

# HIST 380 H02:

## History of Public Health

**Class Time & location** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 13:00-14:20  
Tiernan Hall 114

**Instructor Pronouns** Rosanna Dent  
she/her/hers

**Form of Address E-mail** You can call me Rosanna, Professor Dent or Dr. Dent  
[rdent@njit.edu](mailto:rdent@njit.edu)

The best ways to reach me are by email, by Canvas message, or by stopping by my office hours. Please note that I am unlikely to respond outside of regular business hours.

**Office Office Hours** Cullimore 322  
Tuesday 15:00-16:00; Thursday 14:30-15:30 and by appointment.  
Please sign up on my [Google Cal](#) to assure a spot.

**Overview** This course explores the global history of public health. We will examine efforts to cultivate health across diverse times, geographies, and cultures, with a focus on colonial and postcolonial contexts. Public health is a professional field that brings together people from many backgrounds: health professionals, politicians, policy makers, economists, philanthropists, non-governmental organizations, students, academics, and patients and publics. At times it has been a humanitarian endeavor, motivated by desire to address inequities and secure the right to health. It has sometimes been built from the bottom up by activists and local residents or community members. But it has also been implemented in top-down systems motivated by economic concerns, fears about contagion and prejudice about certain peoples, or state concerns about bioterrorism and security. The goal of this course is to provide an understanding of the complex historical origins of modern global health practices and programs. We will examine how interventions into lives of other peoples have grown out of ideas about disease, race, gender, science, and economy. We will also explore how western medicine has been adapted and shaped in local contexts by patients, midwives, nurses, doctors, administrators and others. This course may be used to satisfy a three credit 300 level GER in History and Humanities.

**Prerequisites** A grade of C or better in [HUM 101](#), [HUM 102](#) and a 200 level Humanities or History course or their equivalents.

<b>Course Goals</b>	<p>Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise pertinent questions regarding the political and social implications of public and global health interventions;</li> <li>• Identify and summarize the main idea and key arguments of a textual source;</li> <li>• Critically evaluate a source (whether primary or secondary), situating it in its historical context and interpreting its broader relevance for historical thinking.</li> <li>• Communicate these summaries, questions, and analyses in clear written and oral form.</li> <li>• Demonstrate information literacy through the use of appropriate source material and the ability to cite properly.</li> </ul>
<b>Required Texts</b>	All readings will be available on Canvas.
<b>Academic Integrity</b>	<p>NJIT's policy is as follows: "Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <a href="http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf">http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. <b>Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.</b> If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at <a href="mailto:dos@njit.edu">dos@njit.edu</a>."</p> <p>Most importantly, you are here to learn, grow, practice, make mistakes, exchange ideas, take risks, debate, discuss, and so on. <b>Academic integrity is about being committed to these learning processes and taking responsibility for your own learning.</b> I am here to answer questions and help with this process. If in doubt, ask.</p> <p>Students must obtain permission from me before using AI composition software (like ChatGPT) for any assignments in this course. Using these tools without my permission puts your academic integrity at risk.</p>
<b>Citation Expectations</b>	Scholars communicate their intellectual connections through citation. This is a <b>generative practice</b> that allows you to join a broader conversation with those you read and those who read you. It is also a way to <b>credit others</b> for their work.

Any words taken directly from a written source (assigned reading, website, book, article...) or from another individual (interview, podcast, youtube...) must be in quotation marks and cited. ALWAYS. I will work with you to learn how to do this. This matters a lot, both to **avoid plagiarism** and to **learn how research works**.

In this class we will use Chicago Manual of Style format for citations

**Disability  
Services**

Students who have special needs should contact NJIT's Student Disability Services to help procure accommodations in completing coursework. The center can be found at <http://www.njit.edu/counseling/services/disabilities.php>.

**Computers and  
Personal  
Electronic  
Devices**

I reserve the front row for students who find other people's electronic devices distracting – no electronic note taking in the front row please. If you choose to use a computer, tablet, or phone in class, I expect you to use these tools responsibly. No texting, no chatting, no social media, email etc. If I observe an improper use of devices, you will lose participation credit for that day. If students cannot conduct themselves without these distractions, I may ask you to leave or disallow the use of electronic devices.

