1. **Course Description**

This course will provide a general understanding of factors/dynamics that affect the health of human populations and efforts to improve it. The course will provide an overview of international health and population status, and examine the role of national governments and international agencies in the policy and planning of health care resources and services.

The course is divided into three sections. 1) cultural context of health and illness; 2) socioeconomic indicators and determinants of health, and 3) stakeholders and their priorities in planning and implementing interventions to improve health.

2. **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Integrate cultural concepts (explanatory models of health and illness, idioms of distress, health-related practices), and the cultural aspects of political and economic forces that shape health, illness and health care into analysis of international health encounters;
2. Apply an understanding of indicators, differentials and determinants of health to the analysis of the health status of selected populations;
3. Analyze and evaluate the priorities, roles and activities of key stakeholders in the international health arena, including national governments and major international agencies.

**Units**

This three-credit course is divided into three units. A set of priority issues will be used throughout the course to illustrate concepts, problems and strategies. These issues include maternal mortality, immunization, nutrition, and HIV/AIDS.

**Unit I: Introduction to cultural aspects of health:** Explanatory models of health and illness; idioms of distress; health related practices; and material dimensions of health and illness. (Denise Saint Arnault)

**Unit II: Indicators and determinants of health:** Indicators (population data, vital and health statistics, health services statistics, socioeconomic indicators), determinants (environment, biology/genetics, socioeconomic), patterns and variations. (Connie Currier)

**Unit III: Agencies and Interventions:** Stakeholders (multilateral, bilateral, nationals and non-governmental organizations), roles and resources, policies, priorities and strategies; selected issues and interventions. (Connie Currier)
3. **Readings**


Available from: [Amazon.com](http://amazon.com) through this link: *Culture, Health and Illness*
The Student Bookstore in East Lansing: [www.sbsmsu.com](http://www.sbsmsu.com)

**Recommended:**


Additional readings will be made available on the web.

4. **Course Faculty**

Connie Currier, MPH, DrPH
A224 Life Sciences Building
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Denise Saint Arnault, RN, PhD
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5. **Course Policies**

Students should look at the Announcements each time you log onto the class. Students will find updated news, announcements, and important discussion. The Discussion Forum in Angel, an online web-based conferencing system, will provide a forum for to ask questions and have discussion about various issues related to the course content. Your grade will be partially based on discussion participation with faculty and other students.

Note: Please communicate with faculty using the Discussion Forum and not via private e-mails. Usually if one student has a question, others will have the same question, and all will benefit from the response.

**Student Assessment:**

Students can earn a total of 100 points as described below with the grading scale as follows:

94-100% = 4.0
89-93% = 3.5
84-88% = 3.0
79-83% = 2.5
75-78% = 2.0
70-74% = 1.5
65-69% = 1.0
<64% = 0.0

You will be able to view your grade summary at any time.

Schedule of Topics:

- Week 1 begins January 9th: Orientation to Angel with quiz (5 points) and Introduction to the course - post your photo (optional) and brief bio/personal introduction, state your goals for the course, and learn to navigate through the various links/parts of the course.
- Week 2 begins January 16th: Definitions of health, public health and international health (5 points)
- UNIT I
- Week 3 begins January 23rd: Culture and International Health (5 points)
- Week 4 begins January 30th: Introduction to cultural study and culture concepts (5 points)
- Week 5 begins February 6th: Cultural Beliefs and Values (5 points)
- Week 6 begins February 13th: Health Related Practices (5 points)
- Week 7 begins February 20th: Political and Economic Dimensions of Culture and Health (5 points)
- Week 8 begins February 27th: Culture and International Health (unit exam, 10 points)
- UNIT II
- Week 9 begins March 6th: SPRING BREAK
- Week 10 begins March 14th: Health data: Importance, availability, and accuracy (5 points)
- Week 11 begins March 20th: Measures of health, morbidity and mortality (5 points)
- Week 12 begins March 27th: Measures of health, morbidity and mortality, continued (5 points)
- Week 13 begins April 3rd: Major determinants of health (unit exam 10 points)
- UNIT III
- Week 14 begins April 10th: International Agencies and Funding (5 points)
- Week 15 begins April 17th: International Health Policies and Programs (5 points)
• Week 16 begins April 24th: Final project (20 points: 5 points evaluation of group contribution/participation, 15 points PowerPoint presentation)
• Week 17 begins May 1st: Synthesis, Evaluation and Wrap-up

Course Requirements

The requirements of the course include:

1. Weekly on-line responses to discussion questions based on the required readings and other course activities.
2. All assignments completed on time –incompletes are not an option for this course. Late assignments will be given a zero grade. Assignments are due at the end of each week by midnight Sunday night, unless indicated otherwise.
3. Participation in group activities as directed in faculty announcements or on the Discussion Forum.
4. In addition to recommended texts, read articles and visit web sites posted within weekly topics.
5. Communicate with faculty using the Discussion Forum within the current week if there is any problem in understanding course discussion, activities, or expectations.
6. Check your course grade and acknowledge any faculty feedback weekly.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If dishonest practices are observed or suspected in any form, the student will be reported to the College of Nursing Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for disciplinary action. A failing course grade may be issued.