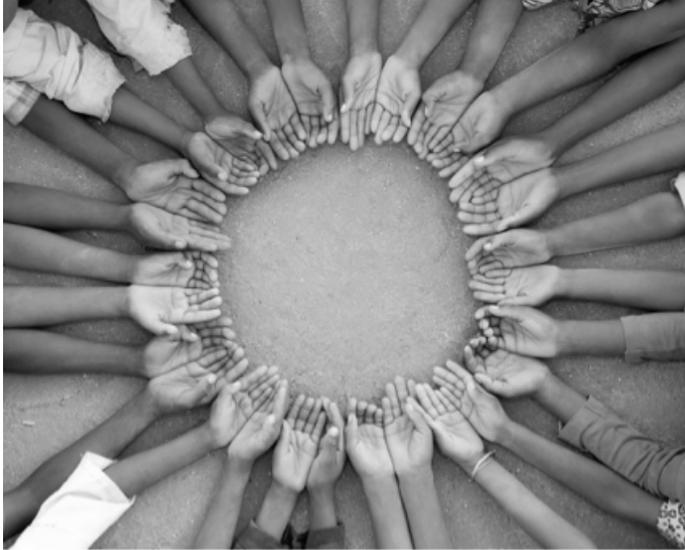


# Bodies Speaking Out: Critical Studies of Health, Disability, and Community Advocacy

Faculty: Eric Stein (anthropology and history), Carolyn Prouty (public health and health sciences)

16 credits (14 credits First year students); All Level; Fall 2024 & Winter 2025



## Meeting times

Tuesdays, 10 - 1; 2 - 4

Wednesdays, 10 - 1

Fridays, 10 - 12; 1- 3

## Possible Readings

- Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*
- Eli Claire, *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*

## Program Description

Health and bodies are inseparable from the historical, cultural, economic, racialized, and social conditions in which we live. How have people and communities come to understand and address the complexity of their embodied experiences of health, including individual and collective well-being, sickness, disability, and healing? What social networks, educational resources, and medical practices have communities created to address their concerns? How can we—as students and practitioners of critical health literacy, anthropology, history, and public health—contribute to their ongoing efforts? At the core of these questions lies an ethics of engagement that places us in the role of listeners, collaborators, and facilitators, recasting more conventional relationships between researchers and subjects, adults and youth, health workers and patients, academics and community members.

Fall quarter builds the theoretical and applied foundations of our studies in health, disability, and community advocacy. Through medical anthropology we

will emphasize the importance of both cultural competency and structural competency: what health practitioners need to know about how a diversity of peoples understand the body, health, and sickness; and how people experience economic, spatial, and socio-political inequalities, in order to effectively care for them. Through public health, we'll examine the social determinants of health: how differential access to resources, agency, and institutional power drive economic, racialized, and other health disparities. Critical disability studies will consider histories of medicalization, stigma, and activism, including ongoing networks of care and mutual aid people with disabilities have established to build community and address needs in the face of institutional limits and discrimination. In this time of social and ecological turbulence, our examination of community resilience and critical hope will provide gateways to explore elements that inspire and sustain resilient transformation, and their connections to action and activism.

Winter quarter will emphasize more intensive scholarship in critical health studies, applied research, and community-based work. For the advanced seminar in medical anthropology, we will read and write about contemporary ethnographies on health disparities and advocacy, developing a grounded, detailed understanding of how peoples' lives are enmeshed in cultural, social, economic, and political realities. Close, focused consideration of individual illness stories will be central to our work in narrative medicine, furthering our understanding of how people's experiences are centered culturally, socially, and historically. Drawing on this work, in our studies of applied anthropology, we will research the complexities of local experiences of sickness, health, and disability and consider engaging in forms of advocacy, intervention, and activism.

This program is coordinated with [Greener Foundations](#) for first-year students. Greener Foundations is Evergreen's in-person 2-quarter introductory student success course sequence, which provides first-year students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive at Evergreen. Students expected to take [Greener Foundations](#) should use CRN 10187 to register for a 2-credit Greener Foundations course in addition to this program for 14-credit.

First-year students who are not expected to take Greener Foundations or have been granted an exemption should use CRN 10186 to register for this program at 16-credits. Find more details about who isn't expected to take Greener Foundations on the [Greener Foundations](#) website.

### **Fall Anticipated Credit Equivalencies**

- 4 - Medical Anthropology
- 4 - Introduction to Public Health
- 4 - Critical Disability Studies
- 2 - Community Resilience Studies
- 2 - Research and Internship Cornerstone (for students not in Greener Foundations)

### **Winter Anticipated Credit Equivalencies**

- 4 - Applied Anthropology
- 4 - Advanced Seminar in Medical Anthropology
- 4 - Narrative Medicine
- 2 - Community Based Learning and Action (4 credits for students not in Greener Foundations)

### **Faculty**



[Eric Stein](#) Ph.D., Anthropology & History  
([steine@evergreen.edu](mailto:steine@evergreen.edu))

Hello Everyone! Since coming to Evergreen in 2007, I have co-taught in programs that explore health, the body, waste, language and power, social media, materiality, ruins, urban planning, and aesthetics and philosophy. My [earlier research](#) studied public health--especially hygiene and family

planning--within the histories of colonialism, decolonization, and nationalism in twentieth century Indonesia. In an ongoing [visual book project](#) on oral history, archival studies, and ethnography, I am thinking through questions of colonialism and decolonization to consider what it would mean to engage in ethically grounded, self-reflexive, collaborative social research. As part of this work, students in my programs often do audio field recording, in-depth interviewing, and podcast design. Recently, I was the faculty scholar at Evergreen's Learning and Teaching Commons; my major project involved collaborating with students to design more accessible and equitable class syllabi. I'm very excited to meet you all, teach with Carolyn, and engage in some embodied thinking together!

Carolyn Prouty, DVM (Public Health & Health Sciences) (proutyc@evergreen.edu) Hi all! I've been teaching at Evergreen since 2009, and I love it. My first career was being a veterinarian, then medical researcher, and now teacher (with a few other excursions along the way). I help students learn about how each of us embodies the world around us—how history, politics, economics, “race”, gender, and dis/ability (and more) affect our bodies. I invite students to use a public health lens to examine how those health impacts are not random, but are patterned on historical and ongoing oppressions. I also love to teach about bodies—how they function (physiology), how things can go wrong (pathology, like diabetes, heart disease, cancer), and how we can heal, at the societal as well as the individual level. It's important to me to welcome every body into my classes, recognizing the wonderful variety of body-minds of human beings. I can't wait to meet you all, to teach with the fabulous Eric Stein again, and go on this learning adventure together!

