

University of Toronto – Department of Sociology  
Summer 2017

**SOC 364H1S**  
**Urban Health**

Tuesdays 12:00 to 14:00  
Thursdays 12:00 to 14:00

Instructor: Brigid Burke

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Classroom: SS 1087

Office hours: Thursday, 9:30 – 11:30am (or by appointment)

Room 391 (Department of Sociology – 725 Spadina Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)

Blackboard/Course website: Access via U of T portal: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>

Teaching Assistant: Ali Rodney ([ali.rodney@utoronto.ca](mailto:ali.rodney@utoronto.ca))

**Course Description**

Biomedical approaches have traditionally focused on individual risk factors influencing health and health disparities. Sociologists have challenged this approach, demonstrating the importance of social conditions in shaping health outcomes. In this course, we will examine the relevance of cities, as social contexts influencing health seeking behaviours, as well as the health risks, protections and services that individuals experience. Applying a social determinants of health model, we will explore the relevance of different social contexts and social statuses in shaping health outcomes and experiences, and apply a sociological lens to critically analyse how we might address different social problems so as to improve the health of urban populations.

*Prerequisites:* Completion of 1.0 SOC FCE at the 200 or higher level is required to take this course. Students without prerequisites can be removed at any time without notice.

**GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

In this course, students will learn how to:

1. Apply a social determinants of health model to analyse urban health.
2. Interrogate the role of different axes of inequality in shaping individual/population health.
3. Explore various social problems/aspects of urban life and their impact on health.
4. Engage in critical thinking, apply course and lecture materials to engage in a sociological analysis, and develop recommendations for addressing urban health problems.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

1. *In-Class Exercises.* Students will participate in two in-class assignments that give them practice applying the weekly readings to analyse lecture material. The goal of these exercises is to assess a student's participation and effort in learning the materials. Thus students will receive 2.5 points for completing the exercise and 2.5 points for demonstrating their understanding of the week's material.
2. *Reading Response:* Students will write one reading response where they apply the course readings and lecture material to analyse a recent investigative journalism article. This assessment will provide students an opportunity to engage in critical thought and analyse how the course readings challenge, support or add to the understanding of the issue presented in the article provided. Students must also identify a question for further research based on their analysis. The assignment must be between 500 and 800 words, for a total of 10 points. All reading responses must be uploaded to blackboard by the start of class (12:00) on June 20<sup>th</sup>.
3. *Research Paper.* Students will identify an urban health problem they feel deserves more attention, based on one of the general topics covered in the course. They will situate the problem within four to six academic research articles that address the same (or similar) topic, in addition to those covered as part of the course. They will analyse the problem in relation to the social determinants of health, and using a critical lens develop a sociological argument for what should be done to address the issue. The assignment must be between 6-8 pages double spaced and must be submitted in-person at the start of class on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. (A class handout will provide more details.)
4. *In-class Tests.* Students will write 3 in-class tests assessing their understanding of the readings and lecture materials. The tests will be a mix of multiple choice, true/false, short answer and definition questions. Test 1 will primarily cover material from Section 1. Test 2 will primarily cover material from Section 2. Test 3 will primarily cover material from Section 3.

## GRADING SUMMARY

2 In-Class exercises (5 points each)	10 points	T.B.D.
Test 1	20 points	July 13 <sup>th</sup>
Reading Response	10 points	July 20 <sup>th</sup>
Test 2	20 points	July 27 <sup>th</sup>
Research Paper	20 points	August 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Test 3	20 points	August 10 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>	

## CLASS FORMAT AND ATTENDANCE

This class will be based on lecture and discussion. The instructor will present and explain the relevant points and major arguments of the weekly materials. Students must come to class having read the assigned material and are encouraged to participate by either asking questions or providing commentary. In this way, the class can become an intellectual dialogue or conversation among class participants.

Attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for obtaining information about any announcements that may have been made in class as well as notes on the material covered from their classmates.

## PROCEDURES AND RULES

### Course Webpage

The course syllabus, links to all the readings that are in journal article form, handouts, and course announcements will be posted on Blackboard. You are responsible for all the course materials and for all announcements. Please make sure to check your official utoronto.ca email addresses as well as the course Blackboard page regularly.

### Electronic communication and electronic learning technology

You are encouraged to use email communication to enhance your learning and experience in the course. With that said, it is essential that you follow a few rules:

- Assignments will not be accepted via email. See above for how to submit them.
- All course communication should be conducted through Blackboard or your utoronto email.
- All emails must include the course code (i.e. SOC 364) in the subject line.
- All emails should be signed with the student's full name and student number.
- Emails from students will generally be answered within 48 hours of receipt (except on weekends or holidays).
- All emails should be treated as a form of professional communication.
- Emails that ask questions that are answered in the course syllabus or website (e.g., "how much is assignment X worth; when is the assignment due; when is the test...") will not receive a response.
- Emails must identify a specific question or concern. Students asking questions that are very involved or in-depth may be asked to visit office hours to receive a full response.  
**\*Emails that do not follow these guidelines will not receive a response.**

### Grade Appeals

Students who are dissatisfied with their test grades have one week to address their concerns, in writing, to the teaching assistant. Students contesting a grade will submit a 1-2 page typed document to the TA, outlining why the grade is believed to be inappropriate. The teaching assistant will then review the claim and respond in writing, either by email or hard copy.

Students who remain unhappy with the response should make an appointment with me to review the case.

### Missed Deadlines

Late work will receive a **5% late penalty off the assignment grade for each day past the due date.**

In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed **Verification of Student Illness or Injury form** (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://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 recommended you always advise your 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. Please see the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" 6 (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) for specific information on academic integrity at the U of T.

