Health and disease:

How do we know what keeps us healthy, or causes a disease? Who to believe? What is true?

BIOL 100 in Florence, Summer 2016
The Science of Disease

✓ Designed for non-science majors – no background knowledge is expected
✓ Satisfies non-lab science Core requirements

Course Description

- Florence, Italy, and Europe are the birthplaces of scientific thought. It’s a great place to learn how we know what we know. This course aims to make sense of the many claims we are bombarded with – about diets, supplements, miracle cures, what causes cancer, what causes sickness, how to be healthy, etc.
- How did people figure out that bacteria and viruses cause infections? Or that DNA differences cause inherited disorders and cancer?
- How do we figure out the causes of current medical mysteries?
- We will learn through case studies. Bubonic Plague in Florence, Italy in the 14th century and throughout the Renaissance. Syphilis plague, childbed fevers, smallpox, cystic fibrosis, breast cancer, autism, and others.
- Along the way...
  - Learn how cells, genes, viruses, and the immune system works
  - Learn how to evaluate health claims; distinguish pseudo-science from science
  - Learn how to find credible information related to health, disease

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