
H S 301 (39095) / SOC 308S (45320)
INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND SOCIETY
FALL 2017
CLA 0.126, MW 10:00-11:30

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The principle objective of H S 301/SOC 308S is to offer students a broad overview of health and society from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. We will examine how social forces influence health and disease in U.S. society, including cultural, economic, and demographic considerations. We will explore why rates of disease vary among different populations and how cultural and structural inequalities shape access to healthcare and affect morbidity and mortality. How do economic factors, politics, public perceptions of morality, and historical biases against specific populations shape our modern-day understandings and experiences of health and illness? We will also examine how social forces shape the very definitions of health, illness, and disease categories, and thereby medical diagnoses and treatments. We will then consider the social consequences of the commodification of healthcare and how new technologies are transforming our current healthcare system and the nature of the patient-physician relationship. Our course readings and discussions will help us address current bioethical controversies that continue to influence our beliefs about health and illness and shape our very understandings about human rights and personhood. This course is built around lectures (including guest lectures), class discussion, and film screenings and discussion.

For those students interested in the Health and Society (H S) major in the College of Liberal Arts, this course will count as the Introduction to Health and Society course that is required for the H S major. This course also may be used to fulfill the social and behavioral sciences component of the university core curriculum and addresses the following four core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, empirical and quantitative skills, and social responsibility.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- Analyze contemporary health issues from a variety of disciplinary and professional perspectives.
- Explain how social location, the media, and economic forces shape health behaviors and outcomes.
- Explain how social and cultural factors shape contemporary understandings and experiences of health and illness and death and dying in the U.S.
- Critically evaluate the assumptions, motives, and evidence that individuals and groups use to make specific claims about health and illness.

COURSE MATERIALS

Gawande, Atul. 2014. *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. New York: Metropolitan.

Course readings also include many scholarly articles, book chapters, and popular news articles. Unless otherwise indicated, these are all available on Canvas. Viewing TED Talks and other online videos are also required throughout the term. When indicated on the syllabus, these should be viewed before the class meeting in which they are listed.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

This course is organized in a lecture format, but it is greatly enhanced by your participation. For variety's sake, I will often incorporate short video-clips, group activities, and/or writing exercises in our class session. We will also spend considerable time each week discussing the readings and our own experiences, interests, and knowledge in this area. Please remember that discussions will only be as rich as you all make them, so it is essential that everyone come prepared to speak about the readings *thoughtfully and critically*. Your final evaluation for the course will be broken down as follows:

In-Class Activities/Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend class, read assignments before each class, and actively participate in classroom discussions during the week. Six times during the semester I will ask students to complete a short group assignment in class. These will not be announced, but will count toward your final grade. You will either be assigned 100 points for participating, or 0 points for not participating. You must be in attendance to receive credit. Five of the six activities will count towards your grade, allowing you to miss one activity and still earn full credit for this portion of your grade. Since one of the six exercises can be dropped, this should allow for any brief illness or unforeseen emergency during the term.

If you have an extended illness, you should alert your TA immediately, **before** the missed classes, providing relevant documentation. Explaining why you were not in an in-class activity *after* it has occurred will not be sufficient. If you have a university-related conflict that requires you miss more than one class period during the term (athletics, scholastic competitions, or other UT-approved trips or performances), you must provide me with relevant documentation **in**

advance of any missed classes, preferably at the beginning of the term if you know about them far in advance.

PLEASE NOTE: While I will not take daily attendance in class, you should consider that attendance is mandatory. So if you just decide not to attend class regularly, be forewarned that chronic absences will, minimally, affect this portion of your grade. And while tardiness is always rude and disruptive, it may also adversely affect this portion of your grade; students who arrive late risk missing this activity and will NOT receive credit for the day.

Reading Responses (RR) (30%)

Students are expected to keep up with the reading for the class. Six times during the semester you will be asked to write a short response paper (double-spaced, between 300-500 words, max). I will post a prompt on the dates indicated on the syllabus. All reading response papers are due by 5:00p.m. on Canvas on the due dates listed on the syllabus. Late papers will have 10 points deducted for each 24-hour period they are late, starting at 5:01p.m.

