Sociology of Urban Health SOC 335H1F L5101 Department of Sociology, University of Toronto Fall 2024 Meeting Time: Thursday 5:10 PM – 8:00 PM Location: Check ACORN

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#### **Introduction:**

Sociology of Urban health examines the intersection of health and urbanization. As cities expand and populations concentrate, changes in land use, infrastructure, and social dynamics emerge. These changes in urban environments create unique health challenges and opportunities, significantly impacting urban health. With growing rates of urbanization, it is important to critically examine which features of cities impact individual's health differentially, and why. Adopting an ecological approach, and considering the interplay between individual behaviors, social factors, and environmental influences, this course investigates how place and urban social context affects health and well-being through various social features of the urban landscape and their intersection with social identities.

#### **Course Description:**

To set context for the course, we first discuss definitions, patterns, and historical to contemporary explanations for urban health in North America. We review historical changes in health (e.g., the epidemiological transitions) and urban form (e.g., urbanization and suburbanization, the nature of community, and social life in urban areas). We examine why place is relevant to physical and mental health and for whom. We cover literature related to the relevance of everyday settings with a specific focus on individuals' neighbourhood of residence. In the latter part of the course, we focus on the risks and protections for special populations in urban areas, including the poor, the homeless, racial and ethnic minorities, the young and old, and families with young children. We critically review research on these topics and discuss potential solutions for remedying exposure and vulnerability of these groups to the risks of urban settings.

In addition to the regular coursework, this course features a dedicated third hour of weekly instruction focused on developing practical research skills and applying theoretical knowledge. During this hour, we will engage in various activities designed to enhance your learning experience and prepare you for independent research.

**Prerequisites:** The prerequisites to take this course are **SOC201H1**, **SOC202H1**, **SOC204H1** and two of the following courses: **SOC251H1**, **SOC252H1**, and/or **SOC254H1**. Students without these prerequisites will be removed from the course.

## **Course Evaluation and Grading Rationale:**

Final marks will be based on five distinct areas to provide students with a well-rounded opportunity to engage in various forms of assessment. This approach is designed to encourage a comprehensive evaluation of student performance, ensuring that each student can demonstrate their strengths across different dimensions of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the University's grading criteria, which you can review here: <u>University of Toronto Grading Policy</u>. The following list depicts the marking breakdown:

## 1. Weekly Short Responses to Readings - 20%

For this course, you will write seven short responses to readings papers. These papers are generally due on Wednesdays by 11:59 PM. The first response paper is due on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, by 11:59 PM. Please note that in weeks when other major course assignments are due, the response papers will not be required.

# 2. Field Exercise - 25%

For this assignment, you will conduct naturalist observations in a public space of your choosing. You are expected to critically analyze your observations and relate them to relevant course concepts and ideas. This exercise aims to enhance your observational skills and deepen your understanding of course theoretical concepts by applying them to real-world settings. <u>The Filed Exercise is due on Wednesday</u> October 23, 2024, by 11:59 PM.

# 3. Research Paper - 30%

In this assignment, you are expected to conduct a comprehensive literature review on a topic covered in our course. The goal of this assignment is to critically analyze existing research, synthesize findings, and identify gaps in the current knowledge. <u>The Research Paper is due on Wednesday November 20, 2024</u>, by 11:59PM.

# 4. Reflection Paper - 15%

For this assignment, you will complete a reflection exercise designed to synthesize your learning and critically evaluate your experiences throughout the course. This assignment serves as a take-home test, allowing you to demonstrate your ability to integrate and apply your knowledge in a reflective and meaningful manner. The Reflection Paper is due on November 27, 2024, by 11:59PM.

## 5. Participation and Attendance - 10%

Your active participation and consistent attendance in this course will not only demonstrate your engagement with the course material but will also maximize your learning experience and contribute to a dynamic and interactive learning environment.

