

Pandemics, Politics and Policies:

PSCI 316W/HIS 374W/ HIS 474/ PHLT 374

Spring 2023 – updated Jan 28 2023

Contact Information

Instructor: Mical Raz MD PhD

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Office Hours: Thursdays 1230-130 in my office (RRL 370B), zoom options available

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

In this advanced seminar, students will learn about prior epidemics and pandemics primarily in the United States, and assess the policy responses to these events. They will learn about a number of key case studies in the history of pandemic response, and examine how politics shaped local and federal policies. They will critically examine primary sources to shed light on contemporary understandings of pandemics and the responses to them, and how these responses were negotiated. With this knowledge and analysis, students will learn to think critically about current pandemics and tie them to a longer history of pandemic responses.

Key Skills Students Will Acquire:

- Working with primary sources to outline policy responses
- Writing a historically oriented policy brief on a distinct historical policy dilemma
- Critically analyzing means of memorializing events of mass death and disability.

Required Texts and Materials

All readings available online via Blackboard or as e-book through the library. You are responsible for accessing this material.

Some primary sources are available here:

<https://www.influenzaarchive.org>

<https://blog.library.villanova.edu/2020/12/07/from-the-archives-digitized-primary-sources-on-the-1918-flu-pandemic/>

Assignments and Grading:

Specific guidance for each assignment will be uploaded to Blackboard and discussed in class.

Verbal Participation: Total 20%

Participation: 15%

Leading an in-class discussion: 5% -, coming prepared with a short overview, and questions for class discussions, identifying themes in the history of pandemics. Generally, you will work in pairs.

Obituary Primary Sources Assignment: 10% - Due Feb 23rd on Blackboard

Find an obituary of someone who passed away of an epidemic/ pandemic illness before 1950. Analyze the obituary and provide historical context. (1-2 double spaced pages) . What silences and gaps do you notice?

Memorial Project (Group Assignment) 15% in Class, March 23, 30

Work in groups of 2-4. Choose an infectious disease we've discussed or you are interested in, and a mass death event that occurred before 2010. Using at least 4 primary sources, plan and design a memorial for its victims. Could be a website, a monument, a library, an image. You don't need to create the actual item itself but sketch out what it would be and why and justify it, based on the sources you've evaluated. Who are you memorializing? Why?

- Presentation in class (power-point or other visual aids, approx 15 mins total time, followed by discussion,)

Policy Brief Mid Term Assignment: 20% Due March 3d (before Spring break, if you need the weekend to complete that's fine, but better to go into break without the assignment)

Create a 3-page policy brief for a government official (state/federal) to address a real historical dilemma. Examples can be – it's 1985, should NYC close its bath houses? What should Monroe County do about its lung block? Define the problem, use at least 3 primary sources and create a policy brief explaining your recommendations. **I am available to help discuss your problem and your sources.**

Final Paper: 35% Due on Blackboard May 2nd at 5pm.

- 1) For the W track, has to be original research with primary sources, submit a draft and revise considerably. The paper can be an original research project on a topic of your

choosing, or can be a policy brief, that can address any health policy issue, including contemporary, but must harness historical primary sources. Must be 12-15 pages double spaced. I must approve your topic in writing by March 1st. **Drafts due April 13.**

- 2) For non-W students PHLT 374 – 8-paged paper or policy brief. Should include engagement with secondary and primary sources. No draft submission is required.

Grade Scale:

A = 93-100 A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86

B- = 80-82 C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76 C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69 D = 63-66

D- = 60-62

Attendance:

Attendance is important for your success. You are expected to arrive prepared to class, and if you cannot attend, email in advance. You may be asked to submit a short response to the reading in lieu of attendance. If you have 3 or more absences throughout the semester, depending on the circumstance, your grade may be impacted beyond losing points in the participation rubric.

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>." If there is any question or concern please contact the instructor for clarification.

Statement of Accommodation:

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 at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. Blackboard will also be updated.

Course Schedule

Thursday, January 12, 2023

Intro, Policy Briefs, Overview, Discussion of Primary Sources

Read Rosenberg Explaining Epidemics Chapter 14

Introduction to Health Policy Briefs.

Visitor Dr Paul Graman - chief epidemiologist at Strong, Local policy first.