What will these papers look like? Some weeks I'll ask you to dig deep and show your understanding of the readings. In other instances, I'll ask you to link the readings in class to other timely health-related news stories I will also post to Canvas. Of the six reading responses posted throughout the term, the top five will count toward your final grade. RRs will be graded as "near perfect"(100), "exceeds expectations" (90), "meets expectations, but has a few errors in clarity, content, or writing mechanics (80), "meets minimum expectations with significant problems in clarity, content, or writing mechanics" (70), or "not worthy of credit" (0). See course schedule for the due dates for Reading Responses (marked **RR**).

PLEASE NOTE: Your grade will not only be based on how thoroughly and thoughtfully you address the prompt or question, but also on writing style and mechanics. You also **must** adhere to word count restrictions and submit the assignment on time to receive full credit. Papers that exceed 500 words will not receive full credit. The quality of your work matters—any of these errors will fail to "exceed" our expectations.

Exams (60%)

Three exams (worth 20% each) will be given to assess your level of mastery of the course material, including assigned readings, videos, lectures (including guest lectures), and in-class films and other media presentations. All exams will be administered during class time on the following dates: 10/9, 11/13, and finally on 12/11. While each exam will primarily cover material presented since the last exam, fundamental concepts will likely appear on later exams. All exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and/or short answer questions.

Overall semester averages will earn the following letter grades:

93-100: A	90-92.9: A-	
87-89.9: B+	83-86.9: B	80-82.9: B-
77-79.9: C+	73-76.9: C	70-72.9: C-
67-69.9: D+	63-66.9: D	60-62.9: D- 0-59.9: F

Course grades will be assigned strictly according to this scale, with no rounding guaranteed (so 92.7 earns an A-, not an A; 89.9 earns a B+, not an A-).

ATTENDANCE AND MISSED COURSE MATERIAL

Attendance in this course is mandatory, though I will not take it. Class meetings will always include content not included in the readings, for which you are responsible. If you are unable to attend class, it is YOUR responsibility to approach other classmates to find out what you might have missed. Please do not approach me (or your TA) for information about what you might have missed unless you have an approved, documented absence.

CONTACTING US

We encourage you to contact us if/when you have questions about the course material. The best way to meet with me or your TA is to come to office hours. If you would like to meet with us but are unable to attend our scheduled office hours, please email us to set up an alternate appointment time. Email is the best way to contact us. The subject of your email should include an appropriate subject heading that includes our course number (e.g. H S 301/SOC 308S). We will do our best to respond within 24 hours during the week (Monday-Friday 8-5p.m.), but our response times will likely be longer on weekends and holidays.

PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to arrive prepared for class, having completed all assigned readings and watched all assigned Ted Talks for that day (and any preceding class periods). I hope that you will participate in class discussions. Participation indicates to me that you are actively engaged in the learning process. I strongly encourage your questions, comments, and the exchange of ideas as they relate to course material. During lecture, I will often open up the floor for discussion. Regular and constructive participation can only help improve your semester grade.

TECHNOLOGY/COMPUTER USE

To maintain an engaged and focused classroom without distractions, I highly restrict the use of laptops and tablets. If you wish to use your laptop or tablet for note taking, you **MUST** 1) receive permission from me ahead of time, and 2) agree to sit in the front 3 rows of the lecture hall whenever you are using your laptop/tablet. I reserve the right to revoke this permission at any point if you are using your computer for any activity other than taking notes. This means no browsers open, and no social media of any kind. Phones are never allowed during class. When class begins, you should silence them and **put them away** for the duration of class. Constantly refreshing your phone to get updated texts or news updates is considered “use” and is distracting to everyone. I reserve the right to deduct points from your “in-class participation” grade if you ignore this rule.

EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOR IN CLASS

Students who attend class are expected to arrive on time, stay for the entire session, and to observe basic rules of civility and decorum. If you participate in class, I expect you to interact respectfully with your peers and with me. I reserve the right to deduct points from your “in-class participation” grade if you ignore this rule. If you must arrive late or leave early in any class period, you must ask my permission ahead of time. If you must leave early, be sure to sit near an

exit to decrease the chance that you will disturb your student colleagues. As I mentioned earlier, using cell phones to send or receive text messages is strictly forbidden. When you arrive to class, please put your phone away immediately.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Texas provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office in the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone). Additional information can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>. Students requiring special accommodations should bring this issue to my attention by **September 11th** so I can make the appropriate scheduling arrangements for the term.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND MISCONDUCT

All work for this course must be your own, and you must properly cite others in all of your writing assignments. Academic dishonesty or misconduct of *any* sort will not be tolerated. This includes a strict prohibition of using work you have written for other classes for our class writing assignments. You will be held accountable for understanding and accepting responsibility for the University of Texas's policies on scholastic dishonesty as well as the UT honor code which are outlined at the following web addresses:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/spot_honorcode.php

If you have any questions about the UT's policy regarding academic integrity please see me before you begin preparing for your first written assignments.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

If you wish to improve your writing outside of class, I recommend visiting the University Writing Center. You can contact UWC representatives at 512-471-6222 or visit the office at the UT Learning Commons at PCL 2.330.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

If you must miss a class, a writing assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence." By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY

Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergence in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routs may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

NOTE: Dates, topics, assignments, and due dates are subject to change.

DAY	DATE	TOPIC AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
Wednesday	8/30	<u>Introduction to the course, review syllabus</u>
PART 1: SETTING THE “SOCIAL” STAGE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH PARADIGMS		
Monday	9/4	HOLIDAY: NO CLASS
Wednesday	9/6	<u>Social Frameworks for Thinking about Health</u> Johnson, Allen. 1997. The Forest and the Trees. Introduction and Chapter 1. Jones, David S., Scott H. Podolsky, and Jeremy Greene. 2012. “The Burden of Disease and the Changing Task of Medicine.” <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> 366(25): 2333-2338. Scott, Janny. 2005. “Life at the Top Isn’t just Better, it’s Longer.”
Monday	9/11	<u>Health Paradigms and the Health Transition</u> Harper, Kristin and George Armelagos. 2010. The changing disease-scape in the third epidemiological transition. <i>International journal of environmental research and public health</i> , 7(2), pp.675-697. “Deadly, Drug-Resistant ‘Superbugs’ Pose Huge Threat, W.H.O. Says” RR 1 DUE FRIDAY 9/15 at 5:00PM
Wednesday	9/13	<u>Social Causes of Health and Longevity - Upstream/Downstream Perspectives</u> Link, Bruce G. and Jo Phelan. 1995. “Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease.” <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 35:(Extra Issue): 80-94. <u>Watch at home:</u> “What Makes Us Get Sick? Look Upstream.” TED Talk. Rishi Manchanda.
Monday	9/18	<u>Social Causes of Health and Longevity Continued / Key Concepts and Methodologies in Population Health</u> Marmot, Michael. <i>Status Syndrome</i> . Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2.
Wednesday	9/20	<u>Status, Stress and Health</u> Marmot, Michael. <i>Status Syndrome</i> . Chapters 3 and 4 <u>Watch at home:</u> “Stress: Portrait of a Killer” (56 minutes on Youtube) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYG0ZuTv5rs <u>Guest Lecture:</u> Sam Twito
Monday	9/25	<u>The US Health Care System in International Comparison</u> Avendano, Mauricio and Ichiro Kawachi. 2014. “Why Do Americans Have Shorter Life Expectancy and Worse Health than do People in other High-Income Countries?” <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i> 35: 307-325. Davis, Karen, Kristof Stremkis, David Squires and Cathy Schoen. 2014. “Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: How the Performance of the U.S. Health Care System Compares Internationally.”

