

**Syllabus**  
**Medical Sociology, SYO 4402-1, Fall 2006**  
Florida State University, Department of Sociology

T & R, 8:00-9:15 a.m.  
0006A LSB (Library Science Building)

*Last Updated: 9/13/2006*

Instructor: **Dr. Annette Schwabe**  
Office: **425 Bellamy Building**  
Office Hours: **M: 12-1:00 & W: 9:30-11:30**  
**or by appointment**

E-mail: [aschwabe@fsu.edu](mailto:aschwabe@fsu.edu)  
Phone: **644-4456 (my office)**  
**or 644-6416 (Sociology Dept.)**

Instructor's Website: <http://schwabe.socprobs.net>

**Note: You may leave printed materials for me in the Department of Sociology office, 5<sup>th</sup> floor Bellamy.**

**Teaching Assistant:**

Sandra Colby, Bellamy (504)

**Office Hours:** T & R, 2:30-4:00 p.m.  
**Phone:** 644-6416 (Dept.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Medicine, as a social institution, has grown in size and importance in the American economy and in social life. Accordingly, the field of medical sociology is currently one of the fastest growing and largest sub-discipline in American sociology. The medical section of the American Sociological Association (ASA) is second in size only to the gender section, highlighting the importance of this area in both academia and society. My aim for this course is to provide students with a working knowledge of the important issues and research the social factors that influence and are influenced by health, health care and the medical sector. In addition, I intend to help students become aware of the ways in which how health is perceived, diagnosed, treated and paid for are outcomes of broad cultural and social norms in society.

Medical sociology as a field of study strives to be independent of the medical profession. The medical profession's values, assumptions, and organization are data for study and analysis. The values and assumptions underlying the medical definition of health are not necessarily the same as those underlying the sociological definition of health. Consequently, some of the conclusions this course arrives may sometimes seem radical. For example, a sociological study of the medical care system in the U.S. could reveal that this system plays a significant role in *maintaining* inequalities and the persistence of health care problems rather than in improving health for all.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the semester, the student should be able to:

- Use sociological concepts to understand health and illness.
- Understand how aspects of health and medicine are measured and tracked.
- Think critically about the problems affecting the health care system.
- Describe the process of professionalization for health care practitioners and identify problems between professionals.
- Research a current issue in medical sociology, utilizing sociological concepts to describe and analyze it.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Texts and Books

***The Sociology of Health, Healing, and Illness, 5th Edition, 2006***

By Gregory L. Weiss and Lynne E. Lonquist, Pearson Education, Inc., Publishers  
ISBN: 0131928406.

This book will be available at the FSU Bookstore and at Bill's. You can also purchase the book (new and used) through [www.textbooksnow.com](http://www.textbooksnow.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.ecampus.com](http://www.ecampus.com) and other online book retailers.

#### Articles and Book Chapters

- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins.** 1892. "The Yellow Wallpaper," pp. 166-182 in: C.P. Gilman. 1999. *Herland, The Yellow Wall Paper and Selected Writings*. Edited and with notes by Denise Knight.
- Institute of Medicine.** 2006. *Report Brief: Preventing Medication Errors*.  
<http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3809/22526/35939/35943.aspx>
- Klass, Perri.** 1986. "Changing Attitudes About Not Changing Baby." *Discovery*, August. (Note: also published in the book: Klass, Perri. 1994. *A Not Entirely Benign Procedure: Four Years as a Medical Student*. New York:Plume Press. ISBN: 0452272580)
- Link, Bruce and Jo Phelan.** 1995. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Extra Issue: 80-94*.
- Loring, Marti and Brian Powell.** 1988. "Gender, Race, and DSM-III: A Study of the Objectivity of Psychiatric Diagnostic Behavior." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 29:1-22.
- Pampel, Fred.** 2006. "Socioeconomic Distinction, Cultural Tastes and Cigarette Smoking." *Social Science Quarterly*, 87:21-35.
- Quadagno, Jill.** 2004. "Why the United States Has No National Health Insurance: Stakeholder Mobilization Against the Welfare State, 1945-1996." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 45: Extra Issue:25-44.
- Satel, Sally and Jonathan Klick.** 2005. "The Institute of Medicine Report: Too Quick to Diagnose Bias." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 48:S15-S25.
- Shepherd, Lois.** 2005. "Shattering the Neutral Surrogate Myth in End-of-Life Decisionmaking: Terri Schiavo and Her Family." *Cumberland Law Review*, 35:575.  
<http://www.civilwarhistory.com/040299/medicalconditions.htm>

In addition to the alphabetical posting of readings, above, I've listed these articles in the syllabus schedule so you will know when to have them read. *I may assign some additional readings (e.g., short news articles) throughout the semester as determined relevant to our topic of study.*

#### **Suggested Reading:**

***The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down.*** By Anne Fadiman. Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, ISBN: 0374525641.

