Sociology of Medicine and Health Care
Sociology 210 (2)
Spring 2022 Syllabus
M/W 3:50 – 5:10 pm
College Avenue Campus, Academic Bldg 4225

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Office: Virtual  
Office Hours: Tuesday 6 – 7 pm and by appointment

PLEASE NOTE: READINGS FOR THIS SYLLABUS WILL BE REVISED AS THE TEXTBOOK HAS BEEN ELIMINATED.

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce you to the many facets of medicine, health and illness from a sociological perspective. Throughout the course, sociological research will be used to highlight medical sociological methods and thinking. The historical context of the rise of medical sociology and its relationship to public health, the professionalization of medicine, the establishment of medical institutions, and the industrialization of health care will be examined. This will also include how patient and health care professional roles have changed. We will also explore how the dominant medical paradigm has been challenged by alternative health practices and practitioners. A major theme that is addressed throughout the semester is social inequality and the way social class, race, gender, culture, and environment connect to health disparities that shape access to health care. Cross-national comparisons of Western health care systems will be made. Historical socio-political considerations that frame the United States’ current delivery system will be presented and challenged. Finally, we will look at quality and cost of health care and what health care reform might look like.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals

1. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
2. Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.
Departmental Learning Goals Addressed

1. Students will understand the sociological perspective, a distinctive analysis of the ways people think, feel, and behave that focuses on how they are situated in historically, culturally, and socially specific environments.
2. Students will develop the skills necessary to read and evaluate social science research in an intelligent and critical manner.
3. Students will understand the role of theory in the construction of sociological inquiry.

Course Learning Goals

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Summarize sociological concepts and theories as they apply to medicine and healthcare
2. Identify sociological research methods used to define and measure health outcomes
3. Apply epidemiological principles and methods to health-related outcomes
4. Describe how health and illness behavior are socially constructed
5. Describe the impact of social and economic influences on health
6. Contrast the U.S. health care system with other western democracies

Required Text

There is no required text for this course.

Top Hat Subscription. It is available @ https://tophat.com/pricing/ Go to the top of the page that says Top Hat. Use the Top Hat Pro link to sign-up and purchase a subscription. Rutgers students are billed $20 one time and it is good for 4 months across all courses that use it. The link says that it is $30, but you will only be charged $20.

Technology: Using Canvas and Top Hat

We will be using Top Hat. This is an online app to engage with course content and participate in class. You may use any online device to access Top Hat. It will be used for instruction, discussion, and evaluations. I also will post all essential materials in Canvas initially since you will need to sign up for Top Hat. I will be very clear when we will be using Canvas. With that said, I will always use Canvas for Announcements (I am the Queen of Announcements). Please be sure to check both the portal and your associated Rutgers email regularly. You are required to be accountable for this information.

Receiving Course Announcements through email:
Course announcements will be posted at least once a week. To receive copies of these through email, make sure that you have your email notification settings turned on for announcements.
• Click on “Account” in the Global Navigation (the red bar on the left)
• Click on “Notifications”
• Ensure that the preference for Announcement is set to ‘Notify me right away.’

Please visit the Rutgers Student Tech Guide page for resources available to all students. If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons, please email Dean of Students deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at [https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/](https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/).

**Wellness Statement**

This is a difficult and stressful time for all of us, some more than others. Many of you may have family responsibilities that are more extensive than usual. Your physical and mental health are important, not only to you, but to your families and loved ones. I know it can be difficult to keep up with the workload under typical class schedules and teaching formats. For some, most likely most, it has been especially difficult in adjusting to the online format. I certainly know that it has been for me and many other professors. I don’t want to sound like your mothers, but one of the most essential self-care activities that you can do is sleep. This is easier said than done. I have issues with it myself. My two sons, both sophomores in college, don’t sleep enough. They don’t listen to me, but you should! Seriously though, sleep is restorative. It helps you think and focus better, and it reduces stress. I should know, I don’t get enough sleep either!

Your physical and mental health are important not only to you, but to me. Why me? I want you to be able to get the most out of this class and work to your potential. If you are feeling overwhelmed, please arrange an appointment to speak with me. I don’t bite and am willing to assist with problem solving any issues that come up. Additionally, Rutgers has resources to assist students that will be available online.

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
[http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/](http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/)

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.


Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
[www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

**Grading**

**Quizzes**

There will be four closed-book, closed-notes exams consisting of multiple choice and true/false questions worth 15% each. These will account for a total of 60% of your overall grade. The first two exams will not be cumulative. The material included in the final (third exam) will be based mostly on the last third of the course, however, there may be questions from prior materials.

**Essays**

There will be three essays worth 30% of your grade. Due dates to be determined.

**Written Assignments – General Guidelines**

Written assignments should be submitted in the correct assignment folder, on time, and in the correct format (pdf using Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spacing). If citation is required, please note that quotes should not be used to guard against plagiarism. You must paraphrase your material and properly cite it using in-text citations. Use quotes sparingly. I would like you to cite using American Psychological Association ([https://www.apastyle.org/index](https://www.apastyle.org/index)) formatting. There is no excuse for not doing this properly. There are plenty of online resources to assist you. I suggest looking at the [Rutgers Libraries Tutorials](https://www.rutgers.edu/library/tutorials) as a starting place. I will also provide you with written materials in a resource folder. If you have any questions about how to write a paper that incorporates academic resources and proper in-text citations, you should take advantage of resources that Rutgers offers their students. [Rutgers Learning Center](https://www.rutgers.edu/learningcenter) is one resource to start with. You may certainly reach out to me for quick questions, but I don’t have the time to tutor you. A rubric cube will be provided to address specific assignments.

