

COURSE OUTLINE					
TERM: FALL 2026		COURSE NO: ANTH 211			
INSTRUCTOR:		COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH			
OFFICE:	LOCAL:	SECTION NO(S):	CREDITS: 3.0		
E-MAIL:	@capilanou.ca				
OFFICE HOURS:					
COURSE WEBSITE:					

Capilano University is named after Chief Joe Capilano (1854–1910), an important leader of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses are located on the unceded territories of the səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

COURSE FORMAT

Three hours of class time, plus an additional hour delivered through on-line or other activities for a 15-week semester, which includes two weeks for final exams.

COURSE PREREQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES

None.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

What produces health? This course moves beyond biology to examine the economic, political, and historical systems shaping daily life—the Social Determinants of Health (SDH). While mainstream public health often focuses on "lifestyle factors," we use medical anthropology and critical global and public health to critique how systemic forces sustain deep health inequities. Students will learn and challenge conventional, top-down approaches to health disparities. By analyzing the SDH framework, students will rethink global public health interventions and consider the structural changes necessary for true health equity.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND/OR RESOURCES

Course readings consist of academic articles published in leading international anthropology, sociology, public health, global health, and medical journals. All readings will be determined by the Instructor and will be available either for purchase in the CapU bookstore or online via the CapU library.

Example readings that may or may not be included in the final syllabus:

Brewis, Alexandra and Amber Wutich. 2019. *Lazy, Crazy, and Disgusting: Stigma and the Undoing of Global Health*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Day, Lisa. 2010. "Health Care Reform, Health, and Social Justice." *American Journal of Critical Care* 19 (5): 459–61.

Phelan, Jo C., Link, Bruce G., and Parisa Tehranifar. 2010. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Health Inequalities: Theory, Evidence, and Policy Implications." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 51 (1_suppl): S28–S40.

Singer, Merrill and Scott Clair. 2003. "Syndemics and Public Health: Reconceptualizing Disease in Bio-Social Context." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17(4): 423–441.

Young, Ruth, Richard Mangwi Ayiasi, Maylene Shung-King, and Rosemary Morgan. 2020. "Health Systems of Oppression: Applying Intersectionality in Health Systems to Expose Hidden Inequities." *Health Policy and Planning* 35 (9): 1228–30.

Woolf, Steven H, and Paula Braveman. 2011. "Where Health Disparities Begin: The Role of Social and Economic Determinants--and Why Current Policies May Make Matters Worse." *Health Affairs (Project Hope)* 30 (10): 1852–59.

Walia, Harsha. 2010. "Transient Servitude: Migrant Labour in Canada and the Apartheid of Citizenship." *Race & Class* 52 (1): 71–84.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Analyze the causal pathways through which specific social determinants—such as housing stability, food security, and education—intersect to produce disparate health outcomes across populations.
- Apply foundational theories in medical anthropology and critical global public health to explain the persistence of health inequities as well as examining how modern healthcare systems can inadvertently reproduce social marginalization rather than alleviate it.
- Deconstruct the impact of systemic structures—including capitalism, colonialism, and structural racism—on population health, using an intersectional lens to move beyond broad demographic categories towards an understanding of structural violence.
- Synthesize evidence from complex academic literature and qualitative and quantitative datasets to formulate evidence-based arguments in structured debates regarding public health policy.
- Evaluate the efficacy and ethical implications of dominant health promotion and behaviour change models, identifying potential biases toward individualistic versus structural interventions.
- Critique the standard SDH framework by identifying its limitations in addressing the root causes of health disparities and proposing alternative frameworks for health equity and the redistribution of power.

COURSE CONTENT

Course content will be determined by the Instructor. Individual lecture topics may include but are not limited to:

- Fundamental causes
- Theories of Intersectionality
- Health lifestyles and collective Behaviours
- Social determinants of mental health
- Stigma and behaviour change

- Disability justice and work
- Gender, sexuality, and health
- Race vs. Racism as a social determinant of health
- Migrant health, immigration policies, and advocacy
- Social capital for navigating inequality and health promotion
- Structural and economic determinants
- Environmental justice and colonialism
- Critical global public health perspectives

Please note that Weeks 14-15 are the final exam period.

EVALUATION PROFILE

The evaluation profile will be determined by the Instructor and may include but are not limited to the following items:

Participation*	0 – 10%
Assignments	0 – 35%
In-class activities	0 – 35%
Presentations	0 – 35%
Midterm Examination	0 – 35%
Final Examination**	0 – 35%
Total	100%

*In the case where an Instructor chooses to include a participation grade as part of their evaluation profile, the Instructor will provide clear details to students about how their participation will be evaluated. For example, participation marks may be based on frequency or quality of a student's comments during class discussion.

