

HIST 4316.W/5313.W: Plagues & Pandemics



PROFESSOR: **DR. WILLIAMSON**

EMAIL: savannah.williamson@sulross.edu

OFFICE HOURS & LOCATION:

Mondays	12-2pm, <i>or by appointment</i>	UC 212
Tuesdays	12:30-1:45pm 3-5pm	LH 211 UC 212
Wednesdays	12-2pm, <i>or by appointment</i>	UC 212
Thursdays	12:30-1:45pm 3:30-5:00pm	LH 211 UC 212
Fridays	<i>Available by appointment</i>	

Section I. Course Introductions

The global Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 has led to a new global interest in epidemic diseases and public health responses. This course will demonstrate how societies have risen to the challenge of earlier epidemic and pandemic diseases.

In “Plagues & Pandemics” we will examine the social, cultural, and demographic impacts of several major pandemic diseases and outbreaks, including: the bubonic plague, smallpox, yellow fever, cholera, influenza, typhoid, HIV/AIDS, and Covid-19. In addition to learning about the basic biology of disease, we will examine how epidemiologists trace disease and how socioeconomic inequalities shape epidemics and their outcomes. Our exploration of viruses will provide insight into the xenophobia and anti-immigrant policies that emerged alongside flu pandemics. We will discover how sexism and homophobia fueled a public health crisis in the early years of HIV/AIDS.

Finally, this course will examine how the intersections of class, gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, and global inequalities contribute to the persistence of pandemics. Our exploration of disease will center on five themes: 1) biology, 2) social epidemiology, 3) the

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rose of social power in shaping societal responses to the disease, 4) construction of social meanings attached to the disease, and 5) the role of social power in shaping public health/public policy responses.

Course Content Note

At times this semester we will be discussing historical events that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork. If you ever feel the need to step outside during a class discussion you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, you should arrange to get notes from another student or see the professor.

Section II. Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to provide a range of critical responses to the question: "How has medicine reflected society and its culture throughout American history?"
2. Students will have a general appreciation for major developments in the ten themes listed above.
3. Of greater importance, students will be able to explain the causes and effects of major developments in the ten themes listed above.
4. Using specific examples, students will be able to explain how external forces – social, political, economic, cultural, and technological – have influenced medical research and praxis in the United States.
5. Develop analytical writing skills

Section III. Grades & Requirements

Required Texts—all free e-books available through SRSU Library

- James Shoals, *Epidemics and Pandemics* (2019)
- Evelyn Lord, *The Great Plague: A People's History* (2014)
- Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (2009)
- Nancy Bristow, *American Pandemic: The Lost Worlds of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic* (2012)

Course Grading

A 90-100% **B** 80-89% **C** 70-79% **D** 60-69% **F** >59%

Assignments

1. *Discussion & Participation* (20%): Most weeks, we will spend a portion of a class period working, usually collaboratively, on an exercise or project focused on either "doing history" or "different ways of seeing the past." Students are expected to read the assigned materials before the start of class and contribute to discussions of course materials.

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- Students will be assigned to official groups for the duration of the semester and will work together to complete group assignments. Individuals who do not contribute equitably to their groups will not receive full credit for assignments and may be required to work alone.
- 2. *Three (3) Book Response Papers* (10% each, 30% total): Assignment details and guidelines will be posted on Bb.
- 3. *Midterm Exam* (15%): Students must be prepared to answer short and long essay prompts and questions.
- 4. *Term Research Essay* (35% total): Each student will choose a research topic related to the course and select primary and secondary sources to interpret and evaluate, place in historical context, and construct an analytical, argumentative essay that is a minimum 8-10 full pages in length. The essay will require that students think critically about the sources, examine how individual choices and decisions influenced the course of history, and consider the ways in which people engage with regional, national, or global communities.
 - *Research Proposal* (5%)—Students **MUST** meet with the professor individually to discuss research topics for approval. The proposal should include an overview of your tentative research topic, research questions, scope, theme(s), as well as a list of secondary sources. The proposal should include an overview of your research topic, The student may not move forward with their research essay without prior authorization.
 - *Rough Draft* (10%)—Each student will submit either a completed rough draft OR an annotated bibliography. See Bb for details to come.
 - *Final Essay Draft* (20%)—The final draft of the research essay should be a minimum 8-10 full pages in length, with 1” margins on all sides, 12-point-font, single-spaced, with page numbers, and citations as footnotes or endnotes. In addition to the essay, students should include a cover page (student name, paper title, course, term/date) and a works cited/bibliography page formatted in Chicago Manual of Style. See Bb for citation, formatting, and composition guides.

