

Courses for Göttingen University: Prof. Kim Gutschow

Introduction to Medical Anthropology & Public Health (BA, MA)

This course introduces students to the Anthropology of Health and Disease. It seeks to understand the causal determinants of health, illness, and disease cross-culturally in the broadest social terms. Along the way, we explore in the biosocial parameters of both health and disease as well as health-seeking behaviors. We are particularly interested in the limits and strengths of ethnographic and other qualitative methods in sociology and anthropology in relation to broader policy debates in Public Health, Global health, and biomedicine.

Infection and Inequality: The Anthropology of Public Health Today (BA, MA, PhD)

This course addresses several major public health crises of our day---AIDS/HIV, Malaria, TB, and Maternal mortality --- in their social, cultural, political, economic, and historical complexity. This course stays focussed on the current debates about the nexus between infection and inequalities as it analyzes the social, economic, and political inequities and other forms of structural violence—gender and race---that have shaped access to health care across the globe.

Methods in Medical Anthropology (PhD)

This course will introduce students to the various methods that Medical Anthropologists have used to study health, illness, health care, health-seeking behavior. We analyze the way that cultural and social anthropologists have pursued an empirical and interpretive understanding of medicine through participant observation, interviews, surveys, and what Clifford Geertz has called “deep hanging out”. One goal is to teach students to write a basic research proposal that tackles informed consent and other statistical, ethical, or methodological hurdles in qualitative research.

Sex and Society: the Cultural Construction of Reproduction (BA, MA)

Why is reproduction such a contested subject in many societies as well as disciplines? Why and how does reproduction provoke such frequent cultural, political, and academic controversy? We will examine the myriad public health and wider social practices that seek control over reproduction around issues such as fertility, family planning, childbearing, abortion, maternal health, and motherhood. This class pursues the global politics and practice of reproduction through a number of academic disciplines, including anthropology, medicine, religious studies, sociology, and women’s studies.

Childbirth: A Cross Cultural Study (MA, PhD)

This seminar undertakes a comparative and multidisciplinary study of childbirth and maternity care across the globe. It explores the cultural and regional variations in childbirth along a number of spectrums including home versus hospital, obstetric versus midwifery care, and private versus government-sponsored care. Along the way we analyze the full complexity of social, economic, cultural, and legal issues that determine the degree of authoritative knowledge of individual stakeholders (mothers, doctors, midwives, other experts) involved in the contemporary process of birth.

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Public Health Debates in South Asia (BA, MA; CEMIS)

This course examines the recent public health successes and failures in South Asia. It engages an anthropological investigation of the socio-cultural and political contexts that frame recent interventions around public health issues. Sample case studies include immunizations including the ongoing but still unsuccessful campaign to eradicate polio in India, family planning disasters and successes in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, the spread of HIV/AIDS and drug resistant TB across South Asia, and the successes in reducing maternal mortality in Bangladesh and Nepal versus limited gains in India and Pakistan.

Asian Medicines (BA, MA; CEMIS)

This course examines the intersection of biomedicine with three major traditional medicines of Asia: Indian Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Tibetan medicine. It is interested in the dialectic between appropriation, adoption, and rejection that patients and doctors use to negotiate these diverse medical systems. It analyzes and theorizes the social, cultural, and economic dialogue that emerges between overlapping medical systems today, with special consideration for the role that Big Pharma plays in this landscape.

Social Suffering and Catastrophe in South Asia (BA, MA; CEMIS)

This course focuses on the act of ethnographic witnessing and its relationship to human suffering. It asks how various forms of witnessing of social suffering in South Asia — academic, journalistic, popular, policy-oriented—vary and with what political and social effects. Select case studies will include the Tsunami of 2004, the Pakistan earthquake of 2005, Bhopal, recurrent Bangladesh floods, and other sites of disaster. Along the way we consider the phenomenon of ‘infotainment’ in which the spectacle of suffering in the ‘South’ becomes food for consumption in the ‘North’.

Gender and Religion in South Asia (BA, MA; CEMIS)

This course applies feminist and critical theory to the relationship between religion, gender, and the state. In the broadest sense, the course considers how South Asian religions and state institutions perpetuate and legitimize social and symbolic constructions of gender and sexuality. It examines a range of religious, social, and political discourses that discipline the self, sex, and gender within Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism, and Jainism, through its analysis of varied social facts such as marriage, the media, current events, literature, ritual, and religious institutions.

Deconstructing the Myth of Shangri La (BA, MA; CEMIS)

The Himalayas and Buddhism are as ubiquitous in popular culture---on the cover of *Der Spiegel*, *Time*, and the subject of numerous Hollywood films---as in academic writings. How has the western fascination with the Himalayas and Buddhism affected the subject we study as academics? This course considers the popular tropes, stereotypes, and fantasies regarding the Himalayas and Tibet, while deconstructing the utopian and orientalist images that continue to shape and distort our understanding today. Our

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analysis covers Shamans, Sherpas, Shangri La, Shambhala, and the ongoing mystique of the Dalai Lama.

India's Identities: Religion, Caste, and Gender (BA, MA; CEMIS)

India is a nation based on difference whose multiple and fragmenting identities are often framed as unified oppositions: Hindu/Muslim, Male/Female, Rich/Poor, and upper caste/outcaste. This course deconstructs the popular and academic representations of these identities in order to complicate the notion of a diverse Indian population. It examines the range of social discourses and strategic forms of identity that constrain individual agency while sustaining future aspirations of communal identity in India today.

The Anthropology of Religion (BA, MA)

This course is intended to provide a broad and basic introduction to the anthropology of religion and associated theoretical and practical implications. We will examine key issues in the study of religion as a point of departure for our analysis of how the anthropology of religion has changed the meaning and definition of the concept of religion as well as the related discipline of religious studies. We employ anthropological, sociological, psychoanalytic, and philosophical modes in our inquiry into the critical methodological issues.