



MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

About Us

The Medical Anthropology Program at Wayne State is the oldest in the country. Medical Anthropologists conduct research, teach, and engage in practice relating to health and how health is maintained, experienced, promoted and threatened in groups past and present throughout the world.

The faculty and students in Medical Anthropology at Wayne State share a common commitment to documenting, understanding, and addressing how health and illness are produced in different communities, cultures, and societies. They study how health problems, health inequalities, and health systems are shaped by and reflect specific historical, geographic and political-economic contexts and change over time. Using methods drawn from ethnographic, biomedical, and epidemiological research alike, faculty and students work to generate empirically grounded, conceptually sophisticated, and analytically powerful accounts of people's words and deeds, their aspirations and struggles, their suffering and efforts to address it. They situate these experiences with health and illness within the increasingly interconnected global environment.

Why Study Medical Anthropology?

QUALITATIVE PERSPECTIVE

By documenting individuals' experiences and understandings of health and illness, medical anthropologists shed new light on the complex meanings of suffering and wellbeing.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

By asking questions about how personal experiences are related to large-scale aspects of political economy and culture, medical anthropologists offer critical insights on rethinking and improving policy, treatment, and care.

HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

By considering how health and illness relate to other aspects of life (like labor, politics, kinship, religion), medical anthropologists provide holistic understandings that go beyond diagnostic categories.

Degree Options

The Association of American Medical Colleges' (AAMC) criteria for a successful medical school candidate overlap with the competencies gained through a degree in Medical Anthropology - including cultural competency, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, scientific inquiry, written communication and understanding of human behavior.

Our Medical Anthropology Programs:

- » B.A. in Anthropology
- » Minor in Anthropology
- » Minor in Global Health & Social Medicine
- » M.A. in Anthropology
- » Ph.D. in Anthropology
- » M.D./Ph.D in Anthropology
- » Ph.D. in Social Work & Anthropology (SWAN)

Faculty Expertise

- Aging and the life course
- Care and caregiving
- Chronic illness
- Culture and disability
- Global health
- Infectious disease
- Health and human rights
- Death and dying
- Health care organization
- Environmental health
- Health disparities
- Urban health



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