**University  
Education in  
Uncertain Times**

Even though many are behaving as if the pandemic has ended, these are still stressful and uncertain times. We are facing serious issues that will impact different members of our class differently, including COVID-19, but also racism, state violence, climate change, and a highly charged political climate. Part of what we will do in this class is learn about the historical roots of many of the problems we now face.

Please be compassionate to others who may be facing different challenges from you. Make an extra effort to get to know your classmates. Read, discuss, and work together if you can. Our learning is enhanced through human connection.

If you are struggling with the course for whatever reason, please contact me. I want you to succeed and will help you do so. I also strongly encourage students to seek support in different forms, including from the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, and Health Services depending on the challenge.

Furthermore, I urge any student who faces challenges securing food or housing to contact the Dean of Students. And if you're comfortable doing so, let me know, because there are ways I may be able to help.

*Note: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus that I deem necessary.*

## Assignments and Grading

**Submission:** All assignments should be submitted electronically through Canvas. Only the following file types are accepted: doc, docx. (I.e. Google docs are not accepted – export in Word.) Please prepare all assignments in Times New Roman, size 12 font, with 1-inch margins, double spaced.

**Late Submissions:** Deadlines are organized so that assigned work supports your learning process. Assignments (other than reading responses and presentations – see below) may lose up to one grade for every day late (A to A-, A- to B+).

**Golden Ticket:** Life can be complicated. All students have one “Golden Ticket,” which can be used for a no-questions-asked 3-day extension on one **major** assignment. Simply **indicate at the top of the first page** that you are using your Golden Ticket, and you will not be marked down. This may not be used without PRIOR permission for your primary source presentation. If you use this on a rough draft, it is STILL your responsibility to give timely peer edits.

**Exceptional Circumstances:** If there are pressing issues affecting your ability to complete class work, please get in touch with me as early as possible. I also strongly encourage you to reach out proactively to the Dean of Students’ office.

<b>Participation</b>	<b>(45%)</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>
<b>Primary Source Pres. &amp; Paper</b>	<b>(15%)</b>	A= 90 to 100
<b>Research Project</b>	<b>(40%)</b>	B+= 88 to 89
		B= 80 to 87
		C+= 78 to 79
		C= 70 to 77
		D= 60 to 69
		F= 59 to 0

### **Participation (45%)**

Attendance and participation are central to your success in this course. Participation includes speaking, listening, and demonstrating careful preparation for class including completing all assigned reading. Full participation in this class includes:

- All students will be required to post either a **response to the readings** on the canvas discussion board by 1pm on **Monday** of each week **OR** a **response to a classmate** by 1pm on **Tuesday**. You will alternate weeks according to the group to which you are assigned. I will post a prompt and guidelines for the response each week by Friday at 5pm. These responses (whether to the reading or a classmate’s response) should be approximately 300 words. They should demonstrate both comprehension and critical thinking about the readings. Late responses will receive partial credit. Responses that meet the directions and engage thoughtfully and generously with the author and/or classmate will get full credit. You may miss two weeks with no penalty. (25% of final grade.)
- In-class participation** can take many forms, such as speaking during full-class discussion, group work and leadership during class activities, pre-prepared questions or comments, in-class writing assignments, among other options. You must be present to participate. If you tend to be shy or quiet in class I encourage you to talk to me about it early in the semester. (20% of final grade.)
- I will occasionally assign in class writing exercises that require you to synthesize material across different weeks of the semester. These are intended to keep you analytically processing the material we learn, and reflecting on how your thinking is developing. This will be factored into in-class participation.

- (d) Disruptive behavior such as texting, social media, etc. is distracting to me and the other members of the class and will result in loss of all participation points for that class period.

If you are concerned about your participation, come speak with me during office hours as early as possible in the semester.

### **Primary Source Presentation and Paper (15%)**

Tuesday classes will begin each week with 5-minute student primary source presentations. Your job for this assignment is to find a primary source that relates to and enriches the discussion from the week before your assigned date. You will identify the source, formally present it, and turn in a 2-page paper that summarizes the **argument** of your presentation. You must do your best to answer the questions: What is this source? Who made it and why? Who was the audience? How did it circulate? What can this tell us about the global history of public health? Your job is to contextualize the source, and then draw connections to the readings and course discussion from the week before to say why it is important. It will also help you learn to identify primary sources and analyze them for your final projects/essays.

