Course description: The course begins by introducing the students to interdisciplinary and multicultural approaches and theories regarding the study of religion and healing. The course will focus on understanding the experimentation, evaluation, and sacralization of the biosphere in cultures to meet human physical and spiritual needs. We will explore ecofeminism and alternative medicine and their impacts on American religious life, as well as healing traditions in Native American, Mexican, and Haitian cultures. We will examine ecologically grounded theory, spirituality, and ritual in a variety of contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of consciousness in achieving a balance in mind, body, and spirit. We will discuss these issues utilizing texts, class discussions, and multimedia technologies. The second half of the course will be devoted to students’ explorations of medical issues within contemporary American society.

Required texts:

*Pathologies of Power* by Paul Farmer (POP)
*Religion and Healing in America* by Linda L. Barnes and Susan S. Sered (RHA)

Suggested Reading: *The Scapel and the Silver Bear* by Lori Alvord and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt.

Course Requirements:
Attendance is required at all lectures. Class members will be required to submit a one to two page response summary for the weekly readings every Thursday. Responses must be kept in journal format, the first half will be due at mid-term and the second half will be due May 21, 2009.

Midterm examination: April 23, 2009, 2-3 page proposal of final research paper. Turn in first half of journals.

Final: 3-5 minute oral presentation based on your 8-10-page final research paper.

Lecture Topics and Readings
March 31: Intro to the course: Read: *Pathologies of Power* by Farmer, Intro: pp.1-50
April 02: Pestilence and Restraint (POP) pp.51-90.
April 07: Lessons from Chiapas (POP) pp. 91-114.
April 09: A Plague on All Our Houses: Resurgent tuberculosis (POP) pp. 115-133.
April 21: Medicine Ethics in a Global Area (POP) pp. 196-212

**April 23: Paper Proposals Due: Plus first half of journals**

April 30: *RHA*: Space and Time of Illness. pp. 3-26
May 05: *RHA*: Spiritual Healing. pp. 49
May 07: *RHA*: Women and Religion. pp. 71-88
May 14: *RHA*: Latino Pentecostal Healing pp. 123-138


**Second half of Journal Due**

May 26: Oral Presentations and Final Paper Due
May 28: Oral Presentations and Final Paper Due
June 02: Oral Presentations and Final Paper Due
June 04: Oral Presentations and Final Paper Due