This course is an introduction to medical anthropology, which includes the study of health, illness, the body, and healing in a cross-cultural perspective. The field draws on various theoretical approaches to understand the interaction of biology, culture, the social environment, and medicine. We will read anthropological accounts from around the world to explore how health and illness are culturally constructed and mediated.

We will begin with a discussion of key scholars and theories in medical anthropology in addition to research methods. Then we will focus on work from different cultural settings that focuses on topics such as, the relationship between traditional healing and western medicine, how medical science is influenced by culture, the development of technology and the limitations of the human body, ethics, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, aging and death, genetics, and other global health concerns like access to services, mental health, malaria, and tuberculosis.

Open to all Mason undergraduate students
Fulfills CHSS Non-Western Requirement

Contact Dr. Hughes Rinker at chughe13@gmu.edu with any questions!