## **Readings, Lectures, and Class Attendance:**

The readings for this course can be downloaded from the class web page. Due to copyright restrictions, you must login to access them. Most of the readings are in PDF format. Readings listed as "supplemental" or "further reading" are optional, meaning they are not required. It is important to complete all required readings and attend each class. To benefit in-class note taking, the lectures slides will be posted the evening before class. Besides the posted lecture slides, we will also incorporate a range of audiovisual material.

## Email and the Course Webpage:

In this course, the use of e-mail and the ability to access the course webpage are important. I will use email for reminders, clarifications, last-minute notifications, etc. Feel free to contact me via e-mail with questions, requests or problems that were not, or could not, be addressed in class.

## Missing Deadlines/Submitting Late Work:

Please note that late submissions for weekly responses **will not be accepted** under any circumstances. These assignments are designed to keep you engaged with the course material on a regular basis, and timely submission is crucial for participation and feedback purposes. Please plan accordingly to ensure your responses are submitted on time.

Late work for other assignments will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor, not the TA. Students who miss a paper deadline will receive a mark of zero for that paper unless the reason is a circumstance beyond their control. **Within three days** of missing a paper deadline, students must send the instructor a request for consideration. Students must document their request with **one of the following:** 

- Absence declaration via ACORN
- U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form
- College Registrar's letter (e.g., in case of personal/family crisis or emergency)
- Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services.

## The University's Plagiarism Detection Tool - Turnitin:

For this course will be required to submit your course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, you will allow your essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (https://uoft.me/pdf-faq).

Students not wishing their assignments to be submitted through Turnitin will not be assessed unless they provide, along with their work, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final paper, etc.), to help establish that the submitted paper is truly their own.

Be careful and avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the Code for Behaviour on Academic Matters <u>https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019</u>). If you are using someone else's ideas, do not present them as your own. Provide proper references and use quotation marks if you are quoting someone else's ideas. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference. Also, please be aware that turning in an assignment, or large parts of an assignment for credit in a second (or third, etc.) course, is considered an academic offence that results in students being referred off to the University's Office of Academic Integrity.

Finally, the knowing use of generative AI tools for any purpose other than information gathering in this course will be considered a violation of academic integrity policies. This includes copying, paraphrasing, or otherwise incorporating AI-generated content into your submissions. Our goal is to ensure that your work reflects your own understanding and critical thinking. While AI can be a valuable

tool for gathering information, it is crucial that the synthesis and analysis of that information come from you. This approach helps maintain the integrity of your learning process and ensures that you develop the skills necessary for academic and professional success.

### **Accessibility Needs:**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or course materials, please contact Accessibility services as soon as possible: <u>disability.sevices@utoronto.ca</u> or <u>http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility</u>

## Feedback on Ideas and Writing:

Your TA and I are happy to discuss your ideas and writing questions during office hours, or through email. However, more help can be provided to students who ask early. All too often, submitted papers are one or two drafts short of excellence. We also encourage you use the university's writing resources.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

# PART 1: Definitions, Patterns, and Explanations of Urban Health

NOTE: Assigned readings are numbered bellow

## Week 01: September 5, 2024 – Introductory Class

Discuss course and material overview and brief overview of mutual expectations. No assigned readings for this week.

## Week 02: September 12, 2024 – Sociology of Urban Health

- 1. Kelly, Michael P., and Judith Green. 2019. "What can sociology offer urban public health?" *Critical Public Health*, 29(5): 517-521, DOI: 10.1080/09581596.2019.1654193.
- 2. Galea, Sandro, and David Vlahov. 2005. "Urban Health: Populations, Methods and Practices." Pp. 1-16 in *Handbook of Urban Health: Populations, Methods and Practice*, edited by S. Galea and D. Vlahov. New York: Springer.

#### **Optional Readings:**

 Vlahov, David, Emily Gibble, Nicholas Freudenberg, and Sandro Galea. 2004. "Cities and Health: History, Approaches, and Key Questions." *Academic Medicine* 79(12):1133-1138.
 Video (time-permitting): The social Life of Small Urban Spaces 1988 (55 minutes).