### Accessibility and Student Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and visit the Accessibility Services Office (<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>) as soon as possible.

### Writing Support

Students are urged to seek assistance from the University of Toronto writing centre should they anticipate problems in this area. The writing centre can be visited on the web at: <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/centres.html>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### SECTION 1

July 4<sup>th</sup>

Course Overview and Theoretical Framework

1. Fitzpatrick, Kevin M. and Mark LaGory. 2003. "Placing 'Health' in an Urban Sociology: Cities as Mosaics of Risk and Protection." *City and Community*. 2(1):33-46.
2. Link, Bruce G., and Jo Phelan. 1995. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 35: 80-94.
3. Farmer, Paul. 1996. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A view from Below." *Daedalus*. 125(1): 261-283.

July 6<sup>th</sup>

Health Care Access and Utilization

1. Harrington, Daniel W., Mark W. Rosenberg, and Kathi Wilson. 2014. "Comparing Health Status and Access to Health Care in Canada's Largest Metropolitan Areas." *Urban Geography*. 35 (8): 1156-1170
2. Asanin, Jennifer, & Wilson, Kathi. 2008. "I spent nine years looking for a doctor": Exploring access to health care among immigrants in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. *Social Science & Medicine*. 66: 1271–1283.
3. Freeman HP. 2004. "A model patient navigator program" *Oncol Issues*. 19: 44-47

July 11<sup>th</sup>

Neighbourhoods

1. Hill, Terrence D. and David Maimon. 2013. "Neighborhood Context and Mental Health." Pp. 479- 501 in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 2nd Edition, edited by C. S. Aneshensel, J. C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman. New York: Springer
2. Diez Roux, A. V. and Mair, C. (2010), "Neighborhoods and health". *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 1186: 125–145.
3. Ross, C., & Mirowsky, J. (2001). "Neighborhood Disadvantage, Disorder, and Health". *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 42(3), 258-276. (Recommended)

**July 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Test 1**

SECTION 2

July 18<sup>th</sup>

Race and Immigration

1. Williams, David R & Michelle Sternthal. (2010). "Understanding Racial-ethnic Disparities in Health: Sociological Contributions." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 51: 15-28
2. Senese, L.C., & Wilson, K. (2013) "Aboriginal Urbanization and Rights in Canada: Examining implications for health". *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 91: 219-228
3. Simich, L., PhD., Wu, F., M.S.W., & Nerad, S., M.S.W. (2007). "Status and health security: An exploratory study of irregular immigrants in Toronto". *Canadian Journal of Public Health*. 98(5): 369-73

**July 20<sup>th</sup>**

Gender and Sexuality

1. Frye, V., Putnam, S., & O'Campo, P. (2008). "Whither gender in urban health?" *Health and Place*. 14(3): 616-622
2. Popkin, S., Leventhal, T., & Weismann, G. (2010). "Girls in the 'Hood: How safety affects the life chances of low-income girls". *Urban Affairs Review*. 45(6): 715-744
3. Carpiano, Richard M and Brian C Kelly, Adam Easterbrook & Jeffrey T Parsons. (2011). "Community and Drug Use among Gay Men: The Role of Neighborhoods and Networks." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 52(1):74

**Reading Response Due**

July 25<sup>th</sup>

Children and Youth

1. Kimbro, R.T., Brooks-Gunn, J. & McLanahan, S. 2011. "Young Children in urban areas: Links among neighbourhood characteristics, weight status, outdoor play and television watching." *Social Science and Medicine*. 72(5): 668-676
2. Aneshensel, CS, Sucoff CA. 1996. "The neighborhood context of adolescent mental health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 37:293-310
3. Molnar, Beth E., Magdalena Cerda, Andrea L. Roberts, and Stephen L. Buka. 2008. "Effects of Neighborhood Resources on Aggressive and Delinquent Behaviors among Urban Youths." *American Journal of Public Health* 98(6):1086-93.

**July 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Test 2**

SECTION 3

August 1<sup>st</sup>

Food and Food Security

1. Walker et al. 2010. "Disparities and Access to Healthy Food in the United States: A Review of Food Deserts Literature", *Health and Place*. 16(5): 876-884
2. Cannuscio, C., Weiss, E., & Asch, D. (2010). "The contribution of urban foodways to health disparities". *Journal of Urban Health*. 87(3), 381-393
3. Wakefield, Sarah, et al. 2007. "Growing Urban Health: Community Gardening in South-East Toronto." *Health Promotion International*. 22(2): 92-101.

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Housing and Homelessness

1. Jacobs, D. E., PhD. (2011). "Environmental health disparities in housing". *American Journal of Public Health*. 101: S115-22
2. Hwang, Stephen W. 2001. "Homelessness and Health". *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. 164(1): 229-33.
3. Lazarus, L. et al. 2011. "Risky Health Environments: Women sex workers' struggles to find safe, secure and non-exploitative housing in Canada's poorest postal code". *Social Science and Medicine*. 73(11): 1600-1607

**Essay Due**

August 8<sup>th</sup>

Drugs and the Opioid Crisis

1. Canadian Public Health Association. (2016) "The Opioid Crisis in Canada". [http://www.cpha.ca/uploads/policy/opioid-statement\\_e.pdf](http://www.cpha.ca/uploads/policy/opioid-statement_e.pdf)
2. Kerr, T. et al. 2017. "Supervised injection Facilities in Canada: Past, present and future". *Harm Reduction Journal*. 14(28):1-9
3. Netherland, J., & Hansen, H. (2016). "The war on drugs that Wasn't: Wasted whiteness, "Dirty doctors," and race in media coverage of prescription opioid misuse". *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*. 40(4): 664-686

**August 10<sup>th</sup> Test 3**