		<p>Commonwealth Fund.</p> <p><u>Guest Lecture:</u> Nina Palmo</p> <p>RR 2 DUE FRIDAY 9/29 at 5:00PM</p>
Wednesday	9/27	<p><u>Models of Health Care Coverage</u></p> <p>“Health Care Systems, Four Basic Models”</p> <p>“Health Insurance Coverage: Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey 2016” by Robin A. Cohen, Ph.D., Emily P. Zammitti, M.P.H., and Michael E. Martinez, M.P.H., M.H.S.A Division of Health Interview Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics.</p> <p><u>Guest Lecture:</u> Nina Palmo</p>
Monday	10/2	<p><u>Social Integration and Health</u></p> <p>Umberson, Debra and Jennifer Karas Montez. 2010. Social Relationships and Health: A Flashpoint for Health Policy. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 51(S) S54–S66.</p> <p><u>Guest Lecture:</u> Professor Marci Gleason</p>
Wednesday	10/4	Review for Exam #1
Monday	10/9	<p>EXAM #1</p> <p>Bring your #2 pencils to class</p>
PART 2: HEALTH IN CONTEXT/ THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH		
Wednesday	10/11	<p><u>The Social and Economic Context of the Food We Eat</u></p> <p>Mark Bittman, Michael Pollan, Rocardo Salvador and Oliver De Schutter. 2014. “How a National Food Policy Could Save Millions of American Lives.” <i>Washington Post</i>. November 7, 2014.</p> <p>Pollan, Michael. 2006. “The Consumer: A Republic of Fat.” Chapter 6 in <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals</i>. New York: Penguin.</p> <p><u>In-class film:</u> <i>Food, Inc. (94 min)</i></p>
Monday	10/16	<p><u>The Social and Economic Context of the Food We Eat</u></p> <p>“Understanding the Connections: Food Insecurity and Obesity.” Research Brief by Food Research and Action Center (FRAC).</p> <p>“Disparities and Access to Healthy Food in the United States: A Review of Food Deserts Literature.”</p> <p><u>In-class film:</u> <i>Food, Inc. (94 min)</i></p> <p>RR 3 DUE FRIDAY 10/20 at 5:00PM</p>
Wednesday	10/18	<p><u>The Social and Economic Context of Health Risk Behaviors- Obesity</u></p> <p>Himes, Christine L. 2011. “The Demography of Obesity.” Chapter 3 (pp. 35-47) in <i>The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Obesity</i>, edited by John Cawley. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Puhl, Rebecca M. and Chelsea A. Heuer. 2010. “Obesity Stigma: Important Considerations for Public Health.” <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 100(6): 1019-1028.</p>

		<p><u>Watch at home:</u> “Why Dieting Doesn’t Usually Work.” TED Talk Sandra Aamodt</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Sam Twito</p>
Monday	10/23	<p><u>Socioeconomic Status and Health</u></p> <p>Lantz, Paula, et al. 1998. “Socioeconomic Factors, Health Behaviors, and Mortality.” <i>JAMA</i> 279(21):1703-1708.</p> <p>Tavernise, Sabrina. “Disparity in Life Spans of the Rich and the Poor is Growing.” <i>The New York Times</i>. February 12, 2016.</p> <p>Paula A. Braveman, MD, MPH, Catherine Cubbin, PhD, Susan Egerter, PhD, David R. Williams, PhD, and Elsie Pamuk, PhD. “Socioeconomic Disparities in Health in the United States: What the Patterns Tell Us.” <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> Supplement 1, 2010, Vol 100, No. S1.</p> <p><u>In-class film:</u> Excerpt from “In Sickness and in Wealth,” Episode 1 of <i>Unnatural Causes</i></p>
Wednesday	10/25	<p><u>Socioeconomic Status and Health</u></p> <p>“Why Does Education Matter to your Health?” RWJ Brief.</p> <p>“The Association Between Income and Life Expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014”, <i>The Journal of the American Medical Association</i>. Executive Summary.</p>
Monday	10/30	<p><u>Race, Ethnicity, and Health</u></p> <p>Williams, David R. and Michelle Sternthal. 2010. “Understanding Racial-Ethnic Disparities in Health: Sociological Contributions.” <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 51: S15-27.</p> <p>Silverstein, Jason. “How Racism is Bad for Our Bodies.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. March 12, 2013.</p> <p>Fuentes-George. “Flint’s structural racism: This is why providing poisoned water to the city’s citizens seemed like a reasonable idea.” Salon.com. February 7, 2016.</p>
Wednesday	11/1	<p><u>Race, Ethnicity, and Health</u></p> <p>Franzini, Luisa, John Ribble, and Arlene Keddie. 2001. “Understanding the Hispanic Paradox.” <i>Ethnicity & Disease</i> 11:496–518.</p> <p><u>In-class film:</u> Part 2: “When the Bough Breaks” from <i>Unnatural Causes</i> (29 minutes)</p> <p>RR 4 DUE FRIDAY 11/3 at 5:00PM</p>
Monday	11/6	<p><u>Gender and Health</u></p> <p>Rieker, Patricia, Chloe Bird, and Martha Lang. 2010. “Understanding Gender and Health: Old Patterns, New Trends, and Future Directions.” Pp. 52–74 in <i>Handbook of Medical Sociology</i>, 6th Edition, edited by C. Bird, P. Conrad, A. Fremont, and S. Timmermans. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.</p> <p><u>Watch at home:</u> “Why Domestic Violence Victims Don’t Leave.” TED Talk. Leslie Morgan Steiner</p> <p><u>Watch at home:</u> “Violence against women—it’s a men’s issue.” TED Talk. Jackson Katz</p>
Wednesday	11/8	<p><u>Gender and LGBTQ Health</u></p> <p>Courtenay, Will. 2000. “Constructions of Masculinity and their Influence on Men’s Well-being: A Theory of Gender and Health.” <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 50:1385–1401.</p>

