This course introduces students to the concept of social medicine, with a focus on translating a theoretical understanding of the history and content of the movement into an understanding of the movement’s practical implications for current medical practice and health policy. The concept of social medicine begins in earnest in Europe in the middle decades of the 19th century, but like most features of medical science at the time, quickly spread across the Atlantic to take root in the U.S., especially in northeastern cities like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. However, unlike Great Britain, France, and Germany, in the U.S. social medicine themes and ideals largely diverged from clinical medicine beginning in the early 20th century, and instead found a home within the profession of public health. Nevertheless, there still exists a small but vibrant American social medicine movement that seeks to reintegrate ideals and themes of social medicine in medical education, medical practice, and health policy itself. This course examines the history of social medicine in the West, some of its key substantive themes and ideas, and current proposals for integrating social medicine into clinical practice and health policy.

Course Goal(s)

The overall course goals are

1. To understand the origin and intellectual history of the social medicine movement
2. To understand the critical distinction drawn in social medicine between health and health care and how that distinction impacts the scope of medical practice
3. To identify ways in which social medicine concepts and priorities are relevant to current medical practices.

Educational Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to
1. Describe the historical origin and central themes behind the social medicine movement;
2. Explain the distinction drawn in social medicine between health and health care;
3. Identify ways in which social medicine concepts and themes could impact medical practice in the present and in the near future.

**Course Readings**

All readings will be posted on Blackboard. Readings may include and are not limited to:

- Nancy Daniels, Bruce Kennedy, and Ichiro Kawachi, Is Inequality Bad for our Health? (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2000), excerpts.

**Course Activities/Experience**

Class evaluation will be based on the following three factors:
1. Completion of all reading assignments;
2. Attendance and class participation; and
3. A 10-15 minutes research presentation.

The quality of the learning experience in this class depends almost entirely on the preparation and participation of the learners, and thus assignments and evaluation are designed to reflect the importance of these contributions. Because not everyone is comfortable speaking in public, an electronic discussion board moderated by the
Instructors will be available for seminar participants throughout the course, and credit for preparation and class participation (#s 1 and 2 above) may be earned by contributions to the electronic discussion board.

Regarding the research presentation, learners may select any topic of individual interest, so long as it relates to social medicine. Learners may choose whether to prepare and present the topic individually, or with another participant in the course. Evaluation will be based on the depth and quality of the research, as well as the insight demonstrated in connecting the research to the themes of the class and the learning objectives.

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Given the compressed nature of these electives, absences are particularly significant and necessitate a conversation with either of the course instructors.

Plagiarism and cheating contravene the ECU Brody School of Medicine Code of Student Conduct, and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the provisions of the Code. Please familiarize yourself with the definitions of plagiarism and cheating, and contact your instructors if you have any questions or concerns.