:disability@rochester.edu;) (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Writing Skills: We will discuss each writing assignment in detail during class. I am also always willing to talk about writing assignments individually: to help you plan an essay, work through the process, or review comments. I encourage all students to take advantage of this by coming to office hours. Another resource is the UR Writing and Speaking Center, which is dedicated to helping writers at all skill levels to improve. You can reach them at 585- 273-3577 or at https://writing.rochester.edu/OnlineSchedule/AppointmentScheduleEnterStudentID.php

COURSE PLAN (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

**Intro**

Thursday, August 26, 2021

**Medicine, Slavery and BLM in Medicine**   
Tuesday, August 31, 2021

*Sick from Freedom*, Jim Downs, Intro , Chapter 1-2

Jim Downs How Pandemics End <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/06/pandemics-end-when-we-stop-caring-about-their-victims/619127/>   
Thursday, September 2, 2021 – Dr Linda Clark

Bailey et al ‘How Structural Racism Works” *NEJM*

And Bassett Black Lives Matter, *NEJM*   
Tuesday, September 7, 2021- Rosh Hashanah No class in person

**Maternal Health and Mortality**

Tuesday, September 9, 2021- Visit with Dr Twyla Dillon, Executive Director of Health Connect One.

Read <https://www.npr.org/2017/12/07/568948782/black-mothers-keep-dying-after-giving-birth-shalon-irvings-story-explains-why>

Review https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/features/maternal-mortality/index.html

Thursday, September 14, 2021

Read *Medical Bondage*, Dierdre Cooper Owens, Intro Chapters 1, 5 and afterword (open access, through library)

Thursday, September 16, 2021 – no class Yom Kippur

**Lead Poisoning**   
Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Read Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner, Deceit and DenialThe Deadly Politics of Industrial Pollution, With a New Epilogue, 2013, Introduction , Chapter 2 and 3

Thursday, September 23, 2021 Visit with Dr Stan Schaffer

Read

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2018/06/25/623126968/pediatrician-who-exposed-flint-water-crisis-shares-her-story-of-resistance>

optional <https://www.motherjones.com/environment/2016/02/lead-exposure-gasoline-crime-increase-children-health/>

**Poverty, Health and Hunger**  
Tuesday, September 28, 2021

Read Harrington, *Other America*, Chapters 1, 4  
Thursday, September 30, 2021

Read

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-a-new-yorker-article-launched-the-first-shot-in-the-war-against-poverty-17469990/>

Read Laurie B. Green  “*Hunger in America” and the Power of Television: Poor People, Physicians, and the Mass Media in the War against Poverty*

Tuesday, October 5, 2021 Dr Mitch Gruber , Hunger and Health in Rochester

Thursday, October 7, 2021 – Workshop Op-Ed Ideas in Class  
Tuesday, October 12, 2021 – Fall break

Thursday, October 14, 2021 HISTORICAL OP-ED WORKSHOP with Dr Carly Goodman (Zoom)

**Blood Transfusion, Organ Donation**

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 –

Read Susan Lederer, *Flesh and Blood*, Chapters

Thursday, October 21, 2021 Dr Marie Laryea, Transplant Hepatologist and Associate Chair, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Read Vanessa Grubb, “Good for Harvesting, Bad for Planting” Health Affairs

Review statistics <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=27>   
**Cancer**   
Tuesday, October 26, 2021

Read Wailoo – *How Cancer Crossed the Color Line*, Intro, Chapters 1-2   
Thursday, October 28, 2021 Dr Paula Cupertino URMC

Read <https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-the-medical-lesson-chadwick-boseman-20200902-qt3jvyujnncqbacxzenu5g6g7i-story.html>

Review <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/understanding/disparities> and watch embedded movie.

**Diabetes**   
Tuesday, November 2, 2021 –

Read Arleen Tuchman, *Diabetes A History of Race & Disease*, Chapters 3, 5 and Epilogue

Thursday, November 4, 2021 Dr Mahala Schlagman, primary care physician.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/12/opinion/diabetes-diet-and-shame.html>

Read <https://www.healthline.com/diabetesmine/race-and-diabetes-whats-the-connection#To-close-the-gap-on-disparities,-inclusivity-should-be-a-priority>

Review <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/disparities.html>

**Gun Violence and Public Health**

For this section read dying of Whiteness Part I, pages 23 -117 and Mike Spies “A Historian’s Revealing Research on Race and Gun Laws”

<https://www.thetrace.org/2015/11/gun-control-race-history-saul-cornell/>   
  
Tuesday, November 9, 2021 Political History of Guns, Drew McKevitt LA Tech (zoom)  
Thursday, November 11, 2021 –Dying of Whiteness

**Mass Incarceration as a public health problem**  
Tuesday, November 16, 2021- Read *A Plague of Prisons*, Drucker, Chapters TBD

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Dr Irshad Altheimer, Director, [Center for Public Safety Initiatives](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.rit.edu_cpsi&d=DwMGaQ&c=kbmfwr1Yojg42sGEpaQh5ofMHBeTl9EI2eaqQZhHbOU&r=pCByvOLMnS4xwrUsW7f0B-wT4STxJHNg6d3aBPvxW7E&m=L9_8MI5mK0cZe08McULmEa7BaQ-qJOv7HZcbiJ3K_Js&s=VY8JvT_03IYi1mG0ISWuM_lj-UwPUvdpaLoft0ZOXIg&e=) Associate Professor, [Department of Criminal Justice](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.rit.edu_liberalarts_department-2Dcriminal-2Djustice&d=DwMGaQ&c=kbmfwr1Yojg42sGEpaQh5ofMHBeTl9EI2eaqQZhHbOU&r=pCByvOLMnS4xwrUsW7f0B-wT4STxJHNg6d3aBPvxW7E&m=L9_8MI5mK0cZe08McULmEa7BaQ-qJOv7HZcbiJ3K_Js&s=8cgzjfrbYZB0E53fFqSRRpfyRcLHULoqiD92p-gcbjs&e=)

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Read Heather Ann Thompson *Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History*, JAH

Thursday, November 25, 2021 Thanksgiving   
Tuesday, November 30, 2021 Activist

Thursday, December 2, 2021Workshop papers   
Tuesday, December 7, 2021 -independent work

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)