This classic engaging and informative tour of the urban landscape explores how it can be made more hospitable for those who live in it. This film also shows what can be learned through systematic observation of people in urban environments.

## Week 03: September 19, 2024 – How is urban Health Patterned? Some Examples

- **3.** James, P., et al. 2007. "Avoidable Mortality by Neighbourhood Income in Canada: 25 Years After the Establishment of Universal Health Insurance." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 61(4):287-296.
- 4. Hulchanski, David J. 2010. "The Three Cities within Toronto: Income Polarization among Toronto's Neighbourhoods, 1970–2005." *Centre for Urban & Community Studies Research Bulletin* 41, December 2007. (12 pages)

## **Optional Readings:**

Statistics Canada. 2002. Trends in Mortality by Neighbourhood Income in Urban Canada from 1971 to 1996. Catalogue 82-003. Supplement to Health Reports, Vols 13.

- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). 2008. *Reducing Gaps in Health: A Focus on Socio-Economic Status in Urban Canada*. Ottawa, Ont.: CIHI.
- Manuel, Douglas G., et al. 2016. "Measuring Burden of Unhealthy Behaviours Using Multivariable Predictive Approach: Life Expectancy Lost in Canada Attributable to Smoking, Alcohol, Physical Inactivity, and Diet." *PLOS Medicine* 13(8).

# Week 04: September 26, 2024 – Historical Sweep to the Present – The Health Climacteric: From Material Scarcity to Social Disadvantage

- de Leeuw, Evelyne. 2017. "Cities and Health from Neolithic to Anthropocene." Pp. 3-30 in *Healthy Cities: The Theory, Policy, and Practice of Value-Based Urban Planning*, edited by J. Simos and E. de Leeuw. Springer. <u>http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-6694-3\_1</u>.
- 6. Wilkinson, Richard G. 1994. "The Epidemiological Transition: From Material Scarcity to Social Disadvantage?" *Daedalus* 123(4):61-77.

## **Optional Reading:**

Frank, John W. and Fraser Mustard. 1994. "The Determinants of Health from Historical Perspective." Daedalus 123(4):1-19.

# Week 05: October 03, 2024 - Sociological and Epidemiological Explanations of Health in the Urban Context

- 7. Fitzpatrick, Kevin M. and Mark LaGory. 2003. "Placing 'Health' in an Urban Sociology: Cities as Mosaics of Risk and Protection." City & Community 2(1):33-46.
- 8. Gehlert, Sarah, Dana Sohmer, Tina Sacks, Charles Mininger, Martha McClintock, and Olufunmilayo Olopade. 2008. "Targeting Health Disparities: A Model Linking Upstream Determinants to Downstream Interventions." *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 27(2):339-349.

## **Optional Readings:**

Fitzgerald, Des, Nikolas Rose, and Ilina Singh. 2016. "Revitalizing Sociology: Urban Life and Mental Illness between History and the Present." *British Journal of Sociology*. Kaplan, George A. 2007. "Health Inequalities and the Welfare State: Perspectives from Social Epidemiology." *Norsk Epidemiologi* 17(1):9-20.

# Week 06: October 10, 2024 - Social Context and Urban Health: Neighbourhood Disadvantage, Risks, and Inequality:

- **9.** Pabayo, Roman, et al. 2016. "Income Inequality within Urban Settings and Depressive Symptoms among Adolescents." *J Epidemiol Community Health* 70:997-1003.
- **10.** Rivera Navarro, Jesus, et al. 2019. "Understanding Urban Health Inequalities: Methods and Design of the Heart Health Hoods Qualitative Project." *Gaceta Sanitaria* 33(6):517-522.
- Hill, Terrence D., and David Maimon. 2013. "Neighborhood Context and Mental Health." Pp. 479–501 in *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 2nd ed., edited by C. S. Aneshensel, J. C. Phelan, and A. Bierman. Springer Science + Business Media.
- Video: Robert J Sampson "Neighbourhood Effects and the Contemporary City" 16 Minutes <u>Https://youtu.be/smuxHR\_zc2Q</u>

