

**SOCIOLOGY 363H1F:
THE SOCIOLOGY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL DISORDERS**

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Time: Tuesday 12-2

Place: SS2135

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Calendar Description

An overview of the link between social inequality and emotional inequality, focusing on differences in mental health across social groups and the role of stress and coping resources in explaining group differences.

Prerequisite

The prerequisite for Sociology 363 is a Sociology 200 level or higher course. Students without the prerequisite will be removed from the course when discovered.

Overview

This course considers the influence of social environment and social experience on mental distress and disorder, focusing especially on differences in mental health by social statuses and across groups, and explanations of these differences in terms of exposure to different types of stress and access to coping resources which counteract the effects of stress.

A sociological perspective on mental health typically uses mental health as a “social mirror” --- an efficient marker which “reflects” the emotional consequences of experience in varying social environments, social conditions, and both social contexts and individual histories in individual’s lives.

The course can be viewed as a logical sequence of issues that arise in considering the experiential course of a person at risk for mental health problems. We begin with the problem of defining and measuring disorder and distress, followed by a consideration of international social patterns in mental health, and then we consider variations in mental health that are related to social position or category, such as social class, gender, race, and

marital status, immigration, and stage of life.

We then introduce the Stress Process model as an organizing framework for explaining the role of social inequality and social experience in mental health. This section introduces the basic components of this model, with an emphasis on varieties of stressors and coping resources. Given a person with a mental health problem, then, the next section considers the life consequences of these problems, focusing as examples on educational marriage, and adult achievement outcomes. Finally, we consider important themes in recent mental health research, focusing this year on the impact of social contexts such as neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools, and communities, the impact of macro-stressful events, such as 9/11, and mental health in the age of electronic connectedness.

My approach in this course is to consider the better-known and/or most prevalent disorders and problems, including depression, anxiety disorders, and substance abuse in particular. We do not restrict our attention to disorders, however. A good deal of the important differences in mental health in a population are not captured by only focusing on disorder. I will discuss mental health issues in terms of a gradient of problems from the minor to the severe, thus including those with real problems but who do not qualify for specific diagnoses. Studying the full range of mental health is important to a sociological approach, since the full distribution of mental health is a sensitive indicator of sources of social disadvantage and inequality.

Required Work

Tests

I will give one term test (short-answer), two pop quizzes in class, and a final exam. Note that the test and the final are *non-cumulative*. The two in-class quizzes will occur in one class before the first test, and another after the first test. They will be short, and take only a few minutes. Each test is worth 5 points: signing your name is worth 3 points; answering a question about the previous class will add 1 point, and answering a question about the current class will add 1 point.

The term test will be short answer only, but the final will be short answer plus one short essay, based on your choice of two questions. The short-answer sections of tests are somewhat unique in format. Basically, types of responses vary by the type of question. Some questions are multiple choice, some are fill-in-the-blank, some ask you to choose the correct word to complete a sentence, and some require a phrase or sentence response. Questions focus on evaluating your awareness and understanding of the basic theories, concepts, hypotheses, and findings discussed *in both readings and lectures*. No short-answer questions necessitating an "opinion" to be defended will be included.

Term Work

Term work this year has been simplified, compared to past years. Instead of writing a paper, you will post comments on the readings online. Each comment is a few paragraphs in length – no more. You will be responsible for a total of six comments on *highlighted readings in the reading list*. Only the highlighted readings are available, but there are ten readings to select from.

You will post *at least* two readings before the first test. Your grade on the first two comments will be reported to you at the same time as the term test. T.A.s will grade comments as a group, rather than one by one. This is fairer, and more reliable as well. Guidelines about comments will be posted on the Blackboard web site.

All comments are due before 12 noon on the day of class where that reading is assigned. Once that reading has been discussed in class, you cannot post on that reading. You will post comments on the Journals section of the Blackboard web site.