## COURSE CALENDAR

### PART I: PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH, HEALING, & ILLNESS

#### **Week 1, August 29 & 31: Overview of the field.**

Reading: Chapter 1 (Weiss and Lonquist)  
"A Matter of Life and Death: Magic Moments and Dark Hours in the History of Medicine"-First breath

#### **Week 2, September 5 & 7: History and development of scientific medicine, importance of a social perspective in understanding health and medicine.**

Reading: Chapter 2 (Weiss and Lonquist)  
Web article: *Medical Conditions and Care in the Civil War*  
"A Matter of Life and Death: Magic Moments and Dark Hours in the History of Medicine"-Wild Years

**Exam I (Take Home) due in class: Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**

### PART II: INFLUENCE OF THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON HEALTH AND ILLNESS

#### **Week 3, September 12 & 14: Social epidemiology**

Reading: Chapter 3 (Weiss and Lonquist)  
Pampel article  
"Influenza 1918"

**Week 4, September 19 & 21: *Fundamental (social) and proximate causes of disease.***

Reading: Chapter 4 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
Link and Phelan article  
Kolata article on Life Expectancy\_NYT

**Week 5, September 26 & 28: *Social Stress***

Reading: Chapter 5 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
Loring & Powell article

**Exam II: Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.**

PART III: HEALTH AND ILLNESS BEHAVIOR

**Week 6, October 3 & 5. *Health behavior***

Reading: Chapter 6 (Weiss and Lonnquist)

**Week 7, October 10 & 12. *Medicalization, illness experience***

Reading: Chapter 7 (Weiss & Lonnquist)  
Perkins Gilman, *Yellow Wallpaper*  
“Big Bucks, Big Pharma” (if available)

**Exam III: Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**

PART IV: HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PATIENTS

**Week 8 (remainder), October 19. *Physicians & professions.***

Reading: Chapter 8 (Weiss and Lonnquist)

**Week 9, October 24 & 26. *Medical education & socialization of physicians.***

Reading: Chapter 9 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
Klass article

**Week 10, October 31 & November 2. *Nurses, allied health workers, complementary & alternative medicine.***

Reading: Chapters 10 & 11 (Weiss and Lonnquist)

**Week 11, November 7 & 9. *The physician-patient relationship.***

Reading: Chapter 12 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
IOM report on medication errors

**Week 12, November 14 & 16. *Professional & ethical obligations of physicians.***

Reading: Chapter 13 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
Satel and Klick article

“A Deadly Deception” (Tuskegee)

**Week 13, November 21 & 23. *Exam, Holiday.***

Reading: Quadagno article

**Exam IV: Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**NO CLASS on Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>: Thanksgiving Day.**

MAKE SURE TO READ the article by Quadagno before you return from break.

## PART V: THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

**Week 14, November 28 & 30. *The health care system of the United States, care delivery.***

Reading: Chapters 14 & 15 (Weiss and Lonnquist)  
Shepherd article

**Week 15, December 5 & 7. *Social implications of health technology, comparative health care systems.***

Reading: Chapters 16 & 17 (Weiss and Lonnquist)

**Exam V (FINAL): Tuesday, December 12, 10:00 a.m- noon.**

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Blackboard.** Mandatory participation in the online discussion forums if requested by the instructor. Students need to check Blackboard regularly to keep up with newly posted information and changes to the syllabus.

**Attendance.** Attendance is required. In order to measure attendance, I will take a sample of student attendance by circulating an attendance sheet for each student to sign ten times during the semester. I will give students one point for each verified attendance, for a total of 10 points, to be factored in to the final course score. Note: If you have questions about attendance, please contact the course TA before you contact me. I will cross-check attendance and resolve any problems, but the TA will keep attendance records and correspond with you about them. If you have an emergency and cannot attend class, please let the TA and me know ASAP (preferably, before class) via e-mail or phone. IF you have a valid excuse (e.g., evidence of having had emergency medical care), I will consider giving you an attendance point for that missed class. Class attendance and grades are nearly perfectly correlated so find a way to get to each and every class.

NOTE: we will enjoy the expertise of several guest speakers in this course. IF YOU MISS CLASS on these dates, you will lose 10 points from your course total, for each speaker missed. See *Blackboard*.

**Reading assignments:** Lectures will highlight and/or build on the readings so you should finish assigned readings *prior to* coming to class. Being prepared for class will also enhance your learning experience and allow you to ask questions about the material during the lecture on the assigned topic. I suggest you make your reading time productive by: 1) skimming section headings within each chapter or article before reading to get a “map” of the concepts covered; 2) write down a brief summary of what you’ve read; 3) jot down things you don’t understand so you can re-read that part of the text, bring it up in study sessions or ask me to clarify in class.

