

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

Instructor: Dr. Gabriela Hamerlinck (ghamerlinck@ufl.edu)
Teaching Assistant: Gavriella Hecht (ghecht@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Held in Turlington Hall 3122 and via Zoom (check Canvas for link)
Wednesday 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Thursday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Or by appointment (please email to schedule)

Class meetings: Tues Period 4 and Thurs Period 4-5
Meeting location: Tuesday 10:40 am – 11:30 am Little Hall 0113
Thursday 10:40 am – 12:35 pm Little Hall 0121

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 – mixed multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank (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 (5 points), and written or oral presentation/reflection (10 points). Students will be graded on each activity, but the goal of each activity is to learn through student led interactions (25 points each x 6 = 150 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:
 - Selecting a topic (5 points)
 - Knowledge and synthesizing materials from primary sources, identifying the problem and defining strategies to improve/reduce STI rates (30 points),
 - 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 presentation. 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 = 500

Participation:

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

- **Participation:** Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate class participation is expected and will be evaluated using the rubric below. The instructor will inform you of your participation grade to date when mid-term exams are returned and schedule a conference if you are earning below 70% of the possible points.
- **NOTE:** If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

Participation Grading Rubric:

	High Quality	Average	Needs Improvement
Informed: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work. This includes class preparation (i.e. posting questions to Canvas prior to class)			
Thoughtful: Shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised.			
Considerate: Takes the perspective others into account.			

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.

The course is designed to introduce STIs by type, bacterial or virus first, to organize the course by STIs with treatment (bacterial) and prevention (viruses). Once students understand these differences, we will discuss different individual diseases in the early weeks and move into comparisons in latter weeks. As we discuss diseases, we will continually return to how global patterns are formed by local patterns of context, biology, culture, and how these influence transmission and control. This will setup a dynamic where students can frame global patterns to their own experience. Students are expected to engage in class, as evident by the point breakdown. To do this, students should plan to read or watch media ahead of class or after, as appropriate.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1	No class	Introduction to medical geography and STIs
2	Bacterial STIs and Control Methods	Activity 1 (<i>Drug resistant gonorrhea</i>)
3	Viral STIs and Control Methods	Activity 2 (<i>Changing patterns of chlamydia</i>)
4	HIV: History of a Global Epidemic	HIV: country by country patterns
5	HIV: Global patterns of spread	Out of class movie day ("And the band played on" 140 mins)
6	HIV – Culture, religion, and HIV: how do you stop an epidemic	Activity 3 (<i>How do you stop an epidemic?</i>)
7	HPV: the first viral STI with a working vaccine	Activity 4 (<i>Culture, religion, and cancer: STI stigma versus cancer prevention</i>)
8	Wildlife STIs (Animals get them too)	Treating and Tracking Animal STIs
9	Syphilis in American History	Syphilis in American History
10	Exam review (optional class period)	Exam
11	Introduction to the position piece	STIs in print media
12	STIs in social media	No class
13	Culture and condoms	Activity 5 (<i>Sexual education as STI prevention</i>)
14	Emerging STI Threats: Zika	No class - holiday
15	Emerging STI Threats: Ebola	Emerging STI Threats: Monkeypox
16	Activity 6 (<i>Evaluation of future STI threats</i>) 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.bluer.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>