		<p>Readings on LGBTQ Health TBA</p> <p><u>Guest Lecture:</u> Emily Paine</p>
Monday	11/13	EXAM #2 Bring your #2 pencils to class
PART 3: CONTEMPORARY TOPICS IN HEALTH AND ILLNESS		
<p>Wednesday</p> <p>RR 5 POSTED</p>	11/15	<p><u>Morality, Politics, and Health</u></p> <p>Morone, James. 2005. "Morality, Politics, and Health Policy." <i>Policy Challenges in Modern Health Care</i>. Edited by David Mechanic, Lynn B. Rogut, David Colby, and James R. Knickman. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.</p> <p>Schaffner, William. 2011. "Have We Politicized Our Public Health?"</p> <p>Additional short articles on politics and health TBA</p> <p>RR 5 DUE MONDAY 11/20 at 5:00PM</p>
Monday	11/20	<p><u>The Social Construction and Commodification of Health and Illness</u></p> <p>Freedman, David. 1992. "The Aggressive Egg." <i>Discover Magazine</i></p> <p>Brown, Harriet. 2015. "How Obesity Became a Disease." <i>The Atlantic</i>. March 24, 2015.</p> <p>"There's Nothing Wrong with Medicalizing Childbirth."</p> <p>"Pregnancy is Way Better without an OB/GYN."</p> <p>Moynihan, Ray. 2003. "The Making of a Disease: Female Sexual Dysfunction." <i>British Medical Journal</i> 326:45-7.</p> <p>"F.D.A. Approves Addyi, a Libido Pill for Women." <i>The New York Times</i>. August 18, 2015.</p> <p><u>Watch at home:</u> "Are we Over-Medicalized?" TED Talk. Ivan Oransky.</p> <p>RR 5 DUE MONDAY 11/20 at 5:00PM</p>
Wednesday	11/22	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS: NO CLASS
<p>Monday</p> <p>RR 6 POSTED</p>	11/27	<p><u>The Opioid Crisis in American Society</u></p> <p>Harris, Gardiner. "Congress Splits Over Bill Aimed at Nation's Opioid Epidemic." <i>The New York Times</i>. July 6, 2016.</p> <p>Meier, Barry and Abby Goodnough. "New Ways to Treat Pain Meet Resistance." <i>The New York Times</i>. June 22, 2016.</p> <p>Additional readings on the Opioid epidemic TBA</p> <p>RR 6 DUE FRIDAY 12/1 at 5:00PM</p>
Wednesday	11/29	<p><u>Aging and Growing Old in the US</u></p> <p>Gawande, Ch. 1-4.</p> <p>Rauch, Jonathan. "The Real Roots of Midlife Crisis." <i>The Atlantic</i>. December 14, 2014.</p> <p><u>Watch at home:</u> "How to Live to be 100+" TED Talk. Dan Buettner</p>

Monday	12/4	<u>Death and Dying in the US</u> Gawande, Ch. 5-7. <u>Watch at home:</u> Centra Hospice Documentary “Except for Six.” <i>58:30 min</i> Available at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8tp-S58LhM <u>Guest Lecture:</u> Nancy McCranie <u>Death and Dying in the US</u> Gawande, Ch. 8 and Epilogue “Should I Help My Patients Die?”
Wednesday	12/6	
Monday	12/11	EXAM #3 Bring your #2 pencils to class

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