



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2246B-001
Sociology of Health and Illness
Winter 2024

Delivery Method: In-person
Instructor: Dr. Anna Zajacova
Office Hours: TBD
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This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.

Course Description

This course examines how health and illness are related to social processes and social structure. We will investigate how the social organization of Canadian society influences and is influenced by the types and distribution of disease and illness. Patterns of health and illness in Canada will be studied in relation to the variables of age, gender, class and race. In addition the impact of stress, work and the environment on the health of Canadians will be addressed. This will be followed by an examination of the social experience of illness.

Prerequisite(s): None

Anti-requisite(s): SOC 2245

Course Objectives:

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.

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 Canada

Course Materials

- Juanne Nancarrow Clarke. 2021. Health, Illness and Medicine in Canada, 2nd edition. OUP.
- Additional readings will be provided on OWL.

Communication

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Method of Evaluation

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Evaluation Breakdown

Class attendance and participation	16%
Photovoice assignment	12%
Infographic assignment	13%
Mid-term exam	26%
Final exam	33%

See below for due dates.

- Class attendance and participation will be collected on an ongoing basis in most classes, largely via iclicker questions.
- The photovoice assignment will be a one-page work comprising a photograph that illustrates a key topic in social determinants of health. The photo will be accompanied by short text (1 rMid-term and final exams will be in class, 75 and 90 minutes, respectively, closed-book, predominantly multiple choice but also other question formats possible (fill-in-the-blank, short answers)

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:

This pertains to the ongoing class attendance and participation assessments. We apply universal accommodation of only counting the top 75% marks; the lowest 25% (which may include zero marks due to class absence) will be dropped automatically. No further accommodation is offered.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Tentative; changes may occur and will be announced on OWL and in class.

Week 1, 1/9	Introduction to medical sociology Readings:
Week 2, 1/16	Theory and methods in sociology of health and illness Readings:
Week 3, 1/23	Social status and health Readings:
Week 4, 1/30	Demographic inequalities in health Readings:
Week 5, 2/6	Social-psychological factors in health (stress, social support) Readings:
Week 6, 2/13	Social construction of health and illness, medicalization Readings: Photovoice assignment due 2/13
2/20 No class, Reading Week	
Week 7, 2/27	Mid-Term Exam
Week 8, 3/5	Experience of illness, aging, and dying Readings:
Week 9, 3/12	The medical profession Readings:
Week 10, 3/19	Nursing and allied health professions Readings:
Week 11, 3/26	Health care systems – models and evaluation Readings: Infographic assignment due 3/26
Week 12, 4/2	Health care system in Canada Readings:

Final exam time and room TBD

Academic Policies.

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf)” document https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health

2023-2024