Section IV. Classroom & Teaching Philosophy

A Climate of Mutual Respect

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose, and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). I also understand that the current crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My

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commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Children in the Classroom

The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff, and faculty parents.

1. All exclusively nursing/breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the nursing/breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they must choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
2. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
3. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
4. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
5. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have *finally* gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.
6. Don't forget to check out the SRSU Lactation Room on the 2nd floor of Lawrence Hall!

Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom!

Section V. Classroom Policies

- This is a web-based course, which means that students **must** have regular, reliable access to a working computer with internet. At times, we may meet in an online classroom rather than in-person. **Students are responsible for checking email and the Blackboard site on a regular basis to access course materials and information.**
- Think of this course like joining a gym—you get out what you put in. As your professor, it is my responsibility to make sure you know how to use the equipment and to assist you when you need a spotter. Meanwhile, it is your responsibility to engage with the course materials,

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put in the work, and complete the assignments by the designated due dates. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily the time you spend.

- **This is a writing-intensive course** intended to introduce you to the practice of history. History is an analytical discipline. While facts and dates are indeed important, alone they do not allow us to understand the past in a meaningful fashion. Among other things, history is the art of mustering evidence to make an argument or arguments about the past in as compelling a manner as possible. If you engage the course material in a meaningful way, this class will help you to read more carefully, think more critically, and write more eloquently.
- All exams and course work will **only** be accepted on the due dates in the class calendar. In the case of extraordinary medical or personal circumstances, you must contact the instructor **before** the due date of the assignment or exam. If you miss a class for extraordinary circumstances, you must submit appropriate paperwork--a doctor's note, obituary, a bill for a tow truck, and the like.
- While I am always happy to discuss ways to improve your writing and performance on exams, I am not in the business of haggling over grades. Grades in this class are the product of careful deliberation and are not negotiable. If you find that the instructor—who is human—made a mathematical error, please bring the matter to my attention during office hours.
- If you are having any problems with the course, please come to the office hours of the professor. I am very eager to help students and am committed to your success in the class.

Academic Honesty

The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. "Cheating" includes:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.
2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.
5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a non-administered test.

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7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.
8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea in one's own written work offered for credit.
9. "Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.
11. "Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.
12. "Falsification of Data" means the representation, claim, or use of research, data, statistics, records, files, results, or information that is falsified, fabricated, fraudulently altered, or otherwise misappropriated or misrepresented.



All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final.

Please read the complete policy at

http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_discipline.pdf

COVID-19

With respect to instructional spaces (classrooms, labs, performance spaces, etc.):

- You should check daily for COVID symptoms by completing the self-check, which can be found on the university website, www.sulross.edu
- Do not attend your in-person class if you have COVID-19, if you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, if you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms, if you need to care for an individual with COVID-19, or if you have other health concerns related to COVID-19.
- Students who miss class due to the above conditions will not be penalized for their absence and will not be asked to provide formal documentation from a healthcare provider.

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- If you are unable to attend class, take the following steps.
 - Notify me in advance of the absence or inability to participate, if possible.
 - Participate in class activities online and submit assignments electronically, to the extent possible.
 - Reach out to me if illness will require late submission or other modifications to deadlines.
 - If remaining in a class and fulfilling the necessary requirements becomes impossible due to illness or other COVID-related circumstances, contact me to discuss other options.

As your instructor, I will trust your word when you say you are ill, and in turn, I expect that you will report the reason for your absences truthfully.