#### **Optional Readings:**

- Ross, Catherine E., John Mirowsky, and Shana Pribesh. 2001. "Powerlessness and the Amplification of Threat: Neighbourhood Disadvantage, Disorder, and Mistrust." *American Sociological Review* 66:568-591.
- Sampson, Robert J, Jeffrey. D. Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley. 2002. "Assessing 'Neighbourhood Effects': Social Processes and New Directions in Research." Annual Review of Sociology 28:443-478.
- Ross, Catherine E., and John Mirowsky. 2009. "Neighbourhood Disorder, Subjective Alienation, and Distress." *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour* 50:49-64.
- Curry, Aaron, Carl Latkin, and Melissa Davey-Rothwell. 2008. "Pathways to Depression: The Impact of Neighborhood Violent Crime on Inner-City Residents in Baltimore, Maryland, USA." *Social Science & Medicine*. NIH, S-55719.
- Robert Woods Johnson Foundation. 2013. "Violence, Social Disadvantage and Health." Report #rwjf70452.

#### Week 07: October 17, 2024 - Health Cities Approach: Perspectives, Methods, Measurement

- 12. Pederson, Ann, and Irving Rootman. 2017. From Health Care to the Promotion of Health: Establishing the Conditions for Healthy Communities in Canada. Pp. 43-61 in Healthy City: The Theory, Policy, and Practice of Value-Based Urban Health Planning, edited by E. de Leeuw and J. Simons. New York, NY: Springer.
- **13.** Hancock, Trevor. 2017. "Healthy Cities Emerge: Toronto Ottawa Copenhagen" in *Healthy City: The Theory, Policy, and Practice of Value-Based Urban Health Planning*, edited by E. de Leeuw and J. Simons. New York, NY: Springer.
- 14. de Leeuw, Evelyne, and Geoff Green. 2017. "The logic of Method for Evaluating Healthy Cities" in *Healthy City: The Theory, Policy, and Practice of Value-Based Urban Health Planning*, edited by E. de Leeuw and J. Simons. New York, NY: Springer.

**Optional Readings:** 

Duhl, Leonard J., and Trevor Hancock. 1988. *Promoting Health in the Urban Context*. WHO Healthy Cities Papers, No. 1. E87743.

Oickle, Dianne, and Connie Clement. 2019. *Glossary of Health Equity Concepts for Public Health Action in the Canadian Context.* 

Cappon, Daniel. 1989. Indicators for a Healthy City.

## PART 2: Special Topics and Populations in the Sociology of Urban Health

# \*\* Field Exercise - 20% due at 11:59 PM on Wednesday, October 23, 2024\*\*

#### Week 08: October 24, 2024 - Healthiness of Green Spaces, Walkability, Physical Design of the City

- **15.** Steinbach, Rebecca, Judith Green, Jessica Datta, and Phil Edwards. 2011. "Cycling and the City: A Case Study of How Gendered, Ethnic, and Class Identities Can Shape Healthy Transport Choices." *Social Science & Medicine* 72(7):1123-1130.
- 16. Cole, Helen, Margarita Triguero-Mas, James Connolly, and Isabelle Anguelovski. 2019.
  "Determining the Health Benefits of Green Space: Does Gentrification Matter?" *Health & Place* 57:1-11.
- 17. Gascon, Mireia, et al. 2016. "Residential Green Spaces and Mortality: A Systematic Review." *Environment International* 86:60-67.

