The Global AIDS Pandemic

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. The second half of the twentieth century was marked by the emergence of a new epidemic of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the human population, caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). HIV has now spread to all parts of the globe, infecting 60 million people worldwide and causing 25 million deaths. At last count, 33 million people were living with HIV infection. The epidemic has caused vast suffering and has had a profound impact on many aspects of contemporary life. This interdisciplinary course reviews those developments, provides basic information about the history, epidemiology, politics, and cultures of AIDS, surveys the current state of the epidemic in different parts of the globe, and describes how the epidemic has been shaped by gender, sexuality, race, poverty, political economy, and other structures of social inequality. Topics to be covered include risk, prevention, treatment, activism, demography, globalization, and specific strategies of response to the epidemic.

Learning Objectives

• Students will gain an understanding of the complexity of HIV/AIDS that spans several approaches: socio-cultural, historical, political, demographic, and epidemiological.

• Students will learn how socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, race and ethnicity, and other social identities shape the pandemic globally.

Course Components & Evaluation

• Participation and Attendance (25%)
Active participation, regular attendance and timely arrival are expected in this course. You are further expected to demonstrate consistent engagement with the course. ‘Engagement’ means that for each class session, you should: 1) complete the readings; 2) come prepared with thoughts and questions; 3) contribute to our group discussion. In other words, mere attendance is not sufficient to earn a high mark for participation. I reserve the right to assign brief (one-page) response papers and issue “pop quizzes” on readings throughout the semester and to count these towards the participation grade.
Attendance is required and an attendance sheet will be circulated at the beginning of each class. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Your grade will be reduced for each class meeting you miss over two, with exceptions made for documented emergencies.

- **Midterm Exam (20%)**
  The exam will be held in class on Friday 14 February and will cover the first half of the course. The format will include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short and longer essay responses.

- **Response papers (5 x 5% each = 25%)**
  Five times in the semester (Friday 7 February, Tuesday 25 February, Friday 28 March, Friday 11 April, and Friday 2 May) students will write responses of 500-800 words about readings and other course materials. Please post your response to the Chat Room on Sakai by 12:30pm on the due date.

- **Final Exam (30%)**
  The exam will be cumulative. The format will include multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank but will emphasize short and longer essay responses.

**Readings**

The following four books are required and are available at the campus Barnes & Noble, and elsewhere. All other course materials will be available on Sakai.


**Course Schedule**

**Tue 21 Jan: What is AIDS?**

No assigned readings
Fri 24 Jan: The Natural History of AIDS


Tue 28 January: The Biology of HIV/AIDS


Watch this animation of how HIV replicates and also how the main antiretroviral therapies work: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RO8MP3wMvjg


Fri 31 Jan: Emergence of the Pandemic


Tue 4 Feb: A Global Map of the Pandemic


Examine the UNAIDS global AIDS map, especially the maps of changing HIV prevalence in various world regions from 1990-present: http://www.unaids.org/globalreport/HIV_prevalence_map.htm
Fri 7 Feb: The Early Response

First response paper due


Tue 11 Feb: Why Africa?


Pam Belluck. “Contraceptive Used in Africa May Double Risk of H.I.V.” *NY Times* 3 October 2011

“South Africa Fears Millions More H.I.V. Infections” *New York Times* 19 November 2010


Fri 14 Feb: Demography: Migration and Orphans


Tue 18 Feb: Is AIDS a Disease of Poverty?


**Fri 21 Feb: Transmission and Prevention**


**Tue 25 Feb: Treatment**

Second response paper due


**Fri 28 Feb: Tourism and Sex Work**


**Tue 4 March:**

*The Wisdom of Whores* pp. 1-83.

**Fri 7 March:**

*The Wisdom of Whores* pp. 84-160.

**Tue 11 March:**

**Fri 14 March: Midterm Exam**

The Wisdom of Whores pp. 227-326.

--SPRING BREAK--

**Tue 25 March: Marriage and HIV Risk**


**Fri 28 March: The Epidemic among African-Americans**

**Third response paper due**


**Tue 1 April: The Epidemic Among MSM**


I-Ching Ng. 2008. “Helping the Hidden Community of HIV.” *TIME* 19 August.

**Fri 4 April: Regulating Sex, Criminalizing Transmission**


**Tue 8 April: ACT UP and AIDS Activism in the U.S.**


Deborah Gould. Chapter 3 “The Pleasures and Intensities of Activism; or, Making a Place for Yourself in the Universe.” In *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP’s Fight against AIDS*. 2009 Pages 181-212

Possible trip to NYC for exhibition on AIDS activism at NYPL

**Fri 11 April: Global Treatment Activism**

Fourth response paper due


**Tue 15 April: The Subjective Experience of Being HIV**


**Fri 18 April: PEPFAR and the Global Fund**
Look through PEPFAR website: http://www.pepfar.gov/about/index.htm


Donald McNeil. “At front lines, AIDS war is falling apart.” NY Times 10 May 2010


Tue 22 April:

Love in the Time of AIDS, Chapters 7 and 8

Fri 25 April:

Love in the Time of AIDS, Chapters 9 and 10

Tue 29 April: How to end the pandemic

Tinderbox Appendix: How The AIDS Epidemic Can Be Overcome.


Fri 2 May: Exam review

Fifth response paper due

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday 8 May, 12:00-3:00pm