- Missed Content: Students are responsible for all worked missed due to documented absence and should contact their professor as soon as possible to discuss making up any missing work.

Section VI. University Programs and Services

- ***SRSU Library Services***

The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

- ***Learning Strategies, Styles, and Centers***

Academic Success Center. 1st Floor Library, offers tutoring for many subjects, holds numerous workshops on developing better notetaking, reading, and study skills as well as assisting students with writing and test taking strategies.

The University offers tutoring for many subjects, holds numerous workshops on developing better notetaking, reading, and study skills as well as assisting students with writing and test taking strategies through the **Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)**.

Location: FH 214. Web: <http://www.sulross.edu/academic-center-excellence>

- ***ADA***

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a request.

Students seeking accessibility services must contact:

SRSU's Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services

Location: Ferguson Hall 112

Telephone: 432-837-8691

(Please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832

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Students should then contact the instructor as soon as possible to initiate the recommended accommodations.

- ***Counseling and Psychological Services***

Provides counseling services and offers other services to students in need.

Location: Ferguson Hall 112. Hours: M-F 8am-12pm and 1pm-5pm. Phone: (432) 837-8203.

Web: <http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>

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Section VII. Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 10, 12, 14) Introductions

Week 2 (January 17, 19, 21) The Black Plague

Read: Evelyn Lord, *The Great Plague: A People's History* (2014)

-Cory Wright-Maley, and Parag Joshi. "All Fall Down: Simulating the Spread of the Black Plague in the High School History Classroom." *The History Teacher* 50, no.4(August1,2017):517-34.

<http://wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.44507272&site=eds-live>.

<http://wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.44507272&site=eds-live>

Reflection on *The Great Plague* due to Bb by Monday, January 24th

Week 3 (January 24, 26, 28) Smallpox

Read: Colonial Health Primary Sources

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/becomingamer/ideas/text7/text7read.htm>

Week 4 (January 31, February 02, 04) Individual Meetings re: Research Paper Topic Selection

Research Proposal due to Bb by Monday, February 07th

Week 5 (February 07, 09, 11) Yellow Fever

Read: Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Reflection on *Epidemic Invasions* due to Bb by Monday, February 14th

Week 6 (February 14, 16, 18) Cholera

Watch: "John Snow and the 1854 Broad Street Cholera Outbreak," *YouTube*, April 19, 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INjrAXGRda4>

Week 7 (February 21, 23, 25) Typhoid

Read: George A. Soper, "The Curious Career of Typhoid Mary," Read May 10, 1939, before the Section of Historical and Cultural Medicine, *The Bulletin for the New York Academy of Medicine*, v.15 (10, October 1939): 698-712.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1911442/pdf/bullnyacadmed00595-0063.pdf>

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Watch: “Mary Mallon Spreads Typhoid Across New York City—Drunk History,” *YouTube*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12wh0lfHb2U>

Week 8 (February 28, March 02, 04) **Influenza**

Read: Nancy Bristow, *American Pandemic: The Lost Worlds of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic* (2012)

Reflection on *American Pandemic* due to Bb by Monday, March 14th

Week 9 (March 07, 09, 11) **SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS**

Week 10 (March 14, 16, 18) **HIV/AIDS**

Read: Lucas Richert, “Reagan, Regulation, and the FDA: The US Food and Drug Administration’s Response to HIV/AIDS, 1980-90,” *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 44, Issue 3 (Winter 2009): 467-487.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/su4bt24o2tuk5ep/Richert_Reagan%2C%20Regulation%2C%20and%20the%20FDA.pdf?dl=0

TBA

Week 11 (March 21, 23, 25) **Covid-19**

TBA

Week 12 (March 28, 30, April 01) **Individual Research Meetings**

Week 13 (April 04, 06, 08)—Research & Writing Days

Week 14 (April 11, 13, 15)—Research & Writing Days

Week 15 (April 18, 20, 22)—Research & Writing Days

Week 16 (April 25, 27, No Class the 29th)—Research & Writing Days

FINAL DUE by 11:59PM FRIDAY, April 29th