**Optional Readings:** 

- Anguelovski, Isabelle, Helen Cole, James Connolly, and Margarita Triguero-Mas. 2018. "Do Green Neighbourhoods Promote Urban Health Justice?" *Lancet Public Health* 3(6)
- Berry, Brent. 2007. "Disparities in Leisure Time Inactivity: Trends and Explanations." *Sociological Perspectives* 50(2):177-208.
- Cole, Helen V. S., Melisa Garcia Lamarca, James J. T. Connolly, and Isabelle Anguelovski. 2017. "Are Green Cities Healthy and Equitable? Unpacking the Relationship Between Health, Green Space, and Gentrification." *J Epidemiol Community Health* 71:1118-1121.
- Galea, Sandro, Jennifer Ahern, Sasha Rudenstine, Zachary Wallace, and David Vlahov. 2005. "Urban Built Environment and Depression: A Multilevel Analysis." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.*
- Guthman, Julie. 2013. "Too Much Food and Too Little Sidewalk? Problematizing the Obesogenic Environments Thesis." *Environment and Planning* 45:142-158.
- Saelens, Brian E., James F. Sallis, Jennifer B. Black, and Diana Chen. 2003. "Neighborhood-Based Differences in Physical Activity: An Environment Scale Evaluation." *American Journal of Public Health* 93(9):1552-1558.

\*\*\* October 31, 2024: Reading Week - No Class\*\*\*

#### Week 09: November 7, 2024 - Housing, Homelessness, and Health

- 18. Frankish, C. James, Stephen W. Hwang, and Darryl Quantz. 2009. "The Relationship Between Homelessness and Health: An Overview of Research in Canada." Pp 128-148. in *Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada*, edited by J. D. Hulchanski, P. Campsie, S. Chau, S. Hwang, and E. Paradis. Toronto: Cities Centre, University of Toronto. Retrieved from www.homelesshub.ca/FindingHome.
- **19.** Jacobs, David E. 2011. "Environmental Health Disparities in Housing." *American Journal of Public Health* 101(Suppl 1): S115–S122.

**Optional Readings:** 

- Berry, Brent. 2014. "Sociology of Housing in Urban Canada." In *Sociological Perspectives*, 3rd edition, edited by Harry H. Hiller. Oxford University Press.
- Coley, Rebekah Levine, Tama Leventhal, Alicia Doyle Lynch, and Melissa Kull. 2013. "Relations Between Housing Characteristics and the Well-Being of Low-Income Children and Adolescents." *Developmental Psychology* 49(9):1775–1789.
- Hwang, Stephen W. 2001. "Homelessness and Health." *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 164(1):229-233.
- O'Grady, Bill, and Stephen Gaetz. 2004. "Homelessness, Gender and Subsistence: The Case of Toronto Street Youth." *Journal of Youth Studies* 7(4):397–416.
- Pollack, Craig Evan, Beth Ann Griffin, and Julia Lynch. 2010. "Housing Affordability and Health Among Homeowners and Renters." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 39(6):515-521.
- Video: Sidewalk (time-permitting)

#### Week 10: November 14, 2024 – The Health of urban Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities

- **20.** Wilson, Kathi, Mark W. Rosenberg, and Sylvia Abonyi. 2011. "Aboriginal Peoples, Health and Healing Approaches: The Effects of Age and Place on Health." *Social Science & Medicine* 72(3):355-364.
- **21.** Noh, Samuel, and William R. Avison. 1996. "Asian Immigrants and the Stress Process: A Study of Koreans in Canada." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 37(2):192-206.
- 22. Khan, Aysha M., Mariana Urquia, Katherine Kornas, David Henry, Samantha Y. Cheng, Christina Bornbaum, and Laura C. Rosella. 2017. "Socioeconomic Gradients in All-Cause, Premature, and Avoidable Mortality Among Immigrants and Long-Term Residents Using Linked Death Records in Ontario, Canada." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 71(7):625-632.

**Optional Readings:** 

- Boardman, Jason D., Jarron M. Saint Onge, Richard G. Rogers, and Justin T. Denney. 2005. "Race Differentials in Obesity: The Impact of Place." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46(3):229-243.
- Doherty, Alison, and Tracy Taylor. 2007. "Sport and Physical Recreation in the Settlement of Immigrant Youth." *Leisure/Loisir* 31(1):27-55.

