Course Description:

In this course, we explore the idea that health and illness cannot be understood simply as biological phenomena or individual medical issues. Instead, we must consider broad societal influences and contexts, from structural and cultural to political, economic, and interpersonal forces. In the first part of the course, we will study social causes, correlates, and consequences of health and illness. We will explore how social structures and inequalities with respect to social class, age, gender, race, etc., impact the patterns of health and illness in Canada and worldwide. In the second part of the course, we will examine how people experience illness, analyze the roles of the patients and health care providers and their interactions, and discuss the basics of health care systems in Canada and globally from a sociological perspective.

Issues surrounding health and health care are at the forefront of economic, social, and political discourse in most countries around the world. 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.

Prerequisite(s) 1.0 from: Sociology 1020, 1021E, 1025A/B, 1026F/G, 1027A/B.

Antirequisite(s): Sociology 2245.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will:

- 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 life course
- Explain major historical and current issues related to medical institutions, the medical professions, and health care in Canada
- Critically evaluate the how a society's views on health and medical care fit within its broader cultural and structural perspectives.

**Required Text(s):**

(Additional readings are posted on OWL)

**Reading and Participation:**
It is expected that students will come to class and be prepared to discuss the assigned material. There are no participation or attendance grades, but failure to attend classes regularly will put you at a disadvantage. Much of the course is cumulative, so missing one class can cause problems for comprehending the material in the following classes.

**Method of Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Quiz (February 4)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (February 25)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation (March 31)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Health Case Study Report (April 3)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (TBA)</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Evaluation Breakdown**

**In-Class Quiz (Tuesday, February 4) – 10%**
This quiz is worth 10% of your total grade and test materials from January 7 to 28. This quiz consists of two short answer questions. Use lectures as your preparation materials.
**Midterm Exam (Tuesday, February 25) – 30%**

The closed-book midterm exam is worth 30% of your total grade and covers materials from January 7 to February 11. This exam consists of multiple-choice questions only. You should use lecture slides and class notes as your main preparation materials.

**Group Health Case Study Report (Friday, April 3) - 20%**

In the second week of the semester, students will form a group of 3 or 4 and conduct a research on a specific health issue in the Canadian context. To complete this assignment, students must meet the following three criteria:

- Provide background information on the selected topic of health issue (1 page)
- Discuss the core debates or problems from both media and scholarly arena (2 pages)
- Analyze how current health policies/program(s) address the focal issue (2 pages)
  - Does the health policy or program effectively address the problems?
  - What are the anticipated challenges in responding to the problems?
  - Is there an alternative policy or program that can potentially alleviate the problem?

This report should be **5 pages maximum, (double spaced, 12-inch font), excluding the cover and reference page.** Please submit one copy per group to the sociology department’s dropbox, across from SSC 5306 by **4:00pm, Friday April 3.** Deduction will apply to late submission (5% per day). Please include every member’s name, student number and my name on the cover page.

**Group Presentation (Tuesday, March 31) - 5%**

On March 31, students will do an oral presentation based on the group health case study. The purpose of this presentation is to showcase your research topic and ways to improve the focal health problem. Each group will have **5 minutes** to do (1) a brief introduction of the topic, (2) a highlight of core issues related to your topic and (3) health policies or programs that respond to the issues of the focal health problem.

**Final Exam (April Exam Period) – 35%**

The closed-book final exam is worth 35% of your total grade. It will be **cumulative** from the beginning of this course. However, 20% of the questions will target on information before the midterm and 80% will cover information after the midterm. This exam will consist of multiple choice questions only.

**How to get important information:**

OWL (http://owl.uwo.ca) will be used to post course information, content, and instructions regarding deadlines, expectations, requirements, etc. You should check OWL regularly to
ensure that you are kept up to date on new and revised course content. During the course, I may post or email additional content and/or materials that may aid in your learning and understanding of course topics.

**Course Reading & Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Social Context of Health &amp; Illness</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Theory &amp; Methods in Studying Health &amp; Illness</td>
<td>Ch. 2, 3</td>
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<td>Group Formation (3 or 4 people as a group)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Class, Health Inequality &amp; Social Justice</td>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Gender, Race, &amp; Health Inequality</td>
<td>Ch. 5, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>In-Class Quiz</td>
<td>Ch. 9, 12</td>
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<td>The Medicalization of Society &amp; Public Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>Social Construction of Disability, Aging and Dying</td>
<td>Ch. 10, 11</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Reading Week</td>
<td>No reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>No Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Health Program Evaluation Part I</td>
<td>Additional Readings on OWL</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Health Program Evaluation Part II</td>
<td>Additional Readings on OWL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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| 11   | March 17 | Food Insecurity in Canada
Health Care System in Canada                                           | Ch. 13
Additional Readings on OWL                   |
| 12   | March 24 | Global Health Inequalities & Case Studies                             | Additional Readings on OWL                 |
| 13   | March 31 | **Group Presentation**
**Group Paper due by Friday April 3 (4:00pm)**                          | No Reading                                 |
Important Policies

A Note on 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 (http://www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations
You may not use any electronic devices during examinations. Computer marked multiple-choice tests/exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:
Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work
Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met. Two important exceptions to this rule: SRAs will not be allowed for final examinations or assessments worth more than 30% of a given course.

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds).

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or
midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having_problems/Self_Reported_Absence.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:
http://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 with emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a list of options of how to get help.