



Western University
SOCIOLOGY 2246A-001
Sociology of Health and Illness
Summer 2021
Distance Studies

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Lin
Office Hours: By Appointment
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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.

Course Delivery Method

The content of this course will be delivered fully online via **an asynchronous learning format**. Asynchronous learning means that the instructor and the students in the course all engage with the course content **at different times (and from different locations)**. The instructor provides students with a sequence of units which the students move through as their schedules permit. Each unit might make use of assigned readings or uploaded media, online quizzes, discussion boards, and more. The instructor guides the students, provides them with feedback, and assesses them as needed.

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):

Germov, J., & Hornosty, J. (Eds.) 2016. "Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology, Second Canadian Edition. Oxford University Press. (ISBN: 0199018138)

(Additional readings are posted on OWL)

Course Expectation

This course is delivered fully online. The instructor will post weekly pre-recorded lectures on OWL. Students are expected to complete assigned reading and listen to recorded lectures. There are no participation or attendance grades, but failure to complete weekly reading and recorded lectures will put you at a disadvantage. Much of the course is cumulative, so time management and self-disciplining are crucial to success in this course. If you have questions, please feel free to email me or set up a Zoom meeting with me.

Method of Evaluation

Online Quiz (Wednesday, June 2)	20%
Online Midterm Exam (Wednesday, June 16)	30%
Group Health Case Study Report (Friday 23)	20%
Online Final Exam (TBA)	30%
Total	100%

Evaluation Breakdown

Online Quiz (Wednesday, June 2) – 20%

This online quiz is worth 20% of your total grade and test materials from **May 3 to May 30**. This quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions only. Use my pre-recorded lectures as your preparation materials. You will have at least 12 hours to complete the quiz on OWL.

Online Midterm Exam (Wednesday, June 16) – 30%

This online midterm exam is worth 30% of your total grade and covers **materials from May 3 to June 13**. This exam consists of multiple-choice questions only. You should use lecture slides and class notes as your main preparation materials. You will have at least 12 hours to complete this exam on OWL.

Group Health Case Study Report (Friday, July 23 by 11:55pm) - 20%

In this course, students will form a group of **4** and conduct 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 Assignment Tab on OWL, by **11:55pm, July 23**. Deduction will apply to late submission (5% per day). Please include every member's name, student number and my name on the cover page.

Online Final Exam (Between July 26-27) – 30%

The closed-book final exam is worth 30% of your total grade. It will be **cumulative** from the beginning of this course. It 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

Week	Date	Topics and Evaluations	Readings
1	May 3-9	Introduction to the Course The Social Context of Health & Illness	Ch. 1
2	May 10-16	Theory & Methods in Studying Health & Illness Group Formation (3 or 4 people as a group)	Ch. 2, 3
3	May 17-23	Class, Health Inequality & Social Justice	Ch. 4
4	May 24-30	Gender, Race, & Health Inequality	Ch. 5, 6
5	May 31-June 6	Online Quiz (June 2) The Medicalization of Society	Ch. 9
6	June 7-13	Social Construction of Disability, Aging & Dying	Ch. 10, 11
7	June 14-20	Online Midterm Exam (June 16)	No reading
8	June 21-27	Health Program Evaluation Part I	No Reading
9	June 28-July 4	Health Program Evaluation Part II	Additional Readings on OWL
10	July 5-11	Food Insecurity in Canada Health Care System in Canada	Ch. 13 Additional Readings on OWL
11	July 12-18	Global Health Inequalities & Case Studies	Additional Readings on OWL
12	July 19-23	Group Work Week (Paper due on July 23)	No Reading
13	July 26-27	Final Exam Week	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>).

Use of Recording Devices and Course Content

Course instructors own and retain the intellectual property rights of their teaching materials. These rights extend to materials used in online settings and digital learning management systems like Owl or Zoom. Students do not have our permission to make audio or video recordings of lectures, take pictures of lecture material, or distribute any course content for nefarious purposes (E.g. for sale or to cheat on exams). It is the decision of the instructor as to how and when teaching materials can be shared or used. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of pre-recorded lectures or other course materials. Nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

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

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.