Comments can raise critical questions, argue for the importance of the reading and its contribution, suggest what is missing and should be considered, connect the reading to other readings, or propose research which follows up the reading and resolves questions in the reading or tests the generality of findings in the reading. These comments should mention the parts of the paper that led to the comment you make, but you also need to be clear that you have read the entire paper. Each comment you submit should be about two to four paragraphs single-spaced.

Reading

Readings are listed by topic in the reading list. All readings will be posted on Blackboard. Note two important issues about these readings: 1) readings highlighted in green are the only readings available for posting comments. You must select from these readings; 2) Optional readings in some sections can be used for comments, but will not be formally included as material for exams. In some cases, I will cover some material from the optional readings in class. Exam questions on optional readings will be restricted to whatever is covered in class.

Due Dates for Work:

Provisional due dates for required work are as follows:

Work	Date	Weights
1. 6 posted comments, at least 2 before term test	Before noon day of class	5% each
2. Term test	October 18	25%
3. Two pop quizzes in class	unknown	10%
4. Final exam	exam period	35%

Please note: There are no late comments. There is plenty of choice available in submitting

comments. If you fail to submit 6 comments, you will lose 5% for every comment not submitted.

Seminar Tutorial

Later in the semester we will hold up 2 or 3 voluntary tutorial seminars. Time and place will be announced. The idea of these seminars is to allow students to make comments, ask questions, or express a perspective in a smaller group setting. This is voluntary; you will sign up for these tutorials and it will be first-come, first-served.

Blackboard

Blackboard will be used in this course primarily for three purposes: 1) I will post required readings beyond the textbook there; 2) You will post comments about readings on the discussion board; and 3) I will post most lecture Power Point materials there.

Required Reading

I have decided not to use a textbook in this course this year. Instead, all required readings will be posted on the course website. This will include a mixture of chapters from books and journal articles.

Class slides will also be posted online. They are quite detailed, but not detailed enough to understand without attending class.

Class Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Section / Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>
September 13	1. Sociological Approach	Aneshensel
September 20	2.1 and 2.2 Definition and Measurement	Wakefield Wheaton
September 27	3.1 Patterns 3.2 Social Class	Kessler (both), Lee Eaton
October 4	3.3 Gender 3.4 Marriage and Relationships Status	Rosenfield and Smith Williams et al. Simon (both)
October 11	3.5 Race, Immigration 3.6 Age and the Life Course	Brown Hughes Montazer and Wheaton Mirowsky and Ross
October 18	<i>Term Test</i>	

October 25	4.1 and 4.2 Stress	Turner Wheaton Wheaton et al
November 1	4.2 and 4.3 Stress and Coping	Kawachi and Berkman Mirowsky and Ross Ross and Mirowsky Taylor and Brown
November 8	FALL BREAK	
November 15	5.1 Life Consequences	Breslau Kessler
November 22	5.2 Social Contexts	Aneshensel Leventhal
November 29	5.3 Social Media	Pantic Kross et al.
December 6	5.4 Mass Violence and Disasters	Wheaton and Montazer McGinty Walkup and Rubin

Student Accommodations

Please see me if you have a disability or other need that requires accommodation or classroom modification. I will be glad to help you in whatever way I can.

Missed Deadlines

In case of **illness**, you must supply a duly completed **Verification of Student Illness** or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. The original form must be given to me in person, within 10 business days, with the opportunity for me to make a Xerox copy. Forms that are scanned or Xeroxed will not be accepted.

If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). Academic Integrity

Students are expected to know and adhere to the University's principles of academic integrity. Any act of plagiarism or other unethical behavior will be addressed in accordance with University guidelines. Students should be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second course, is considered an academic offense. Please see the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters"

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) for specific information on academic integrity at the U of T.

Appointments

I do not hold specific office hours. Instead, you can phone the number on the first page and arrange an appointment at any time, or email me to set up an appointment. I am in my office on most days.

TOPICS/READING LIST

1. THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH.

Carol S. Aneshensel, Jo C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman. "The Sociology of Mental Health: Surveying the Field." Pp. 1-23 in Carol S. Aneshensel, Jo, C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman (eds.). *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*. New York: Springer, 2013.

2. DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF MENTAL DISORDER AND DISTRESS

Jerome C. Wakefield. 2010. "The Measurement of Mental Disorder." Pp. 20-45 in Scheid and Brown, (eds.) *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health, Second Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wheaton, Blair. 2007. "The twain meet: distress, disorder and the continuing conundrum of categories." *Health* 11(3):303-319.

3. THE SOCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF MENTAL HEALTH

3.1 Epidemiological Patterns

Kessler, Ronald C., Patricia A. Berglund, Olga Demler, Robert Jin, Kathleen R. Merikangas and Ellen E. Walters. 2005. "Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication." *Archives of General Psychiatry* 62(6):593-602.

Kessler, Ronald C., et al., 2007. "Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of mental disorders in the World Health Organization's World Mental Health Survey Initiative" *World Psychiatry*: 168-176.

Lee, Sing, Adley Tsang, Ming-Yuan Zhang, Yue-Qin Huang, Yan-Ling He, Zhao-Rui Liu, Yu-Cun Shen and Ronald C. Kessler. 2007. "Lifetime prevalence and inter-cohort variation in DSM-IV disorders in metropolitan China." *Psychological Medicine* 37(1):61-71.

3.2 Social Class

William W. Eaton, Carles Muntaner, and Jaime C. Sapag. 2010. "Socioeconomic Stratification and Mental Disorder." Pp. 226-256 in Scheid and Brown, (eds.) *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health, Second Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

3.3 Gender

Sarah Rosenfield and Dena Smith. "Gender and Mental Health: Do Men and Women Have Different Amounts or Types of Problems?" Pp. 256-268 in Scheid and Brown, (eds.) *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health, Second Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

3.4 Marriage and Relationships

Kristi Williams, Adrienne Frech, and Daniel Carlson. "Marital Status and Mental Health." Pp. 306-320 in Scheid and Brown, (eds.) *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health, Second Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Simon, Robin 2002. "Revisiting the Relationships among Gender, Marital Status, and Mental Health." *The American Journal of Sociology* 107:4 (1065-1096) .

Simon, Robin, and Anne Barrett. 2010. "Nonmarital Romantic Relationships and Mental Health in Early Adulthood: Does the Association Differ for Women and Men?". *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 51: 168-182.

3.5 Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Tony N. Brown. "Race, Nativity, Ethnicity, and Cultural Influences in the Sociology of Mental Health." Pp. 255-276 in Carol S. Aneshensel, Jo, C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman (eds.). *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*. New York: Springer, 2012.

Hughes, M., Kiecolt, K. J., Keith, V. M., & Demo, D. H. (2015). Racial identity and well-being among African Americans. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 0190272514554043

Shirin Montazer and Blair Wheaton. 2011. "The Impact of Generation and Country of Origin on the Mental Health of Children of Immigrants." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 52: 23-42.

Optional:

Mabry, J. B., & Kiecolt, K. J. (2005). "Anger in black and white: Race, alienation, and anger." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 46(1), 85-101.

Marie-Pier Joly, and Blair Wheaton. 2015. "The Impact of Armed Conflict in the Country of Origin on Mental Health after Migration to Canada." *Society and Mental Health* 5: 86-105.

3.6 Age and the Life Course

Mirowsky, John, and Catherine Ross. 2010. "Well-Being Across the Life Course." Pp. 361-383 in Scheid and Brown, (eds.) *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health, Second Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

4. EXPLANATIONS OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCES

4.1 The Stress Process Model

Blair Wheaton. 2009. "The Stress Process as a Successful Paradigm:." Pp. 231-252 in William R. Avison, Carol S. Aneshensel, Scott Schieman, and Blair Wheaton (eds.), *Advances in the Conceptualization of the Stress Process*. New York: Springer.

R. Jay Turner. 2009. "Understanding Health Disparities: The Promise of the Stress Process Model." Pp. 3-22 in William R. Avison, Carol S. Aneshensel, Scott Schieman, and Blair Wheaton (eds.), *Advances in the Conceptualization of the Stress Process*. New York: Springer.

