



**HSC4950/HSC5925**

**North American Perspectives on Health: Panama Canal & Central America**

**Fall 2009**

**Friday, periods 7-9, FLG-265**

**Instructors:**

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**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to provide students the opportunity to gain a historical perspective on health in the United States and Central America. This course will explore the construction of the Panama Canal as a primary example of the impact of communicable diseases and use of alcohol (as a form of recreation) influences health status of a population. Students will be able to describe basic epidemiological principles related to the disease control efforts in the US and Central American. Students will compare and contrast the diverse health conditions in the US and Central American during the twentieth century as well as today. The influence of

environment, health care and recreational opportunities on health will also be explored. The culminating experience will be a 10 day cruise through the Panama Canal with field study site visits to Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Mexico. The study abroad experience will allow the students to personally experience how these less healthy ecological environments have been structured to create more health supporting environments.

### **Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define basic epidemiological terms.
2. Describe the traditional epidemiological methods related to control and management of communicable diseases.
3. Contrast diverse health conditions in the U.S. and Central American during the twentieth century.
4. Identify significant historical events that have detracted from or contributed to health status in the U.S. and Central America.
5. Compare and contrast the demographic characteristics and health status characteristics of the U. S. in 1900 with that of today.
6. Compare and contrast the demographic characteristics and health status characteristics of Central America in 1900 with that of today.
7. Describe the interventions used by the U.S. to ensure the health and wellbeing of Panama Canal workers and ultimately the successful completion of the canal in 1914.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Required text:** McCullough, David (1977 or later) *The Path Between the Seas: The creation of the Panama Canal 1870-1914*, Simon & Schuster. The UF bookstore has used copies for \$15.00 and this book is available in a Kindle edition.

Students are required to:

1. Attend and participate in all scheduled class meetings.
2. Read the text and report on an assigned chapter.
3. Participate and contribute to assigned group project and presentation.
4. Submit all course assignments not later than the specified deadline date.

### **Assignments:**

1. Students must read and participate in discussions related to the content of the text. Each student will be assigned one chapter from the text for which they will have the responsibility to develop a one page handout for the class summarizing the key topics of the text. Students will present a brief introduction to their chapter on September 18.
2. Students must form groups of three and choose ONE group project from the below list:

### ***A. Country Analysis***

In groups of 3, research a country from the instructor approved list. First, identify general information about the country as it was in 1900. Include such demographics as country size, population demographics, language, religion, government, military, socio-economic status, and cultural traditions. Then identify these same demographics as they exist today. Compare these demographic characteristics, then, expand your research to identify health demographics (such as disease trends), explain the government's role in the health status of the country (i.e. health prevention initiative/agenda), and describe the type of health care system available to citizens. This project should be organized into a 6-page, typed, APA format paper complete with a reference list. The group will also present their findings to the class. The presentation format may be determined by the group.

### ***B. Analysis of a Ninetieth or Twentieth Century Health Problem***

In groups of 3, select one health problem from the instructor approved list. Research the history related to how this health problem impacted the United States and Central America by answering the following questions: Was this health problem a leading cause of death? How many people were impacted annually? What were the root causes of this health problem? What was done to cure/prevent this health problem? Why were the prevention and treatment/management measures successful? This project should be organized into a 6-page, typed, APA format paper complete with a reference list. The group will also present their findings to the class.

#### **Grades:**

Group project	50%
Presentation	15%
Book chapter review	10%
Attendance and Participation	25%

#### **Grading Scale:**

A = 92-100; A- = 90,91
B+ = 88,89; B = 82-87; B- = 80,82
C+ = 78,79; C = 72-77; C- = 70,71
D+ = 68,69; D = 61-67; E = less than 60%

#### **Accommodations:**

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

(<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>)

**Resources:** Dewey, Russ, Professor Emeritus, Georgia Southern University, APA Crib Sheet <http://www.psywww.com/resource/APA%20Research%20Style%20Crib%20Sheet.htm#top>

Additional resources and a reading list will be provided.

**Academic Honesty:**

Review UF's Academic Honesty Guidelines

(<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>)

Review the Academic Honesty Student Guide

(<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php>) if you are unsure about how to present your work honestly.

**Tentative course outline**

August 28	Course introduction
Sept 4	Course assignments discussed, groups formed Lecture 1: Building the Panama Canal video; History of Health Overview
Sept 11	Lecture 2: History of Health 20 <sup>th</sup> Century US and Central America
Sept 18	Lecture 3: History of the Panama Canal – chapter reviews
Sept 25	***Group project research
Oct 2	***Group project research
Oct 16	Homecoming – classes do not meet
Oct 23	***Group project research
Oct 30	***Group project research
Nov 6	Lecture 4: Panama Canal Today
Nov 13	Group project presentations
Nov 20	Group project presentations
Nov 27	Thanksgiving holiday
Dec 4	Lecture 5: Course wrap-up and preparation for Panama Canal travel study
Dec 11	Lecture 6: Health status in Jamaica
Dec 13	Lecture 7: Health status in Costa Rica and Nicaragua
Dec 16	Lecture 8: Health status in Guatemala and Mexico
Dec 19	Lecture 9: Course wrap up

***\*\*\* Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their assigned instructor during “group project research” class sessions for guidance with the group project. \*\*\****