What can the social sciences teach us about the ongoing coronavirus pandemic or the opioid epidemic of the past decade? How can we understand the sources of inequalities in access to care and in health outcomes across populations, both in the United States and globally? What is the significance of varying experiences of illness, categories of disorder, ideals of well-being, and forms of intervention across cultural settings and historical periods? This course introduces students to the social, political, and economic processes that shape individual and population health, as well as to a range of concepts and methods which social scientists use to study these processes. This summer’s class will focus on the case studies of COVID-19 and the opioid epidemic, along with other cases.

Please note that this course is not a continuation of HLTH 17000, but a summer session version of the same class. This course can be used to satisfy the HLTH 17000 requirement for the Health and Society minor. Students who are not currently in the minor are also welcome to take the course as an opportunity to learn about the social sciences of health and medicine.