

HLT/APS 211 Health in Appalachia, Fall, 2010. Syllabus

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Office hours: MW 2-2:50, TR 3-4, or by appointment.

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Teaching assistant: Kyla Pemberton

Course meets: MW 3-4:50

At various times I will ask to meet with each of you individually or in small groups; these are considered required meeting times, just like classes are.

Special notice!! The Appalachian Center of Berea College is sponsoring a bus trip to Washington, DC, September 25-27, for *Appalachian Rising*, a mass mobilization for lobbying, organizing, and protesting to end mountaintop removal. This will give you a wonderful opportunity to explore the issues of this course, to meet some true Appalachian heroes, to see our government at work, to participate in democracy, and to visit our nation's capital. Details will follow. This will be a fantastic learning opportunity for this course and I strongly urge you to go!

Course description

This course is designed to help you learn and think critically about the health of the people and the environment of central Appalachia. This will be a service-learning course--we will partner with the Kentucky Environmental Foundation to help them research and write a Health Impact Assessment on the effects of coal on the health of the people of Kentucky, in comparison to the health effects of using less energy and/or relying more on renewable forms of energy such as solar and wind. We will then take what we have learned and design and use strategies to teach this material to the people and policy makers of the state, with the intention of improving the health of the people and environment of the region. We will also read and think about social factors such as culture, income, and income inequality, and how these impact health. We will learn and practice the skills of Digital Storytelling, producing short digital pieces to educate and influence others about the concepts of this course.

Sources of learning for the course will include readings, discussion, presentations from college and community experts, library research, the teacher and the teaching partner for the course, films, interviewing, writing, and working in teams with fellow students.

Course goals/objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Begin to define Appalachia, particularly central Appalachia, by geography, ecology, history, cultures, and social assets and problems.
2. Discuss some primary social determinants of health in Appalachia, including stress, poverty, income inequality, and social capital, as well as positive impacts of family and culture, and the mechanisms through which these impact health.
3. Describe how the health of humans is tied to the health of plants, water, other animals, and the land itself.

4. Understand and discuss the many ways in which deep mining, mountain top removal mining, coal transporting, coal processing, and coal burning impact the health of people in central Appalachia.
5. Research, understand, discuss, and write clearly and convincingly about the health and economic impacts of burning less coal and relying more on conservation and renewable energy options. Include in this a discussion of how central Appalachia could make these changes while protecting the employment (and thus financial health) of people presently employed as coal miners.
6. Understand the financial impact of coal mining jobs in Kentucky, past and present, and how that impacts health.
7. Develop the abilities to teach and convince others, from legislators to family members to fellow students to the (other) people of Kentucky, about our class findings on these topics.
8. Describe how laws are made and carried out in Kentucky and how this is affected by federal laws and agencies such as the EPA. Discuss how individuals and organizations can have and have had a role in influencing these processes.
9. Discuss the roles of the coal industry on the health of people in central Appalachia.
10. Discuss why some kinds of social change have been and still are particularly difficult in Kentucky.
11. Discuss and appreciate the roles of people and organizations working to make Kentucky a healthier and more just place. Use this as a counter to the stereotype of Appalachian people as helpless, fatalistic victims.
12. Discuss the role of media makers, including novelists, filmmakers, and news reporters, in changing public opinion and effecting social change, particularly regarding health behaviors, environmental health, and stereotypes of the people of central Appalachia.
13. Discuss the importance of service learning and reflect on how this component of this course has been helpful in your own learning and development.
14. Create effective digital storytelling productions.
15. Strengthen and demonstrate skills in the following:
 - a. critical thinking
 - b. finding, reading, and understanding research papers in health
 - c. writing formal reports for outside agencies and parties
 - d. public speaking, persuasive speaking, and teaching
 - e. working collaboratively in small groups
 - f. working collaboratively with a community partner organization
 - g. digital storytelling as a tool for educating and influencing people
16. Discuss effective next steps in making central Appalachia a region that is healthier, cleaner, safer, and more just for all who live here.

Texts:

Davis, Devra. 2002. *When smoke ran like water: Tales of environmental deception and the battle against pollution*. New York: Basic.

Goodell, Jeff. 2006. *Big coal: The dirty secret behind America's energy future*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Reece, Erik. 2006. *Lost mountain: A year in the vanishing wilderness: Radical strip mining and the devastation of Appalachia*. New York: Riverhead.