Thursday, January 19, 2023

Yellow Fever

Politics, Parties, and Pestilence: Epidemic Yellow Fever in Philadelphia and the Rise of the First Party System, Martin Pernick

Mariola Espinosa The Threat from Havana: Southern Public Health, Yellow Fever, and the U.S. Intervention in the Cuban Struggle for Independence, 1878-1898

Goldberg "Against the Very Idea of the Politicization of Public Health Policy" AJPH 2012

Visitor Mitch Gruber - putting history to action

Thursday, January 26, 2023

Rise of Epidemiology

Jim Downs, *Maladies of Empire:*

Read Intro, Chapters 6, 7, and Conclusion

Policy Briefs discussion

Thursday, February 2, 2023

Cholera

Charles E Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years*, (1962) available online through the library

Introduction and Part 1, and Part 3 1-98; 175-242

Visitor – Dr Michael Mendoza, Monroe County Public Health Commissioner

Thursday, February 9, 2023

TB

Living in the Shadow of Death, Sheila Rothman, Intro, Part I (12-76), Part IV (179-225) and epilogue (247-52).

Working with Obituaries and Memory

Info session with Librarian Lara Nicosia

Thursday, February 16, 2023

TB

Nancy Tomes, *Gospel of Germs*, Chapters 5, 8.

SK Roberts “Where Our Melanotic Citizens Predominate: Locating African Americans and Finding the Lung Block in Tuberculosis Research in Baltimore, Maryland 1880-1920s”

Archive Visit – Miner Library at Strong Memorial Hospital

Thursday, February 23, 2023

Influenza and Inequality

Fanning, Patricia : *Influenza and Inequality: One Town's Tragic Response to the Great Epidemic of 1918*, Intro, Chapter 4 ,5, 6,7 Conclusion and Epilogue

Morabia “Why Does Influenza Hit the Poor More Than the Rich? A 1931 Social Epidemiology Article That Broke New Ground in the History of Confounding, Mediation, and Interaction”

Have a look at but don't have to read closely:

Edgar Sydenstricker, The Incidence of Influenza among Persons of Different Economic Status during the Epidemic of 1918, Public Health Reports Jan. 23, 1931, Vol. 46, pp. 154-170

Troubleshooting Policy Briefs

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Influenza history – present histories and policies.

Markel H, Lipman HB, Navarro JA, et al. Nonpharmaceutical Interventions Implemented by US Cities During the 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic. JAMA. 2007;298(6):644–654.
doi:10.1001/jama.298.6.644

Tom Dicke Waiting for the Flu: Cognitive Inertia and the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918–19, Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, Volume 70, Number 2, April 2015, pp. 195-217

David M. Morens, Jeffery K. Taubenberger, and Anthony S. Fauci, 2021:” A Centenary Tale of Two Pandemics: The 1918 Influenza Pandemic and COVID-19, Part II” American Journal of Public Health 111, 1267_1272, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2021.306326>

Thinking about Historical Memory

Thursday, March 9, 2023- NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Thursday, March 16, 2023

Polio

Rogers, Dirt and Disease: Intro, Chapters 1,2 5, epilogue

Naomi Rogers, “Race and the Politics of Polio: Warm Springs, Tuskegee, and the March of Dimes,” *American Journal of Public Health* 97 (May 2007): 784-795.

Recommended but not required Paralyzing Fear – Polio in America

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFENJm2B3cg> (and if you watch it, I recommend on 1.25 speed, its slow)

Thursday, March 23, 2023

Polio, Vaccine Politics

Oshinsky, *Polio, An American Story* Intro, Chapters 2-5 (e-book through library)

Conis, Polio, Measles and the “Dirty Disease Gang”

Presentations of Group Memorial Projects I

Thursday, March 30, 2023

2pm Visit and Talk Dr William Valenti: How to Manage a Pandemic: AIDS, COVID, MPox

AIDS – Federal

Read - Jennifer Brier , Infectious Ideas : U. S. Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis , Prologue, chapters 1-3. (ebook at library)

Presentations of Group Memorial Projects II

Thursday, April 6, 2023

AIDS – State/local action

James Colgrove, *Epidemic City*, Chapter 4

Dan Royles, To Make the Wounded Whole, 6,7

Visit the AIDS Poster Collections

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Anthrax / Preparedness

Anne Pollock , Sickening, Intro and Chapter 1

Rosner and Markowitz, Are We Ready? Public Health Since 9/11 , intro (1-6) and Chapter 3

Fee and Brown The Unfulfilled Promise Of Public Health: Déjà Vu All Over Again, Health Affairs, 2002

Final Project Check Ins

Thursday, April 20, 2023

Covid and the Misuse of History

Reading TBD based on new developments.

Unmasking Textualism: Linguistic Misunderstanding in the Transit Mask Order Case and Beyond *Columbia Law Review Forum*, Volume 122: 192-213 (2022)