### **Un-Essay or Essay Research Project (40%)**

- Topic Brainstorm (ungraded) (due Thurs, Feb. 1)
- Proposal Rough Draft (ungraded) (due Thurs, Feb. 22)
- Proposal Final Draft (10%) (due Thurs, Feb. 29)
- Rough Draft and Progress Report (5%) (due Fri, Mar. 29)
- Peer Feedback (5%) (due Sun, Mar. 31)
- Final Project (20%) (due Thurs, Apr. 25)

Option A: You may elect to create an un-essay. This could be anything from a podcast, a website, or a short video to a board game, a costume, a theatrical piece or other creative project. (Don't be limited by the suggestions here – think broadly!) Together with your creative piece, you will write a 3-4 page exploration of your un-essay and how it relates to course material. Specific instructions will be provided. Group projects must have my prior authorization.

Option B: You may elect to write an essay. It will be a 10-page research paper that explores a public health issue (sixteenth-twentieth century) or a historical precedent to the COVID-19 pandemic. I strongly encourage you to choose a case study beyond the US and Europe. Using peer-reviewed secondary sources and primary sources, you will develop an argument about the issue you choose. Your job will be to situate it in historical context drawing on the concepts and patterns we discuss in class.

Both options A and B must rely on high quality secondary sources and primary source materials that you will identify. The assignments are structured to build into your final project, and so taking each step seriously will help you succeed in your research.

### Schedule of Topics and Assigned Readings

\*\*Reading Response for the listed readings are due on MONDAY of the week listed\*\*

\*\*Classmate Responses for the listed readings are due on TUESDAY of the week listed\*\*

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>  **no reading responses required**  Secondary Sources: Charles E. Rosenberg, "Introduction" in <i>Framing Disease: Studies in Cultural History</i> , (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), xiii-xxvi.  Tues, Jan. 16 <i>Public Health: What's in a Name?</i>  Thurs, Jan. 18 <i>Framing Disease</i>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Colonial Origins and Responses</b>  Jones, David. 2015. "Death, Uncertainty, and Rhetoric." In <i>Beyond Germs: Native Depopulation in North America</i> , edited by Catherine M. Cameron, Paul Kelton, and Alan C. Swedlund, 16-49. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. Fett, Sharla. 2002. "Doctoring Women" in <i>Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power On Southern Slave Plantations</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 112-141.  Tues, Jan. 23 <i>Settler-colonialism and Disease in the Americas</i>  Thurs, Jan. 25 <i>Colonial Cures &amp; Western Enclaves</i>  NOTE: Monday January 22 is the last day to add or drop a course.
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>The Tropics</b>  Secondary Sources: Seth, Suman. "19th-Century Medicine and The Races of Men." <i>The Lancet</i> 401, no. 10377 (February 25, 2023): 638–39. Fisher, Colin. "Antebellum Black Climate Science: The Medical Geography and Emancipatory Politics of James McCune Smith and Martin Delany." <i>Environmental History</i> 26, no. 3 (2021): 461–83. Peard, Julyan G. 2000. "Race, Climate, and Medicine: Framing Tropical Disease" in <i>Race, Place, and Medicine: The Idea of the Tropics in Nineteenth-Century Brazilian Medicine</i> . Durham: Duke University Press. 81-108.  Primary Source: Manson, Patrick. 1897. "On the Necessity for Special Education in Tropical Medicine" <i>Lancet</i> , 150 (3866): 842-845.  Tues, Jan. 30 <i>Victorian Morals, Victorian Professionals</i>  Thurs, Feb. 1 <i>Brazilian Tropicalistas</i> <b>**Final Project Topic Brainstorm Due**</b>