**Examinations.** The first exam will be a take home. The next four will be in-class exams – three mid-terms and one final. These exams will include multiple-choice, definitions, and short answer format items. *Mid-term exams* will not be cumulative as they will cover each sections of the course that they follow. The *final exam* will emphasize the fifth section of the course, but will include some questions that tap into key concepts and findings from the entire course. All exams=150 points, total (see point distribution, below).

Unless we get behind in covering topics and need to move an exam to a day or so later than scheduled, exams will be held in class on the dates specified in the syllabus calendar, above.

*Note: The date and time for the final is set by the university, please check the registrar’s schedule.*

([http://registrar.fsu.edu/dir\\_class/fall/exam\\_schedule.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/dir_class/fall/exam_schedule.htm))

I will administer make-up exams ONLY for emergencies or for extenuating circumstances. In order to get credit for the exam, you may need to take a different form of the exam (possibly with essay questions) AND give me a valid written excuse that I can keep for my records. If you know you will not be able to attend class on one of these dates, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with me to take the exam **before** the date scheduled. DO NOT SCHEDULE trips, flights, interviews, medical appointments, or any other events on exam dates.

**You will not be excused from the final exam** if you have decided to leave town before or on the scheduled date. Please see Florida State University's policy on final exams, which instructors and students are mandated to follow: [http://registrar.fsu.edu/dir\\_class/fall/exam\\_schedule.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/dir_class/fall/exam_schedule.htm)

**Assignments.**

Students will complete four assignments, worth 100 possible points, total. I will discuss the details of assignments in class well before they are due and will post them on the Blackboard website for this course. However, I have briefly listed the content of the four assignments below:

**Assignment 1:** *Drawing conclusions from health data.* This task requires you to examine health data from several sources and to draw conclusions about the findings. (15 points possible)

**Assignment 2:** *Analysis of "The Yellow Wallpaper."* Students will describe how two sociological theories (e.g., S-I, conflict, functionalist or "sub-theories") are exemplified by the content of this reading. (20 points possible)

**Assignment 3:** *Analysis of a health care issue portrayed in (instructor-selected) film.* (30 points possible) OR *"Topic of Choice" Analysis paper.*

**Assignment 4:** *Report on topical areas of the course.* Draw on course readings, lectures (instructor & speakers) and address one of four broad questions. (30 points possible)

- I will deduct 3 points the first day that an assignment is late, 3 more points on the second day after the due date and after 3 days I will give you a zero for that assignment.

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

Point Distribution			
Components	Points Possible	(% of final grade)	Exam & Due Dates
<b>Exam I (Take Home)</b>	<b>25</b>	10%	T, 9/12/06
<b>Exam II</b>	<b>30</b>	12%	R, 9/28/06
<b>Exam III</b>	<b>30</b>	12%	T, 10/17/06
<b>Exam IV</b>	<b>30</b>	12%	T, 11/21/06
<b>Exam V (Final)</b>	<b>40</b>	15%	T, 12/12/06: 10 a.m.-noon
<b>Assignment I</b>	<b>15</b>	6%	T, 9/19/06
<b>Assignment 2</b>	<b>20</b>	8%	T, 10/24/06
<b>Assignment 3</b>	<b>30</b>	12%	R, 11/9/06
<b>Assignment 4</b>	<b>30</b>	12%	T, 12/5/06
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>10</b>	4%	
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100%</b>	

- You will not receive letter grades for exams or assignments; I will add your points for attendance, exams and assignments to derive your final grade for the course.
- Grades assigned will be based on a class curve, so that grades are distributed, roughly, according to class performance. In order to estimate how you're doing along the way, use the following guidelines

A=90% of total points and above  
 B=76%-89% of total points  
 C=65%-75% of total points  
 D=50%-65% of total points  
 F=anything at or below 50% of points possible.

Extra Credit: I will not give any extra credit in this course. If you attend regularly, keep up with readings, study for exams and complete assignments on time, you will not need to do extra credit.

### **ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY**

Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in The Florida State University General Bulletin. The Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of these expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Policy: <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor's discretion. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy (<http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf>).

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Student Disability Resource Center, 108 Student Services Bldg., Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167, (850)644-9566 (voice), (850)644-8504 (TDD)  
E-mail: [SDRC@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:SDRC@admin.fsu.edu)  
Website: <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

### **CLASSROOM COURTESY**

Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. This means no cell phones, talking during lectures (unless recognized by the professor or discussion leader), reading newspapers, etc. during class. If you must have a cell phone to receive emergency calls about children or other family members, keep it on vibrate.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Students will be allowed to miss class due to observance of religious holidays but they are still responsible for all materials assigned outside and covered in class on the day(s) missed. You must talk with your instructor in advance of missing a class for religious holiday observance reasons.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused.

### **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor's discretion. Note that College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an "I" must be passing the course.

**SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY:** This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.