

SYLLABUS

SOC 4408G-001 Winter 2019

SOC 4408: ADVANCED SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Class meets Wednesdays 9:30-12:30 in SSC 5235

Instructor: Dr. Anna Zajacova

Email: anna.zajacova@uwo.ca

Office: SSC 5330

Office hours: TBD

Prerequisite(s):

Enrolment in fourth year of one of the Honors Specializations or Honors Double Major in Sociology or Criminology, or the BHSc Aging.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we explore the idea that health and illness cannot be understood simply as biological phenomena or individual medical problems. Instead, we must consider broad societal influences, from structural and cultural to political and economic forces. We will study social aspects of health and illness, the roles of the patients and health care providers and their interactions and discuss the basics of Canada's health care policy from a sociological perspective.

Issues surrounding health care are at the forefront of economic, social, and political discourse in Canada and globally today. The overarching goal of this course is to help you become a better-informed citizen with respect to health and health-care issues by analyzing health and medical institutions sociologically.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the class, students will be able to

- Provide a broad overview of the field of medical sociology
- Understand the links between social factors and health
- Appreciate how age, sex, race/ethnicity, social class, and other sociodemographic characteristics shape health and illness over the lifecourse
- Explain major historical and current issues related to medical institutions, the medical professions, and health care in the United States
- Critically evaluate the how a society's views on health and medical care fit within its broader cultural and structural perspectives.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

This senior-level seminar requires attendance during all class sessions. The classes will be mostly discussion-based; therefore, students are expected to complete all required reading prior to class in order to participate and get the most out of class. Students may be asked to summarize papers, integrate their arguments or life experiences with the discussed material, and pose questions arising from the readings. The instructor will provide brief lectures to supplement reading materials.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

- Mikkonen, Juha, and Dennis Raphael. (2010). *Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts*. York University School of Health Policy and Management. Available for download at http://thecanadianfacts.org/The_Canadian_Facts.pdf.
- Gawande, Atul (2014). *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. Metropolitan Books. Not available in UWO bookstore.

GRADING:

- **Class participation (10%).** Attendance during all class sessions is an important part of this seminar. All students are expected to participate and contribute meaningfully to class with relevant comments and questions. A part of the participation grade is online submission of comments and questions related to the readings, submitted prior to class and discussed in class.
- **Midterm tests (two tests, each worth 22%).**
- **Short writing assignments (16%).** There will be four short assignments, about 2-3 pages each. Their aim is to solidify your understanding of the covered material and contemplate its relevance to the students' life experience.
- **Independent research project, presentation, and paper (30%).** Students will select a topic, collect readings, learn the current state of knowledge, and write a report about . We will begin working on the around mid-semester. Everything will be done in steps and I will provide regular feedback throughout the process.
 - Step 1 is worth 2% of the final grade: a timely selection of an appropriate topic, due February 27
 - Step 2 is worth 5% of the final grade: a 2-page outline/draft plus bibliography with at least 12 sources, due on March 13.
 - Step 3 is worth 7% of the final grade: 5-minute presentation in class on April 3.
 - Step 4 is worth 16% of the final grade: this is the final version of the paper, due at 5 pm on April 3 (with an additional 5-day grace period).

For class participation, only the best 10 scores will be calculated into your final grade. No other academic accommodation will be available for participation, such as late submissions or extended absences during the semester. For the final paper, late submissions will be penalized by 8% per day after the 5-day grace period.

IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday 1/9	First class
Wednesday 2/13	Midterm test 1
Wednesday 2/20	Reading week, no class
Wednesday 2/27	Topic for research paper due
Wednesday 3/13	Outline for research paper due
Wednesday 3/27	Midterm test 2
Wednesday 4/3	Last class, Student conference
Wednesday 4/8	End of grace period for research paper submission

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES: READINGS TO BE ASSIGNED PRIOR TO JANUARY 9

WEEK 1 (January 9). INTRODUCTION TO MEDICAL SOCIOLOGY

WEEK 2 (January 16). INDIVIDUAL AND POPULATION HEALTH IN HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

WEEK 3 (January 23). SOCIAL FACTORS IN POPULATION HEALTH

WEEK 4 (January 30). DEMOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES IN POPULATION HEALTH

WEEK 5 (February 6). SOCIAL STATUS, STRESS, AND HEALTH

WEEK 6 (February 13). SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH BEHAVIORS

FEBRUARY 20: NO CLASS, SPRING READING WEEK

WEEK 7 (February 27). MEDICALIZATION

WEEK 8 (March 6). DISABILITY, DYING, AND DEATH

WEEK 9 (March 13). HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS IN CANADA AND GLOBALLY

WEEK 10 (March 20). THE MEDICAL PROFESSION; DOCTOR-PATIENT INTERACTIONS

WEEK 11 (March 27). NURSING AND THE ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS IN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

WEEK 12 (April 3). STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE “Sociological Factors in Sleep and Other Health Behaviors”

SOC 4408 POLICIES**What if I have questions about the class?**

First, check the syllabus. Most students find that the syllabus provides answers to many questions.

Second, contact your instructor via email. I strongly encourage you to email me as soon as questions or issues arise so we can work together to get your question answered or issue resolved. You can generally expect replies within 24 hours during regular work days or 48 on weekends. I will aim to answer faster than that.

- Please write **“SOC 4408” in the subject line** – otherwise it's easy for your email to get lost in the slew of incoming messages. Seeing SOC 4408 in the subject line makes your email a priority for me.

What should I pay attention to when writing emails?

You rightfully expect that your instructors treat you with respect and in a professional manner. We expect the same from you. Please make sure your email communication is professional and tend toward a bit formal. Emails to your instructors are NOT like texting your friends. Please be professional and use proper salutation and correct spelling and grammar. For instance, your college instructors should be addressed “Professor XYZ” or “Dr. XYZ,” not “Hey there” or “Hi Jane” or “Dear Mrs. Green.”

What if I miss a class?

If you are absent from a class, two rules apply:

- 1) Do not email me. Unfortunately there is little I can do with the information explaining your absence. However, if there is something going on in your life that could affect your class performance in a significant way, please let me know we can work together.
- 2) Do get notes and all information from your classmates. You are responsible to keep up with the class. I will post key information on OWL but make sure you talk to your colleagues in advance (or afterwards) and ask them to take notes for you (or share their notes).

Do I need to attend classes?

Regular class attendance is essential to learning at the university level, especially in a course like this where substantial learning occurs in the process of class discussions.

Attending classes AND doing all assigned readings is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for earning a high grade in this class.

You are responsible for all announcements, lecture notes, and activities we cover in class even if you have a valid reason to miss a class. **If you miss a class, please contact your classmates to get all information about what we did.**

What's expected of me in class?

Appropriate professional and respectful behavior is expected of all students, in order to facilitate a supportive learning environment. Any activities not related to the class material must be conducted outside of the classroom, including any social media or in-person communication. Cell phones must be on silent and no conversation or texting is acceptable. **If your behavior does not abide by these basic rules, you may be asked to leave the class.** Please understand I do not wish to use this policy but it is disruptive to other students if someone near them is online or texting.

What is the policy on electronics in class?

Laptops are permitted in class for note-taking although I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand. However, texting, browsing the web, or social networking on Instagram or Twitter or any of the myriad other apps is tremendously disruptive. Even if you feel you can follow the class while networking/browsing/texting, such behavior makes it difficult to those around you to pay attention. Students may be reprimanded, asked to shut off the device, or possibly even asked to leave the class.

Please make sure that your cell phones are silent or turned off at the beginning of class; beeping and ringing distracts your colleagues and is disruptive in a classroom setting.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES

Note Regarding Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations.

Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the

licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health @Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Please note: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester