IDS 2935 (Section 2BH1): Global Patterns of Sexually Transmitted Infections

Instructor: Dr. Gabriela Hamerlinck   (ghamerlinck@ufl.edu)
Teaching Assistant: Michelle Ruiz   (michi28@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Held in Turlington Hall 3122 and via Zoom (check Canvas for link)
                    Wednesday 9:00 pm – 11:00 am
                                     1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
                    Or by appointment (please email to schedule)

Class meetings: Tues Period 3 and Thurs Period 3-4
Meeting location: Tuesday 9:35 am – 10:25 am Little Hall 237
                    Thursday 9:35 am – 11:30 am Turlington Hall L005

Course Description

This is a 3 credit-hour course focused on the geography of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The course will begin with an overview on the types of bacteria and viruses transmitted sexually and discuss the geographic patterns of these organisms. Many bacterial STIs can be treated with antimicrobial drugs, though some bacteria are becoming drug resistant. Viral STIs cannot be treated with antimicrobials, although a human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine is now available. There are discrete geographic patterns to these sexually transmitted pathogens. Often, STIs are heavily stigmatized, and because sexual behavior is involved, often misunderstood by the public. Additionally, culture plays a major role in STI control, prevention, and transmission. Groups such as the Gates Foundation have initiated global challenges to design new condoms to promote wider use worldwide, because many cultures don't use condoms. These behavioral decisions are influenced by culture and religion, and STI reduction cannot be achieved without an understanding of these culture/behavior interactions. This course will examine several important bacterial and viral STIs and their control strategies and how culture impacts control or prevention strategies. Sexual behavior, culture, and religion are complex topics and this course aims to introduce these topics through the lens of medical geography and examine how these interactions lead to changing geographic patterns of STIs around the world.

In this course, students will be expected to (course objectives):

1) Define sexually transmitted infections and understand what pathogens can be transmitted during sex
2) Compare and contrast bacterial and viral STIs and how their biology affects control strategies
3) Understand the role of personal behavior and regional culture/religion in preventing or promoting STI persistence

4) Describe how stigmatism at the national, regional, or local level can affect STI reporting and future intervention
5) Discuss the role of education in STI prevention
6) Critically examine how STI outbreaks lead to major epidemics, such as HIV
7) Examine how pathogens such as Zika and Ebola may become STIs and how prevention differs from other STIs
8) Evaluate how STIs are portrayed in culture and public health

Required & Recommended Course Materials: *None.* Students will be assigned a set of weekly readings and videos to watch. All readings and links to all videos will be made available through Canvas.

Materials and Supplies Fees: *None*

Coursework and Schedule

List of graded work

This course will use a variety of methods to evaluate student performance. For all graded work in the course, rubrics are provided ahead of grading through the class management system Canvas – rubrics divide up assignments into specific points for specific tasks.

- Quizzes on course content knowledge (25 pts each x 7 = 150 pts; lowest quiz score dropped; assigned and completed via Canvas)
- Mid-term exam on course content, completed in-person during class. The exam will comprise of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and fill in the blank questions (100 pts).
- In-class activities and homework – students will receive reading material or concepts ahead of class or at the start of class and work in small groups or independently to review and discuss. Students will be asked to write about or orally answer critical thinking questions relating course skills to activities. For example, students may discuss the early days of the HIV epidemic and compare it to the ongoing Ebola outbreaks, where sexual transmission has been confirmed. Students will relate knowledge from lectures and readings on viral STIs and think about how HIV and Ebola differ and then how the future of Ebola may manifest if sexual transmission becomes a larger part of transmission. Points are awarded for attending and directly participating in the activity (10 points), preparedness - showing proof of knowledge of materials assigned ahead of class (15 points), and written or oral presentation/reflection (25 points). Students will be graded on each activity, but the goal of each activity is to learn through student led interactions (50 points each x 8 = 400 pts)
- Writing assignment – Position piece on STI control relating culture, biology, geography, and prevention. Students will draft a short and concise essay describing an STI and relating transmission and prevention to biology and culture, identifying opportunities to improve education or physical control (e.g. condom use) to reduce STI incidence in the future. The points for this project are divided between:
    o Selecting a topic (5 points)
    o Knowledge and synthesizing materials from primary sources, identifying the problem and defining strategies to improve/reduce STI rates (30 points),
    o Linking culture and biology (20 points)

- Linking the control and/or prevention of the chosen STI from local to global (25 points). As the course is designed with an international or global designation, students are asked to place their experiences with culture and biology into a global context within the written summary. Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of how social, cultural, and ecological differences around the world impact disease transmission and prevention/control.
- The remaining points are related to self-reflection (10). Specifically, students need to demonstrate the ability to reflect their own cultural experiences to those identified within the position pieces.
- Proper formatting (10 points).

The goal of self-reflection in this context is to identify similarities and differences in culture or ecology relative to student experience. This is designed to have students compare local culture or biology to the global context. The paper will be framed as an essay with sub-headings. Students will prepare a paper of no more than 2500 words to address the above goals. (100 points)

Total points in class = 750

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

A	94 to 100%	C	74 to < 77%
A-	90 to < 94%	C-	70 to < 74%
B+	87 to < 90%	D+	67 to < 70%
B	84 to < 87%	D	64 to < 67%
B-	80 to < 84%	D-	61 to < 64%
C+	77 to < 80%	E	<61%

Weekly schedule, readings, and due dates

The weekly schedule provides due dates, exam dates, quiz dates, and activity dates. Please note, all assigned readings will be found in the weekly module pages on Canvas. Readings include actual readings, such as distilled information from public health resources, such as the US CDC, to provide students concise information on each sexually transmitted disease we will study or discuss, and several peer reviewed papers (those that have rigorous review and editing process ahead of publication from profession equivalents). Additionally, students are provided with and asked to watch several videos ahead of or after lectures. These videos, such as Ted Talks or YouTube discussions are meant to provide context and content for discussion. As the course is international, these materials provide comparisons of different cultures, biological/ecological settings, and religious practices that may all impact sexually transmitted infection distribution and control. Readings and media are provided as links within the weekly module pages via Canvas, which are specific to the week and topic. Students should plan to read at least one public health source per class and one paper per week. When multiple papers are available, the instructor will put these into context for students. The module will identify supplemental readings from primary readings.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1	Aug 20: No class	Aug 22: Introduction to medical geography and STIs
2	Aug 27: Bacterial STIs and Control Methods	Aug 29: Activity 1 (*Drug resistant gonorrhea*)
3	Sept 3: Viral STIs and Control Methods	Sept 5: Activity 2 (*Changing patterns of chlamydia*); Quiz 1
4	Sept 10: HIV - History of a Global Epidemic	Sept 12: Out of class movie day ("And the band played on" 140 mins); Homework 1
5	Sept 17: HIV - Global patterns of spread	Sept 19: HIV - country by country patterns
6	Sept 24: HIV – Culture, religion, and HIV: how do you stop an epidemic	Sept 26: Activity 3 (*How do you stop an epidemic?);* Quiz 2
7	Oct 1: HPV - the first viral STI with a working vaccine	Oct 3: Activity 4 (*Culture, religion, and cancer: STI stigma versus cancer prevention*); Quiz 3
8	Oct 8: Wildlife STIs (Animals get them too)	Oct 10: Treating and Tracking Animal STIs; Quiz 4
9	Oct 15: Syphilis in American History	Oct 17: Syphilis in American History; Quiz 5
10	Oct 22: Exam review; Homework 2	Oct 24: Exam during class time
11	Oct 29: Introduction to the position piece	Oct 31: STIs in social media; Quiz 6
12	Nov 5: STIs in print media	Nov 7: Culture and condoms
13	Nov 12: Activity 5 (*Sexual education as STI prevention*)	Nov 14: Emerging STI Threats (Zika, Ebola, mpox)
14	Nov 19: Emerging STI Threats (Zika, Ebola, mpox)	Nov 21: Activity 6 (*Evaluation of future STI threats*)
15	No class - Holiday	No class - Holiday
16	Dec 3: Emerging STI Threats (Zika, Ebola, mpox); Quiz 7 Position piece due	No class – reading days

University Policies

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.
A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student

participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

If students have concerns about classroom issues, disagreements or grades, their first point of contact is the classroom instructor whose contact information appears on the syllabus. If the problem cannot be resolved, the student should email the next departmental contact: in classes with TAs, this is the instructor of record, in classes without TAs, this may be the department chair. Their contact information can be found on the program's website at https://geog.ufl.edu/. That email should include a clear description of the student's concern, and any supporting documents. Most concerns are resolved at this level. If a resolution cannot be reached at the departmental level, the student will be referred to the Office of the UF Ombuds https://www.ombuds.ufl.edu

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Course Policies & Class Environment

Meeting Policy

If you need help with any aspect of the course, you are encouraged to come to office hours (see the details on Page 1 of this syllabus). Alternatively, you can schedule a 1-on-1 meeting with the instructor. Please email Dr. Hamerlinck to arrange a meeting time. Outside of office hours, email is the preferred method of contact. I will do my best to respond to messages within 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays). As a courtesy, please check the syllabus and Canvas before reaching out; answers to many of your questions can be found there.

