

CFE

Winter 2010

**English 275:
Ways of “Knowing”: Health, Illness,
and Identity**

Instructor: Sheila Bock

M W 3:30 - 5:18 PM

25816



This course explores the complex and dynamic nature of health beliefs as they relate to individual and group identities. Using a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, we will examine critically the multiplicity of health beliefs in American culture and the complex ways ideas about health interact with how people identify themselves and others. Central questions we will address include: Where do people learn what they “know” about health and illness? In what ways do individuals (both patients and health professionals) draw upon a variety sources of knowledge as they strive to make sense of health and illness? Which beliefs are given the most credibility in American culture today and why? Which beliefs are most often marginalized and why? How do individuals respond to the ways others categorize their beliefs? Ultimately, students will use the readings and class discussions to inform their understandings of their own experiences with/ perspectives on health and illness. Students will also become familiar with different critical approaches to analysis and interpretation (literary, rhetorical, and folkloric) by examining a variety of textual representations of the human experience. **FULFILLS ARTS & HUMANITIES GEC REQUIREMENT!**