**Participation Quiz Questions**
You will be given quiz questions through Top Hat that incorporate the assigned required readings. They will represent 5% of your grade. These questions will also be distributed throughout the lecture.

Attendance

Attendance will be 5% of your grade. I will take attendance every day. Points will be deducted for unexcused absences beyond three missed classes. If you are absent from class, make sure to get notes from a classmate to make up for the missed material. There will be no excused absences from exams unless there are documented extenuating circumstances, such as a family emergency or medical issue. During the final exam period, there have been conflicts where two finals are given in the same time slot. If there is a documented conflict during finals, you may take a departmental make-up.

Final grades are non-negotiable. There will be no extra credit offered. I will follow Rutgers grading scale:

A 90-100
B+ 86-89
B 80-85
C+ 76-79
C 70-75
D 61-69;
F 60 or below

Teacher-Student Contact Etiquette

The best way to reach me is to contact me by email. I want two things in each email subject line: (1) include “Soc 210” in the subject line and (2) mention your name. This information ensures your email is filtered directly into my course folder and does not get lost among other messages. When you are composing your message, remember you are not writing to describe last Friday night to your roommate. You are talking to someone who might write you a letter of recommendation someday!

I receive so many e-mails that even important e-mails may not receive a reply for 48 hours – though we will make every effort to return your e-mails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours, please feel free to e-mail again. However, please do not e-mail at the last moment (that is 24 hours before exams) with questions regarding the material and assignments. You may not receive a response to these e-mails. To reply to as many e-mails as possible, I may or may not convey
responses in as few words as possible. If I am brief, please do not view these parsimonious responses as discourteous.

Academic Integrity

Rutgers University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. By enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for familiarizing yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy and the possible penalties (including suspension and expulsion) for violating the policy. As per the policy, all suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Aiding others in committing a violation or allowing others to use your work
- Failure to cite sources correctly
- Fabrication
- Using another person’s ideas or words without attribution–re-using a previous assignment
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Sabotaging another student’s work

If in doubt, please consult the instructor.
*** I have had to report academic integrity issues both at Rutgers and at a prior teaching position. It’s not pleasant for anyone involved in the process. ***

The following link has Student Resources for Academic Integrity. There are many links to assist you in evaluating your work including Rutgers’ SAS Writing Program page on Plagiarism.

**Honor Pledge**

All students will need to sign the Rutgers Honor Pledge on every major exam, assignment, or other assessment as follows:

> On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment, paper, quiz, etc.).

**Intellectual Property**

Almost all original work is the intellectual property of its authors. These works may include syllabi, lecture slides, recorded lectures, homework problems, exams, and other materials, in either printed or electronic form. The authors may hold copyrights in these works, which are protected by U.S. statutes. Copying this work or posting it online without the permission of the author may violate the author’s rights. More importantly, these works are the product of the author’s efforts; respect for these efforts and for the author’s intellectual property rights is an important value that members of the university community take seriously.

For more instructions on copyright protections at Rutgers University, please refer to the Rutgers Libraries.

**Class Conduct**

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

**Students Affected by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)**

Know that Rutgers has urged the federal and state governments to protect undocumented students. In light of policy changes announced on September 5th, 2017 by President Trump and AG Jeff Sessions, the university is offering a range of support services. You can access information, resources, and professional legal advice and assistance through the Office of the Dean of Students, which can be reached at 848-932-2300 or link. The
university has also created the Rutgers Immigrant Community Assistance Project (RICAP). All currently enrolled Rutgers students are eligible for a free and confidential legal consultation with the lead attorney there. Information can be found here.

Disability Accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please visit the ODS website. If you have questions, please reach out to me and I’ll be happy to provide you with assistance.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Part I: Introduction and General Concepts

Week 1 (19th January)

Course overview

Reading: Syllabus

The Historical Context of Medicine, Health, and Illness, and the Emergence of Medical Sociology


Research Methods in Medical Sociology


Week 2 (25th January)

Social Epidemiology


Jan 31: Global Disparities I

Feb 2: Global Disparities II

Feb 7: Quiz #2

**Part II: Social Factors and Health**

Feb 9: Health Behavior

TBA

Feb 14: Illness Behavior and Experience

TBA

Feb 16: Social Causes of Health Status

TBA

Feb 21: Social Stress and Other Factors Influencing Health

TBA

Feb 23: Guest Lecturer: TBA

Feb 28: Quiz #2
Part III: Social, Cultural and Capitalistic Factors in Health and Illness

Mar 2: Chronic Disease and Disability


Mar 7: Nutrition, Obesity and Diabetes


Mar 9: Mental Illness and Substance Abuse


Mar 14: Medicine as an Industry: Pharma and the Opioid Crisis


Mar 16: **Medicine as Industry: Medical Devices**


Mar 21: **Spring Recess – no class**

Mar 23: **Spring Recess – no class**

Mar 28: **Medicine as Industry: Continued**

Mar 30: **Environment, Exposure and Health**


Apr 4: Quiz #3

Part IV: Health Care Systems

Apr 6: Medical Education and Physician Training: Progression to Capitalism

TBA

Apr 11: Physician-Patient Interaction


Apr 13: Health Care Providers

TBA

*Papers Due

Apr 18: The Health Care Team


Apr 20: Hospitals and Health Care Settings

TBA

Apr 25: Cross-National Comparisons of Health Care

TBA

Apr 27: U.S. Health Care System
TBA

May 2: Health Care Reform


Quiz #4 During Finals: TBA

Please note: I reserve the right to change, as I deem necessary, any aspect of the syllabus throughout the course of the semester. You will be given ample notice of any such change if possible.