**A final exam may or may not be administered. However, when the course is taught by multiple instructors within a single term, all sections of the course will either include a final exam or exclude one.

GRADING PROFILE

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	

Incomplete Grades

Grades of Incomplete "I" are assigned only in exceptional circumstances when a student requests extra time to complete their coursework. Such agreements are made only at the request of the student, who is responsible to determine from the instructor the outstanding requirements of the course.

Late Assignments

Due dates will be provided to students beforehand, and it is the responsibility of the student to submit their assignments on time. The Instructor's policy for submitting late assignments will be communicated to students.

Missed Exams/Quizzes/Labs etc.

Make-up exams, quizzes and/or tests are given at the discretion of the instructor. They are generally given only in medical emergencies or severe personal crises. Some activities may not be able to be accommodated. Please consult with your Instructor. Accommodations can be made to honour community needs and traditional practices.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and associated activities.

English Usage

Students are expected to proofread all written work for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Instructors may deduct marks for incorrect grammar and spelling in written assignments.

Electronic Devices

The electronic device usage policy is at the discretion of the Instructor. Exceptions to this policy will be made for students with a documented disability and/or supported by the Centre for Accessibility Services.

On-line Communication

Online communication policies will be determined by the Instructor.

UNIVERSITY OPERATIONAL DETAILS**Tools for Success**

Many services are available to support student success for Capilano University students. A central navigation point for all services can be found at: <https://www.capilanou.ca/student-services/>

Capilano University Security: download the [CapU Mobile Safety App](#)

Policy Statement (S2009-06)

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Academic Integrity, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

Academic Integrity (S2017-05)

Any instance of academic dishonesty or breach of the standards of academic integrity is serious and students will be held accountable for their actions, whether acting alone or in a group. See policy and procedures S2017-05 Academic Integrity for more information:

<https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>

Violations of academic integrity, including dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic performances, are prohibited and will be handled in accordance with the Student Academic Integrity Procedures.

Academic dishonesty is any act that breaches one or more of the principles of academic integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to the following types:

Cheating: Using or providing unauthorized aids, assistance or materials while preparing or completing assessments, or when completing practical work (in clinical, practicum, or lab settings), including but not limited to the following:

- Copying or attempting to copy the work of another during an assessment;
- Communicating work to another student during an examination;
- Using unauthorized aids, notes, or electronic devices or means during an examination;
- Unauthorized possession of an assessment or answer key; and/or,
- Submitting of a substantially similar assessment by two or more students, except in the case where such submission is specifically authorized by the instructor.

Fraud: Creation or use of falsified documents.

Misuse or misrepresentation of sources: Presenting source material in such a way as to distort its original purpose or implication(s); misattributing words, ideas, etc. to someone other than the original source; misrepresenting or manipulating research findings or data; and/or suppressing aspects of findings or data in order to present conclusions in a light other than the research, taken as a whole, would support.

Plagiarism: Presenting or submitting, as one's own work, the research, words, ideas, artistic imagery, arguments, calculations, illustrations, or diagrams of another person or persons without explicit or accurate citation or credit.

Self-Plagiarism: Submitting one's own work for credit in more than one course without the permission of the instructors, or re-submitting work, in whole or in part, for which credit has already been granted without permission of the instructors.

Prohibited Conduct: The following are examples of other conduct specifically prohibited:

- Taking unauthorized possession of the work of another student (for example, intercepting and removing such work from a photocopier or printer, or collecting the graded work of another student from a stack of papers);
- Falsifying one's own and/or other students' attendance in a course;
- Impersonating or allowing the impersonation of an individual;
- Modifying a graded assessment then submitting it for re-grading; or,
- Assisting or attempting to assist another person to commit any breach of academic integrity.

Sexual Violence and Misconduct

All Members of the University Community have the right to work, teach and study in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual violence and misconduct. Policy B401 defines sexual assault as follows:

Sexual assault is any form of sexual contact that occurs without ongoing and freely given consent, including the threat of sexual contact without consent. Sexual assault can be committed by a stranger, someone known to the survivor or an intimate partner.

Safety and security at the University are a priority and any form of sexual violence and misconduct will not be tolerated or condoned. The University expects all Students and Members of the University Community to abide by all laws and University policies, including B.401 Sexual Violence Policy and B.401.1 Sexual Violence Procedure (found on Policy page <https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>)

Emergencies: Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency policies where appropriate and the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.