

Urban Health

Course code: SOC335H1F

Course info: Fall 2021 Wednesday 310p-6p

Instructor: Jason Edward Pagaduan (Jason.pagaduan@mail.utoronto.ca)

Classroom: TF201

Teaching Assistant: Olimpia Bidian (olimpia.bidian@mail.utoronto.ca)

The university operates on the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Although I am grateful for the opportunity to work on this land, I acknowledge that this opportunity stems from a history of broken treaties, violence, and colonialism.

Course description:

What is the relationship between social conditions and health? How does urban social context affect health and well-being? How does the state preconfigure who lives and who dies? Rather than focusing on individual approaches to health and inequality we examine how social context shapes health outcomes. We will draw on the social determinants of health model and apply it to relevant contexts such as food security, neighbourhoods, and health-seeking behaviour. We will also examine how features of everyday life influence physical and mental health. Finally, we critically interrogate social constructions of health, health-seeking behaviour, illness, and disease.

Since this is a program-level course, the third hour of our weekly courses will focus on skills development workshops: methods and research design, academic and non-academic writing, as well as presentation skills.

Learning goals and outcomes:

- 1) Identify and apply the social determinants of health model to issues of individual and population health
- 2) Recognize how different axes of inequality shape lived experiences of various aspects of urban life (colonialism, food security, housing, etc.)
- 3) Critically interrogate social constructions of health, illness, and disease
- 4) Develop research skills and methodological toolkit

Prerequisites:

This course is restricted to sociology majors and specialists. Completion of the following courses: Classical Theory (SOC201), Intro to Quant Methods (SOC202), Intro to Qual Methods (SOC204), and 1.0 credits of: Contemporary Theory (SOC251) Intermediate Quant Methods (SOC252), and Intermediate Qual Methods (SOC254). Students without the necessary prerequisites can be removed at any time.

Evaluation:

Final grades for the course will be based on the following (*graded by instructor):

- Introduction and reflection 5%* (due by week 3)
- Participation 10%* (ongoing)
- Reading Response 20%*
- Research paper proposal 5%
- Research Paper 25%
- Research paper presentation 10%*
- Final Assessment 25%

Evaluation breakdown:

Introduction and reflection (5%)

To get a better sense of who you are, where you are at in the program, and what your goals are for the course and your degree. I will also have a few reflection questions about health and your relationship to health. Through this I can adjust workshops to cater to better serve your needs from the course.

Participation (10%)

There are multiple ways to participate that don't necessarily involve coming to class and taking part in discussion. I encourage students to not only engage with one another in class, but also to find creative ways to engage and disseminate what they've learned such as social media use.

Reading response (20%)

Students will write a reading response where they will apply course readings and lecture material to an *assigned* urban health issue. This assignment will give students the opportunity to critically analyze how material from course readings challenge or support the ideas of a given urban health issue. Reading responses will be no more than 800 words in length. All reading responses must be uploaded to Quercus before class.

Research paper and presentation (5% + 25% + 10% = 40%)

This will be the bulk of the final grade and will be evaluated among three parts: a proposal, a final paper, and presentation. This assignment will ask students to identify an urban health problem of their choosing and design a future research project. In the proposal stage students will identify a topic, research question, and provide a justification by drawing on *at least three* academic sources. The final paper will ask students to design a research project related to their research question, a brief literature review, provide a justification for their method, sampling, and overall design. The final presentation will give students the opportunity to develop their presentation design and skills. (I will provide a more detailed handout)

Take home final assessment (25%)

There will be one test to assess students' understanding of course material. The test will consist of a few multiple-choice questions, definitions, and short answer questions. The test will be cumulative, but more emphasis will be placed on concepts and theories from the first half.

On deadlines and late assignments:

Late work will receive a **5%** late penalty off the assignment grade for each **24-hour** segment past the due date.

Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and also declare their absence on the system (ACORN). (NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms).

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

Accessibility and 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. For Accommodated Testing services, please visit: <https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/>

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>

COVID-19, class format, and attendance:

This class will be based on lecture, discussions, and workshops. 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 **not** mandatory. 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. Or you can watch recordings when available.

It remains to be seen if we will end up doing in-person learning this semester. The university president has officially required that students intending to be present on campus be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. We can talk more about this during the first few weeks of class. The first two weeks of class **WILL** be strictly online.

Course Webpage:

The course syllabus, links to all the readings that are in journal article form, handouts, and course announcements will be posted on Quercus. 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 Quercus regularly.

Communication:

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 will be through Quercus or your utoronto email.
- All emails must include the course code (i.e. SOC 335) in the subject line.
- All emails should be signed with the student's name
- Emails from students will generally be answered within 48 hours of receipt (except on weekends or holidays).
- 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.

Important dates:

First day of class	September 15
Last day of class	December 8
Fall reading week	November 8 (Mon) – November 12 (Fri)
Final drop date	November 8
Reading Response	October 20
Research Proposal	November 3
Research Paper	December 1
Final Assessment	TBD

Course schedule:
(* workshop by the TA)

Week 1 (Sep 15)

Introduction + Syllabus

Workshop: decompression hour and AMA

Week 2 (Sep 22): the state

These texts explore the role of the state in relation to its people. Whose life matters more than others? What is the state's responsibility to its people?

"Chapter 9: Politics of health in the eighteenth century" (pages 166-182) in Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. Pantheon Press.

Mbembé, J. (2003). Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11–40.

Workshop: Zoom café

Week 3 (Sep 29): social determinants of health

INTRODUCTION + REFLECTION DUE

Here we will be learning about the social determinants of health model (SDoH for short).

