

Semester	<b>VII</b>
Course	<b>UG</b>
Paper Code	
Paper Title	<b>EPIDEMICS AND THE WORLD: A SOCIAL HISTORY (Minor Paper for Raghampur Campus)</b>
No. of Credits	<b>4</b>
Theory / Practical / Composite	<b>Theory</b>
Minimum No. of preparatory hours per week a student has to devote	
Number of Modules	<b>2</b>
Syllabus	<p><b>Module 1: The Premodern World: Plague, Perception, and Power (14th-18th Centuries)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 1.1: The Blueprint: The Black Death (14th Century) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: Demographic catastrophe; economic disruption (the "Golden Age of Labourers"); religious responses (flagellants); and scapegoating (persecution of Jews).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 1.2: The Birth of Public Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: The development of quarantine (from the Venetian trentina), lazarettos (pest houses), and cordons sanitaires. The tension between medical advice and economic interests.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 1.3: Plague in the Early Modern World</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: Continuing outbreaks; the role of print culture in spreading news and fear; the rise of "plague tracts" and early medical thought.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 1.4: The Columbian Exchange: The Unintentional Agent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: The catastrophic impact of Old-World diseases (smallpox, measles) on the Indigenous populations of the Americas as a form of unintended biological imperialism.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Module 2: Modernity, Globalization, and Pandemic (19th Century - COVID-19)</b>  This module examines how modernity—with its revolutions in science, industry, and global connectivity—transformed the experience of and response to epidemics, culminating in our contemporary experience of a global pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unit 2.1: Cholera and the Industrial City</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Topics: Disease as a marker of poverty and inequality; the rise of sanitation movements and modern public health; miasma vs. germ theory.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 2.2: The 1918 Influenza: The First Modern Pandemic</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: The role of WWI in global spread; the suppression of news; comparing public health responses across cities; the "forgotten pandemic."</li> <li>• <b>Unit 2.3: The Age of Triumph and Hubris: HIV/AIDS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: The emergence of a new disease; stigmatization of marginalized communities (LGBTQ+, Haitians, hemophiliacs); grassroots activism (ACT UP) and its transformation of medical research and patient advocacy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 2.4: 21st Century Pandemics: SARS, Ebola, and the Specter of Bioterrorism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: Pandemics in a hyper-connected world; the World Health Organization's role; the securitization of health; "outbreak culture."</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Unit 2.5: COVID-19: A Living History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Topics: Synthesizing all course themes: lockdowns and inequality, digital life, misinformation, global vaccine access, and the politics of public health. Is history repeating itself?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This course aims to equip students with the analytical tools to understand epidemics not just as biological events, but as powerful social and political phenomena that reveal and exacerbate underlying inequalities, transform institutions, and shape human behavior.</li> <li>2. By examining a global chronology from the Black Death to COVID-19, students will learn to identify recurring patterns of crisis response—such as scapegoating, disinformation, public health policy, and community solidarity—and evaluate how factors like race, class, and gender dictate vulnerability and resilience.</li> <li>3. Ultimately, the course seeks to foster a critical historical perspective that enables students to contextualize</li> </ol>

	contemporary health challenges within broader patterns of societal stress, adaptation, and change.
Reading/Reference Lists	<p><b>Essential Readings-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberth, John. <i>The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents</i>. 2nd ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.</li> <li>• Barry, John M. <i>The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History</i>. Penguin Books, 2005.</li> <li>• Baldwin, Peter. <i>Contagion and the State in Europe, 1830-1930</i>. Cambridge University Press, 2005.</li> <li>• Mukherjee, Siddhartha. <i>The Laws of Medicine: Field Notes from an Uncertain Science</i>. TED Books, 2015.</li> <li>• Shilts, Randy. <i>And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic</i>. St. Martin's Press, 1987.</li> <li>• Snowden, Frank M. <i>Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present</i>. Yale University Press, 2019. (Highly Recommended as a Course Overview)</li> <li>• Zinn, Howard. <i>A People's History of the United States</i>. Chapter 1. Harper Perennial, 2015. (For Unit 1.4).</li> <li>• Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages (Vol. 2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggested Readings-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tognotti, Eugenia. "Lessons from the History of Quarantine, from Plague to Influenza A." <i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i>, vol. 19, no. 2, 2013, pp. 254–59.</li> <li>• Cohn, Samuel K. "Epidemiology of the Black Death and Successive Waves of Plague." <i>Medical History</i>, Supplement No. 27, 2008, pp. 74–100.</li> <li>• Foucault, Michel. "Panopticism" in <i>Discipline &amp; Punish: The Birth of the Prison</i>. Vintage Books, 1995. (Excerpt).</li> <li>• Sontag, Susan. <i>Illness as Metaphor</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978. (Excerpts).</li> <li>• McNeill, William H. <i>Plagues and Peoples</i>. Anchor Books, 1976. (Excerpts).</li> </ul> <p>Primary Source Collections (Selections will be provided):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boccaccio, Giovanni. <i>The Decameron</i>. (Introduction).</li> <li>• Defoe, Daniel. <i>A Journal of the Plague Year</i>.</li> <li>• Pepys, Samuel. <i>The Diary of Samuel Pepys</i>. (Entries on the Great Plague of London).</li> <li>• Various: Public health decrees, mortality bills, eyewitness accounts, and political speeches from various eras.</li> <li>• Modern: WHO reports, CDC guidelines, and news media from the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>

Evaluation	Theory CIA:5+ Mid Sem:20+ Attendance: 5= 30 Semester Exam: 70	
Paper Structure for Theory Semester Exam	Total Marks: 70 Two modules of 35 marks each. (5 questions of 2 marks from 7 options: 2X5=10 3 questions of 5 marks from 5 options: 5X3=15 1 question of 10 marks from 2 options: 10x1=10)	