

Medical Sociology, Fall 2007
SYO 4402, Section 1
T & R, 2:00-3:15 p.m., LOV, Room 101

Last updated on 8/29/07

Instructor: Dr. Annette Schwabe

Office: 425 Bellamy Building

Office Hours: W: 10:00-noon & Th: 3:30-4:30
or by appointment

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

Teaching Assistant (TA):

- Patrick McGrady, 504 Bellamy. Office hours: 2 - 3 p.m., M & W; 8-9 a.m. T, and by appointment.

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.
- Understand why and how social inequality affects health.
- 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.

TEXTBOOK & READINGS

Weitz, Rose. 2007. *The Sociology of Health, Illness and Health Care: A Critical Approach, 4th Edition*. Thomson Wadsworth press. ISBN: 0-495-17203-0. At Bill's and FSU bookstore & available at on-line stores.

Farley, Tom and Deborah A. Cohen. *Prescription for a Healthy Nation: A New Approach to Improving our Lives by Fixing our Everyday World*. Beacon Press. ISBN:978-080702117-0

This book will be available at the FSU Bookstore and at Bill's after 9/9/07. You can also purchase the book (new and used) through www.textbooksnow.com, www.amazon.com, www.ecampus.com and other online book retailers.

Additional readings will be posted on the Blackboard course website in advance of the weeks during which they will be assigned.

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Articles and Book Chapters

- Gazelle, Gail. 2007. "Understanding Hospice." *New England Journal Of Medicine*, 357:321-324.
- 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.
- Klass, Perri. 1986. "Changing Attitudes About Not Changing Baby." *Discovery*, August. Also published in: Klass, Perri. 1994. *A Not Entirely Benign Procedure: Four Years as a Medical Student*. NY: Plume Press.
- Kolota, Gina. "Live Long or Die Young." *New York Times*, Aug. 31, 2006 (on life expectancy).
- Link, Bruce and Jo Phelan. 1995. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Extra Issue: 80-94*.
- 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.
- Scott, Janny. "Life at the Top in America isn't Just Better, its Longer." *New York Times*, 2005.
- 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.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4583139> (Science Friday show in Schiavo)
- <http://www.civilwarhistory.com/040299/medicalconditions.htm>

COURSE CONTENT AND OUTLINE

Part I: Social Factors and Illness

WEEK 1.

- T, Aug. 28** Introductions, course review, class exercise.
R, Aug. 30 Sociological approaches to health, illness and healthcare

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 1: Introduction.
Weitz text, Chapter 2. Epidemiology & Social Sources of Illness.

- **Film:** "A Matter of Life and Death: Magic Moments and Dark Hours in the History of Medicine -First Breath."

WEEK 2

- T, Sept. 4** Key terms, "epidemiological transition."
R, Sept. 6 Social sources of illness & fundamental causes.

- ❖ **Reading:** Link and Phelan article on fundamental causes.
Web article: *Medical Conditions and Care in the Civil War*

- ❖ **Film:** "Influenza 1918."

Exam I (Take Home) due in class on Thursday, 9/13/07

WEEK 3

- T, Sept. 11** Health behaviors and social stress.
R, Sept. 13 " " "

- ❖ **Reading:** Farley & Cohen (F&C), Preface, Chapter 1: The Wrong Remedy
F&C, Chapter 2: Greek Gods & Amer. Myths; and Chapter 3: Humans Behaving Badly

WEEK 4

- T, Sept. 18** Social distribution of illness in the U.S.
R, Sept. 20 Illness in developing nations

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 3: Social Distribution of Illness in the U.S. & Ch. 4: Devel. Nations
F&C: Chapter 14: Unequal Afflictions.

Assignment 1 due in class on Thursday 9/20/07.

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WEEK 5

T, Sept. 25 Wrap up Part I of course, exam review if time permits.
R, Sept. 27 **EXAM II**

- ❖ **Reading:** Kolata and Scott articles from the *NYT* (on Bb).
F&C, Chapter 4: Bell Curves and Bad Apples and Chapter 5: More is More

Part II: Meanings and Experiences of Illness

WEEK 6

T, Oct. 2- Social meanings of illness: what is "normal" and what is "deviant" or "sick?"
R, Oct. 4 Medicalization

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 5: Social Meanings of Illness.
F&C, Chapter 7: Playing by the Rules & Ch. 8: It's the Real Thing: Media.

