SOC 6022H Sociology of Health & Illness  Summer 2018

(Mid-May to end of June: Two days per week, 2-hours per day)

Instructor: William Magee, Associate Professor

Medical sociologists work in diverse settings (e.g. NGOs, hospitals, public health organizations, academic departments at universities, etc.). Research in the field also employs many different methods and theoretical orientations. This course surveys the field. Since we will be on a compressed schedule (i.e. 12 classes over 6 weeks), most writing assignments will be relatively short. Moreover, readings are assigned for only 8 of the 12 classes. Two of the classes will be dedicated to “catching up. In the first class and last class you will discuss your research interests, and how the course material jibes with your interests. The last will be devoted to sharing ideas and projects outlined in the final paper.

Summary of Evaluation:

Take Home Quiz 1 - 20% : Distributed Thursday of week 5, due 3 days later

Take Home Quiz 2 - 20% : Distributed @ Final Class, due 3 days later

Reaction Papers (3 pages, for 2 classes @ 5% each) - 10%

In-class Overview of Readings & Issues (7% each week, for 3 classes) - 21%

Research Connections Paper (about 7 pages, excluding references & cover) - 20%

Attendance & Verbal Participation - 9%

Detailed Description of Evaluation

Attendance & Participation: Attendance at all classes is expected. It is also expected that you will be able to respond knowledgeably to questions about the readings when asked, and give your opinion about issues raised in the readings. If you have to miss class, it is good form to notify the instructor in advance. If you miss a more than one class due to illness, or if you miss any class when you are scheduled to present for that reason, you must submit a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (see below).

In-class Overview of Readings & Issues (3 times): Outline the most important issues raised in (or by) all the readings for the week. Although this will require some amount of review and descriptive summary, you should also place issues raised in the readings in broader historical and theoretical context. For example, historical trends in economic inequality provide relevant context for thinking about the association of inequality with health). Your presentation should outline and critique focal research questions or theoretical issues address in the specific papers,
methodology, or policy implications. You should be prepared to present for 20 minutes, perhaps in 10-minute segments, interspersed with discussion. Handouts and or overheads (or both) are required.

Reaction Papers: For two of the classes that you are not assigned to do an in-class presentation you will write 3 pages that provide your reflections about theoretically or methodologically relevant topics raised in two or more of the assigned readings. You might be assigned a topic for a reaction paper. Penalty for late submission is 1 point per day (out of the 6 allotted).

Research Connections Paper: There is not enough time in this compressed course to expect you to write a decent research paper, but it is important for you to try to connect some of the material in the course to a topic you hope to pursue. Topics must be approved after an individual meeting. Marking: The main criteria for marking will be logical coherence and innovation or insight. However, part of the credit will be allocated on the basis of technical aspects of writing (i.e., grammar, sentence structure, references, etc.). Penalty for late submission is 1 point per weekday.

Take Home Quizzes: These quizzes will be constructed to mimic two comprehensive exam questions, and the time allotted will be about the same given students taking those exams (i.e. they get about 1.5 days per question, you will get twice that – 3 days). Answers should be 4-5 pages long, double-spaced, excluding references and cover page. To mimic the comps, there will be no extensions. Students with documented serious illness, or serious personal problem you will be given a different set of questions, at a later time.

Illness: Please note that requests for medically based exemptions from deadlines must be accompanied by 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, with the opportunity for me to make a hard copy. Forms that are scanned or xeroxed may not be accepted. The university will accept documentation of medical matters only on the U of T Verification of Illness or Injury form, which may only be completed only by a physician, surgeon, nurse practitioner, dentist or clinical psychologist.

Reading List & Course Schedule
The following is a tentative reading list.

I. Broad Trends in Health & Mortality

Week 1. Class 1

Overview & Introductions

Hannah Bradby. 2016. Research Agenda in Medical Sociology. Frontiers in Sociology, 1, 14,
1-4.

Suggestion: briefly review an undergrad text on medical sociology or sociology of health and illness

Scheduling of reaction papers and in-class overviews

Week 1 class 2:

**Epidemiology, Public Health, Medicine & Medicalization**


[https://www.brookings.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/casedeaton_sp17_finaldraft.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/casedeaton_sp17_finaldraft.pdf)

World Health Organization “Summary, & Road Traffic Injuries” pp 173-181 in *Health in 2015: from MDGs to SDGs* in "Chapter 8: Injuries & Violence".


II. Life Course & Health in Context

Week 2, class 3:

**Lifecourse & Illness: Micro to Macro Issues**

Michael EJ Wadsworth and Diana Kuh. 2016. "Epidemiological Perspectives on the Life


**Week 2, Class 4**

**“Fundamental Causes” and “Social Determinants of Health”: Social Positions, Mediation & Moderating Processes & Health**


Bradley R Crammond & Gemma Carey. 2016 "What Do We Mean by ‘Structure’ when We Talk About Structural Influences on the Social Determinants of Health Inequalities?". *Social Theory & Health*:1-15.


**Week 3, class 5**

**Politics, Governance & Health: A Sampling of Levels & Contexts**


Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English. from "Complaints & Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness." Pp 11-24


Take Home Quiz 1 distributed - due in 3 days

**Week 3, Class 6:**
**Integration & Discussion**

We will “catch up”, take stock, further integrate readings, discuss final paper topics, and discuss take-home test.

Discussion newspaper / non-academic magazine articles – e.g.:
“In Sweden, Hundreds Of Refugee Children Gave Up On Life”

Students are asked to identify articles ahead of time.

Plan student-selected readings for week 12: Each student will identify an academic reading in the "sociology of health" area, not listed on this syllabus, that they think particularly important or interesting for themselves & other students in this course to read and discuss for week 11 (e.g. selections from Health Area comp list, etc.).

**III. Cultural & Structural Considerations in Relation to Embodiment & Agency**

**Week 4, class 7**

Sociomateriality & Practices: Body Parts, Medicines, Cigarettes, Lifestyles, Health & Illness Behaviors, etc.

Nikolas Rose. 2007. “Molecular biopolitics, somatic ethics and the spirit of biocapital” Social Theory & Health 5: 3-29. [http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7755576](http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7755576)


Week 4, class 8:

Health, Healthiness, Healthism: Regulating Health & Fitness


**Week 5, class 9**

**Self, Symbolic Interaction, and Illness Experience: From to Cultural Discourse, and Back**


Week 5, class 10:

Issues related to Mental Health

A separate course focuses on mental health. These readings represent a select sampling of issues that resonate with some previously readings from previous weeks.


Week 6, class 11

Integration, Discussion & Student Selected Readings

Catch up (e.g. with any lagged presentations).

Discuss Teaching of Sociology of Health & Illness

Week 6, class 12

Final Paper Discussion & Future Directions

Schedule & format TBD

Take Home Quiz 2 distributed - due in 3 days