Have you ever been sick? Taken birth control or seen a psychologist? Felt unease with the existing explanations in psychology? This course will delve into research in all of these areas, while exploring ways you can engage in research after graduation. You will prepare a proposal for a competitive fellowship or grant, such as NSF. Scholars from Emory with very different backgrounds will guide you through their research, examining how reproductive health and sexuality are portrayed by the media, how behaviors evolve through natural selection, how complexity theories force scientists to reconsider the nature of human experience, the perception of mental health in Haiti, how your immune systems fights off respiratory pathogens, and the application of microscopy to neurological disease. This course will include reading and discussions, excursions, and demonstrations. We examine these topics as a basis for conducting research to answer our questions as well as yours.

What do health and popular culture have to do with one another? Where do we get information about health and illness? How do we make sense of and use the information with which are presented? Through an examination of media representations of women’s reproductive health in the US, we will explore the relationship between health, popular culture and gender.

Whitney Peoples, Women’s Studies [Society]

Why do we get a fever when we are sick? What causes us to cough? How do infectious diseases affect you personally as well as the world? Learn about the interactions between your body and pathogens.

Kate Stokes, Immunology, [Organisms]

Is the experience of depression the same worldwide? How do we decide what makes up mental health and ill-health? And how do you measure it? We will explore the expressions and experiences of mental illness in rural Haiti to question what is universal about these disorders and how we construct categories like mental health.

Bonnie Fullard, Anthropology [People]

What is light? What makes things glow? And how can we use these things to look into neurological diseases? We’ll discover how advanced fluorescence microscopy techniques can squeeze every drop of information out of light, and how they can be used to investigate dynamics at the molecular level.

Neil Anthony, Biophysics [Molecules]

Why do we do the things we do? What drives us? Our genes? Our environment? We will explore a new and fascinating shift in the way we think about the causes of human behavior: from simplistic causation to dynamic uncertainty. These new types of theories are called complexity theories. They come to challenge the way we think about the nature of complex behavior, forcing us to reconsider some of the oldest and most beautiful stories told in psychology.

Andrei Popa, Psychology [Complex Systems]