You'll need a data CD for turning in your digital story. I strongly suggest that you get and use a thumb drive to back up your computer work every day, especially your developing digital stories.

How to learn and do well in this course:

1. Remember that good learning and good grades come from a good learning attitude and from putting in the time to do your work. You will *be* smart when you practice *acting* smart.
2. Come to class each day, on time, prepared to work. Get enough sleep the night before so that you can stay awake. Look alert and interested. If this is not how you feel, fake it; this often works as a way of changing how you feel and how others perceive you. If you feel sleepy or restless, it is fine to stand up in the back of the room and move your body, as long as you keep paying attention.
3. Participate in class discussions. Even if you are anxious, even if your English is not perfect, class participation is a college skill that you will need to master. The way to get good at it is by practicing it. We will be supportive as you do this.
4. Please get to know the names of your classmates. This will foster better learning community, more effective small group work, and better discussions for all of us.
5. Do your homework thoroughly so that you come to class prepared to contribute. If an assignment is not clear, ask me or a classmate.
6. If you don't understand something in class, please ask questions!! Asking good questions fosters good learning for all of us. I appreciate your questions. I would much rather find out what you don't understand before we get to a test.
7. When it is class time, be in class with 100% of your brain and body. Turn off your cell phone and put it out of your sight; if I see it in class, I may take it away. Don't leave class to take or make a call. Use your laptop only for class-designated activities. (If you need your phone on during some classes for an impending emergency such as a sick child, please let me know at the beginning of class.)
8. If you miss class, I won't have time to give you an individual tutorial on the material. Please set up a buddy system with a classmate so that s/he notices when you aren't in class and takes extra-clear notes for you, and you for them. Make sure you know her/his email address.
9. Take the time to meet with me outside of class; this shows me that you are interested and care about doing well. You can make an appointment, stop by during my office hours, or just catch me before or after class. If we have an appointment, please respect my time by being there, on time, or by cancelling in advance.
10. Use the Learning Center when you need assistance; they are there to help you. It's for everyone who wants to do better work, not just students who have learning difficulties. I recommend asking them for their help with every major assignment, and more often if you need more help.
11. Please check your Berea email every day for possible notices from me. I won't add assignments at the last minute, but may clarify assignments or let you know if there is a change in where the class is going to meet.
12. If you have a problem with the course or my teaching of it, please muster the interest and courage to come talk to me about your concerns and your needs. I want to help you learn in ways that work for you. If you need different ways, please let me know. If you don't understand my methods or ideas, please ask and give me a chance to explain them to you. When you give me respectful feedback on my work, I will respond in kind. Thank you!

Policies:

Academic honesty

All work for this course is governed by the Berea policy on academic honesty. Cheating, which includes copying from either a published or web-published work or another student's work, or any other method of passing off someone else writing or other work as your own, will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of 0 for that assignment and at least one letter grade reduction for the

course. Please read the Berea policy on this. Often work for this course will be collaborative; please see me if you have any questions about the lines between collaboration and honesty.

Assignments

Assignments for the course come in two forms, daily homework and major papers. I will let you know which kind each assignment is.

1. *Daily assignments* are due at the beginning of the class for which each is assigned; these will not be accepted late since the main point is to help you prepare for class. Please bring these to class, typed and printed, so we can use them to support our discussions. Many of these will only be graded as to whether you did them or not, without much feedback from me.

2. *Major projects* are more substantive assignments, often addressing what you have already learned. Please submit them as email attachments, labeling both the email and the attachment with the course number, your name, and the name/subject of the assignment, like this: "236 Jane Smith mining health." They are due at 9 am on the assigned date. Major papers submitted late will lose a grade for each day (or part day) late.

Please put the following on every assignment at the top of the first page: your name, the course number (HLT/APS 211), the date you turn it in, and a title that reflects the content of the assignment. Put your name and the page number on every page.

Absences

By the rules of the Department of Physical Education and Health, missing more than 25% of classes for the semester, *whether excused or unexcused*, will result in automatic failure of the class. You don't want that.

Excused absences: You can apply for an excused absence such as a school-sanctioned field trip or athletic event by giving or sending me a written request stating

1. The dates to be missed.
2. The event and who is sponsoring it, with a note from the professor or coach.
3. How you propose to make up any missed learning activities. (Who will take notes for you in class? When will you get in any assignments due?)