<b>Week 4</b>	<p><b>Missionaries of Industry, Missionary Medicine</b></p> <p>Secondary Sources:  Mitman, Gregg. 2017. "Forgotten Paths of Empire: Ecology, Disease, and Commerce in the Making of Liberia's Plantation Economy." <i>Environmental History</i> 22 (1): 1–22. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/emw097">https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/emw097</a>.  Kalusa, Walima T. (2014) "Missionaries, African Patients, and Negotiating Missionary Medicine at Kalene Hospital, Zambia, 1906–1935," <i>Journal of Southern African Studies</i>, 40 (2): 283-294, doi: 10.1080/03057070.2014.896717.</p> <p>Primary Sources:  Explore the collections of <a href="http://liberianhistory.org/">http://liberianhistory.org/</a></p> <p>Tues, Feb. 6 <i>Imperialism and Ecologies of Disease</i></p> <p>Thurs, Feb. 8 <i>Rutgers Library Visit – Meet at Dana Library</i></p>
<b>Week 5</b>	<p><b>Health between the Wars</b></p> <p>Secondary Sources:  Brown, Theodore M., and Anne-Emanuelle Birn. 2013. "The Making of Health Internationalists." In <i>Comrades in Health: U.S. Health Internationalists, Abroad and at Home</i>, edited by Theodore M. Brown and Anne-Emanuelle Birn, 15–42. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. <a href="http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1562484">http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1562484</a>.  Schwartz, Jason L. 2018. "The Spanish Flu, Epidemics, and the Turn to Biomedical Responses." <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 108 (11): 1455–58. <a href="https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304581">https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304581</a>.</p> <p>Primary Sources:  Explore resources at <a href="https://www.influenzaarchive.org/">https://www.influenzaarchive.org/</a>  FILM: <i>Unhooking the Hook Worm</i>, Rockefeller Foundation 1920</p> <p>Tues, Feb. 13 <i>From Social Medicine to International Health Organizations</i></p> <p>Thurs, Feb. 15 <i>Influenza and Humanitarianism</i></p>
<b>Week 6</b>	<p><b>Magic Bullets and the Promise of the Laboratory</b></p> <p>Crafts, Lydia. "Making Medical Subjects: Regeneration, Experimentation, and Women in the Guatemalan Spring." <i>Hispanic American Historical Review</i> 102, no. 2 (2022): 251–84. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-9653491">https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-9653491</a>.</p> <p>Tues, Feb. 20 <i>Eugenics to the Golden Age of Medicine</i> [no reading response, low stakes in-class writing]</p> <p>Thurs, Feb. 22 <i>Peer Editing</i> <b>**Proposal Rough Draft Due in Class**</b></p>

<b>Week 7</b>	<p><b>Problems of Population</b></p> <p>Secondary Sources:  Soto Laveaga, Gabriela. 2005. "Uncommon Trajectories: Steroid Hormones, Mexican Peasants, and the Search for a Wild Yam." <i>Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences</i>, 36 (4): 743–60. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2005.09.007">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2005.09.007</a>.  Briggs, Laura. 2003. "Ch. 4: Demon Mothers in the Social Laboratory: Development, Overpopulation, and 'the Pill,' 1940-1960." In <i>ibid. Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and US Imperialism in Puerto Rico</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.</p> <p>Primary Source: Ehrlich, Paul. 1968. <i>The Population Bomb</i>. San Francisco: Sierra Club/Ballantine Books. 118-155.</p> <p>Tues, Feb. 27 <i>Family Planning Laboratories: Jungles*</i></p> <p>Thurs, Feb. 29 <i>Family Planning Laboratories: Islands</i>  <b>**Proposal Final Draft Due**</b></p>
<b>Week 8</b>	<p>Individual Research Meetings with Prof Dent (Cullimore 322)</p> <p>Tues, Mar. 5 Individual Research Meetings</p> <p>Thurs, Mar. 7 Individual Research Meetings</p>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	<p><b>Development and Decolonization</b></p> <p>Kim, Jim Yong, Joyce V. Millen, Alec Irwin, and John Gershman, eds. <i>Dying for Growth: Global Inequality and the Health of the Poor</i>. Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press, 2002. (Selection.)</p> <p>Primary Sources:  FILM: MD International (Smith, Kline and French Laboratories, 1958)  Frantz Fanon, "Medicine and Colonialism," in <i>A Dying Colonialism</i>, (Grove Press, 1994 [1959]).</p> <p>Tues, Mar. 19 Colonial Cold War Medicine</p> <p>Thurs, Mar. 21 Decolonial Cold War Medicine</p> <p>NOTE: Monday April 1<sup>st</sup> is the last day to withdraw from a course.</p>