- Montazer, Shirin, 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(1):23-42.
- Suto, Melinda J. 2012. "Leisure Participation and Well-Being of Immigrant Women in Canada." *Journal of Occupational Science* 20(1):48-61.
- Trouille, David. 2012. "Neighborhood Outsiders, Field Insiders: Latino Immigrant Men and the Control of Public Space." *Qualitative Sociology* 36(1):1-22

\*\* Research Paper - 35% due at 11:59 PM on Wednesday, November 20, 2024\*\*

#### Week 11: November 21, 2024 - Healthy Cities for Youth, Older Adults, and Families

- **23.** Aneshensel, Carol S., and Clea A. Sucoff. 1996. "The Neighborhood Context of Adolescent Mental Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 37(4):293-310.24.
- 24. Schieman, Scott, Leonard I. Pearlin, and Stephen C. Meersman. 2006. "Neighborhood Disadvantage and Anger Among Older Adults: Social Comparisons as Effect Modifiers." *Journal* of Health and Social Behavior 47(2):156-172.25.
- **25.** Swisher, Raymond, Stephen Sweet, and Phyllis Moen. 2004. "The Family-Friendly Community and Its Life Course Fit for Dual-Earner Couples." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(2):281-292.

#### **Optional Readings:**

- Morrow, Virginia. 2003. "'No Ball Games': Children's Views of Their Urban Environments." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 57(4):234.
- Gusmano, Michael K., and Victor G. Rodwin. 2010. "Urban Aging, Social Isolation, and Emergency Preparedness." *IFA Global Ageing* 6(2):39.

Video: Aging in Place (12 minutes)

\*\* Reflection Paper - 15% due at 11:59 PM on Wednesday, November 27, 2024\*\*

#### Week 12: November 28, 2024 – The Urban Foodscape and Food Environment

- 26. Wakefield, Sarah, Fiona Yeudall, Carolin Taron, Jennifer Reynolds, and Alison Skinner. 2007. "Growing Urban Health: Community Gardening in South-East Toronto." *Health Promotion International* 22(2):92-101.
- 27. Joassart-Marcelli, Pascale, Jaime Rossiter, and Fernando J. Bosco. 2017. "Ethnic Markets and Community Food Security in an Urban 'Food Desert'." *Environment and Planning A* 49(3):0308518X1770039.

**28.** Kirkpatrick, Sharon I., and Valerie Tarasuk. 2011. "Housing Circumstances Are Associated with Household Food Access Among Low-Income Urban Families." *Journal of Urban Health* 88(2):284-296.

#### **Optional Readings:**

- Cummins, Steven, Mark Petticrew, Claire Higgins, Anne Findlay, and Leigh Sparks. 2005. "Large Scale Food Retailing as an Intervention for Diet and Health: Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of a Natural Experiment." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 59(12):1035-1040.
- Pothukuchi, Kami, and Jerome L. Kaufman. 1999. "Placing the Food System on the Urban Agenda: The Role of Municipal Institutions in Food Systems Planning." *Agriculture and Human Values* 16(2):213-224.
- French, Simone A., Mary Story, and Robert W. Jeffery. 2001. "Environmental Influences on Eating and Physical Activity." *Annual Review of Public Health* 22:309-335.
- Video: The Obesity Epidemic (5 minutes).

#### **Other Course Resources:**

Maps: We will examine maps from two websites:

Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles: <u>http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/neighbourhoods.htm</u>:

Toronto Community Heath Profiles: http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/

Films: We will view several short films that may include but not limited to the following:

- Flemington Park: The global village 2003, audiovisual library (Media commons, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Robarts library) videocassette #00672 (46 minutes)
- The Obesity Epidemic. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCORDl4bqDE&t=1s</u> (7 minutes).
- How More Americans are 'Aging in Place' <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VqgSkN14JE</u> (12 minutes)