Kelly, M. P., & Green, J. (2019). What can sociology offer urban public health? *Critical Public Health*, 29(5), 517–521. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2019.1654193>

Fitzpatrick, K. M., & LaGory, M. (2003). "Placing" Health in an Urban Sociology: Cities as Mosaics of Risk and Protection. *City & Community*, 2(1), 33–46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6040.00037>

Phelan, J. C., Link, B. G., & Tehranifar, P. (2010). Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Health Inequalities: Theory, Evidence, and Policy Implications. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51(1_suppl), S28–S40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022146510383498>

Workshop: Organizational skills in academia (my number one hack to organizing your pdfs in academia)

Week 4 (Oct 6): social constructions of health and illness

What does it mean to be healthy? What does it mean to be sick? Is health an adjective, a noun?

Conrad, P. (2005). The shifting engines of medicalization. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 46, 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.3280/ses2009-en2004>

Crawford, R. (2006). Health as a meaningful social practice. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*, 10(4), 401–420. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363459306067310>

Timmermans, S., & Haas, S. (2008). Towards a sociology of disease. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 30(5), 659–676. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9566.2008.01097.x>

Workshop: Zoom café

Week 5 (Oct 13): colonialism

note: *this week's readings are heavy. We will devote as much time as possible working through the ideas together. Even if you didn't get it completely or you struggled to get through them, it's okay.*

McKittrick, K. (2011). On plantations, prisons, and a black sense of place. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 12(8), 947–963. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2011.624280>

“On violence” book chapter from: Fanon, F. (1963). *Wretched of the Earth*. Grove Press.

Workshop: concept/conceptualization/operationalization*

Week 6 (Oct 20): indigenous health

READING RESPONSE DUE

Gracey, M., & King, M. (2009). Indigenous health part 1: determinants and disease patterns. *The Lancet*, 374(9683), 65–75. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(09\)60914-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60914-4)

King, M., Smith, A., & Gracey, M. (2009). Indigenous health part 2: the underlying causes of the health gap. *The Lancet*, 374(9683), 76–85. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(09\)60827-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60827-8)

Wilson, K., Rosenberg, M. W., & Abonyi, S. (2011). Aboriginal peoples, health and healing approaches: The effects of age and place on health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 72(3), 355–364. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.09.022>

Workshop: What makes a good research question?*

Week 7 (Oct 27): neighbourhoods; where you live matters

Guest lecture by my dear friend and colleague Fernando Calderón Figueroa

Green, M. A., Subramanian, S. V., Vickers, D., & Dorling, D. (2015). Internal migration, area effects and health: Does where you move to impact upon your health? *Social Science and Medicine*, 136–137, 27–34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.05.011>

Vartanian, T. P., & Houser, L. (2010). The Effects of Childhood Neighborhood Conditions on Self-reports of Adult Health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51(3), 291–306. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022146510378241>

Pabayo, R., Dunn, E. C., Gilman, S. E., Kawachi, I., & Molnar, B. E. (2016). Income inequality within urban settings and depressive symptoms among adolescents. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 70(10), 997–1003. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech-2015-206613>

WORKSHOP: Writing a literature review*

Week 8 (Nov 3): proximity to nature

PROPOSAL DUE

Guest lecture by Tyler Bateman. This week we turn to nature and access to spaces. How do they affect health?

Costello, L., McDermott, M. L., Patel, P., & Dare, J. (2019). ‘A lot better than medicine’ - Self-organised ocean swimming groups as facilitators for healthy ageing. *Health and Place*, 60(September), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2019.102212>

Finlay, J., Franke, T., McKay, H., & Sims-Gould, J. (2015). Therapeutic landscapes and wellbeing in later life: Impacts of blue and green spaces for older adults. *Health and Place*, 34, 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2015.05.001>

Workshop: how do we measure things in academia?*

Week 9 (Nov 17): food security

Guest Lecture by Michael Chrobok, PhD Candidate in Geography

Prepare for a guest lecture by my dear colleague, Michael Chrobok, whose work examines food access and security in the Bronx. Access to “good” food means access to health. What happens when benevolent policy doesn’t benefit who it’s supposed to help?

Anguelovski, I. (2015). Healthy Food Stores, Greenlining and Food Gentrification: Contesting New Forms of Privilege, Displacement and Locally Unwanted Land Uses in Racially Mixed Neighborhoods. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39(6), 1209–1230. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12299>

Tach, L., & Amorim, M. (2015). Constrained, Convenient, and Symbolic Consumption: Neighborhood Food Environments and Economic Coping Strategies among the Urban Poor. *Journal of Urban Health*, 92(5), 815–834. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-015-9984-x>

Workshop: Sampling logic*

Week 10 (Nov 24): isolation and loneliness pt 1

Social isolation and loneliness are two major issues of urban living, especially among aging populations. How do older adults navigate these experiences? We will devote two weeks investigate these experiences.

Portacolone, E. (2015). Older Americans Living Alone: The Influence of Resources and Intergenerational Integration on Inequality. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 44(3), 280–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241614528709>

Torres, S. (2019). Aging Alone, Gossiping Together: Older Adults' Talk as Social Glue. *Journals of Gerontology - Series B Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 74(8), 1474–1482. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gby154>

Workshop: How to create effective PowerPoint presentations in academia

Week 11 (Dec 1): isolation and loneliness pt 2

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Barbosa Neves, B., Sanders, A., & Kokanović, R. (2019). “It’s the worst bloody feeling in the world”: Experiences of loneliness and social isolation among older people living in care homes. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 49(December 2018), 74–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2019.100785>

Salma, J., & Salami, B. (2020). “Growing Old is not for the Weak of Heart”: Social isolation and loneliness in Muslim immigrant older adults in Canada. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 28(2), 615–623. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12894>

Presentations 1

Week 12 (Dec 8):

Presentations 2