Canvas

Important announcements and updates will be regularly posted to the course Canvas website, so be sure to check Canvas frequently. To ensure that you do not miss anything, please make sure that your Canvas profile is set to receive notifications.

Email Accounts

It is UF policy that you use your GatorLink account or Canvas when emailing your instructors; we will not answer emails sent from other accounts (e.g., personal Gmail, etc.).

Professional Conduct

All members of the class are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times. Please use appropriate etiquette when interacting with your peers and instructors, including on Canvas and via email. Students who behave disrespectfully or disruptively will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

Extra Credit

Extra credit assignments may be posted at the instructors' discretion only. Any other extra work submitted in order to raise a grade will not be accepted and requests for additional extra credit will not be considered.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically via Canvas unless otherwise noted. Emailed or paper submissions for Canvas assignments will not be accepted. You are responsible for ensuring that all your work is uploaded correctly and completely by the deadline. Corrupted files will be treated as missing work (= 0 grade) until they are re-uploaded correctly and late penalties will apply if your resubmission is past the deadline. So, please always double check your files right after you upload them. If you experience technical problems when submitting your work in Canvas, contact the UF Computing Help Desk for assistance: https://helpdesk.ufl.edu.

Disputing a Grade

If you wish to dispute a grade for any assignment, you must contact the instructor in writing within two business days (48 hours) after the assignment has been returned. In your message, you must include a specific explanation for why you think the grade is incorrect and how you think it should be changed. An instructor will then arrange a meeting with you to discuss the issue and determine whether or not to the grade should be changed. The grade assigned following this meeting will be final.

Late Work & Make-Up Assignments

All assignments must be submitted by the due date and time indicated on Canvas. If an assignment is submitted late, 10% of its total point value will be deducted for every day that it is late. Credit cannot be earned for assignments that are turned in 5+ days past the due date, or for those that are submitted after the instructor has graded and returned the assignment to the class. Late work will not be accepted after the deadline for the final assignment in the course.

Extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis (at the instructor's discretion) only in the event of unforeseen emergencies. In such a case, you must contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss the situation; note that the instructor may request documentation. No extensions will be granted for students who miss the due date for any other reason.

A note about deadlines: Remember, the due date does not have to be the "do" date. In other words, it is highly encouraged to work on your assignments in advance– do not wait until right before the deadline to submit your work. Last-minute computer problems or other non-emergency situations that arise right before the deadline are not valid reasons for requesting an extension; such requests will not be considered and late penalties will be applied to your work if it is not submitted before the deadline.

Academic Honesty

Instructors' note: Any action that subverts the learning goals of the course (or a particular course activity) will be treated as academic misconduct and reported to the Dean of Students Office. This includes– but is not limited to– cheating or assisting others in cheating, plagiarism (i.e., misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, whether it is copied directly or paraphrased), self-plagiarism (i.e., copying/reusing work that you have submitted previously), collaborating with others when it is not permitted, fabricating data, lying to an instructor, and bad faith attempts to undermine the intent of an learning activity. In addition to being reported to the Dean of Students

Office, a student will earn a grade of 0 on any assignment that is plagiarized or that otherwise violates these academic honesty policies. This 0 grade is irreversible– it cannot be dropped and the assignment cannot be resubmitted for a different grade. After this, any subsequent incidents of plagiarism or academic honesty will result in an automatic E (= failing grade) in the course.

The Use of AI Generated Content

In this course, the use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Adobe Firefly) is not permitted during the completion of any assigned work. Use of a generative AI tool to complete assigned work in whole or in part may be referred under the Code of Student Conduct academic dishonesty provisions for further action by the Dean of Students Office. Students may use generative AI tools to support their independent study of course topics but should do so with the understanding that generative AI tools may not be trustworthy. If an assignment allows for the use of generative AI content, it will be clearly noted in the assignment page & instructions on Canvas.

Accommodations

Instructors' note: We want you to succeed in this course! To ensure your accommodations are in place when you need them, please be sure to have your DRC accommodation letter sent to us as early as possible– ideally at the beginning of the semester.

Understanding This Syllabus

It is your responsibility to ensure that you fully understand the policies outlined in this syllabus as well as the policies of the university as they relate to this course. By remaining enrolled in this course, you agree that you have read and understood all of these policies and that you will be held accountable to them.

At their discretion, the instructor may change aspects of the course during the semester to accommodate new opportunities, unforeseen disruptions, or other circumstances. These changes will be communicated clearly in class and through Canvas. The current version of the syllabus will always be available on our course's Canvas website. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are following the most recent version of the syllabus.

If you have any questions, please contact the instructors as soon as possible (preferably at the beginning of the course)!