This is due two schooldays before the proposed missed class.

If you want an excused absence for an illness, I need an official note from a professional health practitioner, plus an explanation from you of how and when you propose to make up any learning activities and who took notes for you during class. This is due on the day you return to class after the absence. (If you can email me about the absence before this, please do, so I know why you aren't there.)

If you miss a test or presentation, you will need an MD note or a very good reason, with documentation, to be allowed a make-up.

Unexcused absences: In addition to excused absences, each of you is allowed two classes to miss during the semester with no penalty. Missing more than two will mean a 4-point reduction in your final grade for each additional class missed.

Getting to class after the roll is called is equivalent to missing 1/3 of a class. If you get there late, make sure to check in with me at the end of class to make sure that I count you as late, not absent.

Credit for good attendance: If you miss fewer than two unexcused classes over the course of the semester, you will get extra credit points added to your final grade for each class not missed.

The bottom line is, of course, come to class, on time, prepared to learn.

Disability statement

Students who have a disability that may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Cindy Reed, at (859) 985-3212, or email Cynthia_reed@berea.edu, to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation in this course. Upon request, this syllabus can be made available in alternative forms.

May I use your work to help others learn?

Students sometimes turn in good work that I would like to share with other students and teachers, current or future. For instance, if I give this year's students a particular assignment, I might like to show them examples from the work of last year's students. Before I share it, I take off names and other characteristics that might identify the writer.

I would like to be able to use your work for this purpose. So, *unless you tell me that you object*, I will assume that any paper you turn in to me has your permission for me to share it in this way. If I share it, I promise that I will take off your name and any other features that might identify you as the writer. And I will never share papers with your personal stories, without your permission. *Please let me know if I do not have your permission to share your papers in this way.*

With your digital stories for the course, I will assume that, since you have made them as educational tools, this work, with your name on it as the author and artist, comes with your permission to share it with all others. If this presents problems, please discuss them with me.

Evaluations:

30% of your final grade will come from class and small group participation and daily assignments, including reading quizzes. If the course gets designated as a service-learning course, two of these of these assignments will be reflection papers on the service learning you have done for this course, for a total of 5% of your grade. Many of these assignments will be ungraded; you get full credit for doing them on time or no credit for not doing them on time, with extra credit sometimes possible for doing a great job.

20% of your grade from announced tests and exams

50% of your grade from major projects. I expect that this will be 30% from your section(s) of the Health Impact Assessment and 20% from your digital story project, but we will clarify this as the course develops. Each of these major projects will be done in stages, with feedback along the way and a portfolio due at the end of the project.

See note above for how absences will affect your grade.

I'll give you a page to help you calculate your grade as we go through the semester.

If you want a lot more information about what is currently happening in Appalachia:

To get on the Appalachian Studies (appalnet) listserv, you can email Roy Silver at rsilver@uky.edu. All kinds of things Appalachian-related come across this listserv. It's an active listserv, with several emails each day.

Other Appalachian Center opportunities for the semester (from Chad Berry):

On Sept. 6 from 11:30-1:00, in the Appalachian Center Gallery, Silas House, Donovan Cain, and Abby Cain will do an Appalachian Sampler of reading and music. A light lunch will be served. This is our traditional Labor Day Concert for the start of the semester.

One of the most important things is *Appalachia Rising*, a mass mobilization in Washington, D.C., September 25-27. More information is here: <http://appalchiarising.org/>. I have reserved the College bus, and so we expect to fill it up with students, faculty, and staff. There will be lobbying, organizing, and a massive protest to end mountaintop removal on the Mall. I'd love for the bus to be full capacity. Those interested can email Chad.

On Oct. 13, we'll have another Dinner on the Grounds to welcome the Beehive Collective's new coal poster. This will be a very good event, particularly for students. More details to come. You can also check it out here: <http://www.beehivecollective.org/english/front.htm>. The new poster is called "The True Cost of Coal."

I'm also planning to have film screenings on *Coal Country* and *Bonecrusher*. Both of these films deal with coal and mining. Both are very good, and the filmmakers will be here.

You won't want to miss the Celebration of Traditional Music, October 14-17. We have a great lineup this year, including Sister Lena Mae Perry, a famed African American gospel singer who may just take off the roof of Phelps Stokes. More information can be found here: <http://www.berea.edu/appalachiancenter/ctm/default.asp>.