<b>Week 11</b>	<p><b>World Health</b></p> <p>Secondary Sources:  Bhattacharya, Sanjoy. 2006. "WHO-led or WHO-managed? Re-assessing the Smallpox Eradication Program in India, 1960-1980." In <i>Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization and Security, 1850 to the Present</i>, edited by Alison Bashford, 60-75. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.  Cueto, Marcos. 2015. "The WHO and Primary Health Care during the 1980s." In <i>Health for All: The Journey of Universal Health Coverage</i>, edited by Medcalf et al., 10-19. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.  Soto Laveaga, Gabriella. 2015. "Mexico's Historical Models for Providing Rural Healthcare." In <i>Health for All: The Journey of Universal Health Coverage</i>, edited by Medcalf et al., 25-35. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.</p> <p>Primary Sources:  Declaration of Alma-Ata. International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma-Ata, USSR, 6-12 Sept 1978.</p> <p>Tues, Mar. 26 <i>Vertical Approaches: Eradication</i></p> <p>Thurs, Mar. 28 <i>Horizontal Approaches: Primary Health Care (Salud!)</i></p> <p><b>**Rough Drafts of Research Projects Due Friday Mar. 29**</b>  <b>Peer Feedback Due Sunday Mar. 31</b></p>
<b>Week 12</b>	<p><b>AIDS and the Reconfiguration of Global Health</b></p> <p>Crane, Johanna T. "Unequal 'Partners'. AIDS, Academia, and the Rise of Global Health." <i>Behemoth</i> 3, no. 3 (2010): 78-97, <a href="https://doi.org/10.6094/behemoth.2010.3.3.685">doi:10.6094/behemoth.2010.3.3.685</a>.  McKay, Ramah. <i>Medicine in the Meantime</i>. Duke University Press, 2018. Selection.</p> <p>Tues, Apr. 2 <i>Structural Adjustment and Health Infrastructures</i></p> <p>Thurs, Apr. 4 <i>Social Infrastructures</i></p>
<b>Week 13</b>	<p><b>Creativity in Crisis</b></p> <p>Julie Livingston, "The Next Epidemic: Pain and the Politics of Relief in Botswana's Cancer Ward," in Biehl and Petryna, eds., <i>When People Come First: Critical Studies in Global Health</i>, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).  Mika, Marissa. "The Half-Life of Radiotherapy and Other Transferred Technologies." <i>Technology and Culture</i> 61, no. 2 Supplement (April 2020).  <a href="https://www.proquest.com/docview/2444885265/abstract/D225C0A9F5184481PQ/1">https://www.proquest.com/docview/2444885265/abstract/D225C0A9F5184481PQ/1</a>.</p> <p>Tues, Apr. 9 <i>The Other Opioid Crisis</i></p> <p>Thurs, Apr. 11 <i>The Limits of Technology Transfer</i></p>

<b>Week 14</b>	<p><b>Mourning the Dead</b></p> <p>Keller, Richard C. 2022. "<a href="#">Memorializing Death in an Age of Mass Mortality: Keywords of Covid-19.</a>" Somatosphere.</p> <p>Liu, Andrew. 2020. "<a href="#">'Chinese Virus,' Global Market.</a>" <i>n+1</i>, 20 March 2021.</p> <p>Mason, Katherine. 2020. "<a href="#">Reflecting on SARS, 17 Years and Two Flu-like Epidemics Later.</a>" <i>Somatosphere</i>.</p> <p>Bring one primary source that you have chosen for discussion. It should provide insight towards an analysis of the COVID-19 pandemic that is global or brings global questions to local, US realities.</p> <p>Tues, Apr. 16     <i>Primary Sources of COVID</i></p> <p>Thurs, Apr. 18     <i>Framing COVID</i></p>
<b>Week 15</b>	<p>Tues, Apr. 23     <i>Un-Essay and Essay Presentations and Discussion</i></p> <p>Thurs, Apr. 25     <i>Un-Essay and Essay Presentations and Discussion</i></p> <p><b>**FINAL Research Projects Due**</b></p>
<b>Week 16</b>	<p>Tues, Apr. 30     <i>No Class – Friday Schedule</i></p> <p>Thurs, May 2     <i>Reading Day</i></p> <p><b>May 3 - 9     Final Exams</b></p>