4.2 Stress

Blair Wheaton, Marisa Young, Shirin Montazer, and Katie Stuart-Lahman. 2012. "Social Stress in the 21st Century." Pp. 299-325 in Carol S. Aneshensel, Jo, C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman (eds.). *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*. New York: Springer, 2013.

4.3 Coping Resources and Coping Behavior.

Kawachi, I., & Berkman, L. F. (2001). Social ties and mental health. *Journal of Urban Health*, 78(3), 458-467.

John Mirowsky and Catherine E. Ross. "Control or Defense?: Depression and the Sense of Control over Good and Bad Outcomes." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 31, 1990: 71-86.

Taylor, Shelley E.; Brown, Jonathon D. "Illusion and well-being: A social psychological perspective on mental health." *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 103(2), Mar 1988, 193-210.

Ross, Catherine E., and John Mirowsky. 1989 "Explaining the Social Patterns of Depression: Control and Problem-solving or Support and Talking." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 30(2,Jun): 206-19.

5. SPECIAL TOPICS

5.1 Life Consequences Of Mental Health Problems

Breslau, Joshua, Michael Lane, Nancy Sampson and Ronald C. Kessler. 2008. "Mental disorders and subsequent educational attainment in a US national sample." *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 42(9):708-716.

Kessler, Ronald C., Hagop S. Akiskal, Minnie Ames, Howard Birnbaum, Paul Greenberg, Robert M. A. Hirschfeld, Robert Jin, Kathleen R. Merikangas, Gregory E. Simon and Philip S. Wang. 2006. "Prevalence and effects of mood disorders on work performance in a nationally representative sample of U.S. workers." *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 163(9):1561-1568.

5.2 Social Contexts

Carol Aneshensel . 2009. "Neighborhood as a Social Context of the Stress Process." Pp. 35-50 in William R. Avison, Carol S. Aneshensel, Scott Schieman, and Blair Wheaton (eds.), *Advances in the Conceptualization of the Stress Process*. New York: Springer.

Leventhal, Tama, et al., 2003. "Moving to Opportunity: an Experimental Study of Neighborhood Effects on Mental Health." *American Journal of Public Health* 93: 1576-1582.

Optional:

Melissa H. Milkie. and Catherine H. Warner. 2011. "Classroom Learning Environments and the Mental Health of First Grade Children." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 52: 4-22.

5.3 Social Media and Mental Health

Igor Pantic. 2014. "Online Social Networking and Mental Health." *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 17: 652-657.

Ethan Kross , Philippe Verduyn, Emre Demiralp, Jiyoung Park, David Seungjae Lee, Natalie Lin, Holly Shablack, John Jonides, Oscar Ybarra. 2013 "Facebook Use Predicts Declines in Subjective Well-Being in Young Adults". *PLOS / One* *: 1-6.

5.4 Mass Violence and Disasters

Wheaton, Blair, and Shirin Montazer. 2016. "The Impact of 9/11 on the Subjective Welfare of Mid to Later Life Americans." Draft.

Emma E. McGinty, M.S., Daniel W. Webster, Sc.D., M.P.H., and Colleen L. Barry, Ph.D., M.P.P. 2013. Effects of News Media Messages About Mass Shootings on Attitudes Toward Persons With Serious Mental Illness and Public Support for Gun Control Policies . *American Journal of Psychiatry* 170: 494-501.

John T. Walkup, M.D., and David H. Rubin, M.D. 2013. Social Withdrawal and Violence — Newtown, Connecticut. *New England Journal of Medicine* 368: 399-401.

Optional

Sandro Galea, Chris R. Brewin, Michael Gruber, Russell T. Jones, Daniel W. King, Lynda A. King, Richard J. McNally, Robert J. Ursano, Maria Petukhova, Ronald C. Kessler, "Exposure to Hurricane-Related Stressors and Mental Illness After Hurricane Katrina." *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 2007: 64(12):1427-1434.