ANTH 394-A02: Archaeology of Infectious Disease
Instructor: Dr. Stephanie E. Calce

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The spread of infectious diseases in human populations is due to both biological and cultural customs, and have profoundly affected both human history and biology from ancient to modern times claiming more lives than all wars, non-infectious diseases, and natural disasters combined. Using information from history, medicine, and anthropology this course will examine changes in patterns of human behaviour through cultural evolution and consider how these have affected the development and spread of infectious diseases throughout time. Course topics include: infectious diseases as agents of natural selection; biocultural adaptation; demography and epidemiological transitions with emphasis on emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases; skeletal disease diagnosis and mummy pathology; social, economic, political, and psychological disruptions engendered by global epidemics (plague, small-pox, AIDS), acute epidemics (measles, influenza) and chronic debilitating infectious diseases (malaria, schistosomiasis); the history and origin of syphilis and tuberculosis, and disease exchange as a result of agriculture, urbanization and colonization with special emphasis on the New World. The skills and knowledge gained from this course provide a foundation for advanced study in archaeology, medical anthropology, and human osteology among others.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Students will learn how to think critically in completing assignments that will cover concepts of demography, epidemiology, and differential diagnosis. Students will develop essential skills in areas such as deductive reasoning, collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of both qualitative and quantitative data. Students will develop their problem solving, research, communication, and writing skills through a series of assignments that will include both individual and group work.

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