Other: Clips on medicalization (SouthPark) and Nora Volkow, Dir., NIDA (DVD track 1, disc 2)

WEEK 7

T, Oct. 9 Experiencing Disability and Chronic Health Problems
R, Oct. 11 " " "

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 6: Disability.
F&C, Chapter 6: Sidewalks and Falling Children: Physical Structures.
Assignment 2. Due by class time on Tuesday, 10/16/07

WEEK 8

T, Oct. 16 Mental Illness (*Loring and Powell*)
R, Oct. 18 " " and wrap up section.

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 7: Sociology of Mental Illness.
F&C: Chapter 9: The Killer Leaf.

WEEK 9

T, Oct. 23 **EXAM III**

Part III: Health Care Systems, Settings, and Technologies

R, Oct. 25 U.S. Healthcare System and Reform

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz text, Chapter 8: U.S. Healthcare System.
Quadagno article: "Why the U.S. Has No National Health Insurance."

WEEK 10

T, Oct. 30 U.S. Healthcare System and Reform – *Ken Brummel-Smith, M.D.*
R, Nov. 1 Health Care Systems Cross-Nationally.

- ❖ **Reading:** F&C: Chapter 15: Health, Policies & Politics.
Weitz text, Chapter 9: Alternative Health Care *Systems*.

❖ **Film:** "Big Bucks, Big Pharma." Possibly: "Remaking American Medicine"

WEEK 11

T, Nov. 6 Health Care settings and Technologies
R, Nov. 8 " " " " and wrap up section

- ❖ **Audio:** Science Friday Clip on Schiavo and end of life issues: listen to clip before 11/13.
- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz, Chapter 10: Health Care Settings and Technologies.
Shepherd, Lois: "Shattering the Neutral Surrogate Myth" article on Bb.

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WEEK 12

T, Nov. 13 **EXAM IV.**
R, Nov. 15 The Medical Profession.

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz, Chapter 11: The Profession of Medicine
Klass article: "Baby Poop" on professional socialization of physicians.

Assignment 3 due by class time on Tuesday, 11/20/07

Part IV: Health Care Providers and Bioethics

WEEK 13

T, Nov. 20- The Medical Profession, continued & Alternative Health Care Providers.
R, Nov. 22 **NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Holiday break**

WEEK 14

T, Nov. 27- Alternative Health Care Providers
R, Nov. 29 Medical Ethics —*Robert Hood, Ph.D.*

- ❖ **Reading:** Chapter 12: Other HC Providers.
Gazelle article on hospice.

Assignment 4 DUE by class time on Tuesday, 12/04/07

WEEK 15

T, Dec. 4- Medical Ethics
R, Dec. 6 Course review and wrap up.

- ❖ **Reading:** Weitz, Chapter 13: Issues in Bioethics.
❖ **Film:** "The Deadly Deception" about the Tuskegee syphilis experiment.

FINAL EXAM: Friday, 12/14/07 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. in our usual classroom

NOTE: if you come more than 15 minutes late for an exam you will not be able to take it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

Attendance. I will not take attendance formally. However, student attendance is required and students will lose points if they miss in-class assignments or pop quizzes. Points for those in-class activities will be factored into the final cumulative points earned and will affect the course grade.

If you have an emergency and cannot attend class, please let me know ASAP (preferably, before class) via e-mail or phone. You will need a valid written excuse (e.g., evidence of having had emergency medical care), to get attendance points for any activity in that missed class. Class attendance and grades are nearly perfectly correlated so find a way to get to each and every class.

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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.

Examinations. The 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 last section of the course, but will include some questions that tap into key concepts and findings from the entire course.

Unless we get behind in covering topics, exams will be held in class on the dates specified in the syllabus.

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 (on FSU Registrar's website).

Assignments.

Students will complete four assignments, (briefly listed below). 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.

- Assignment 1: Drawing conclusions from health data.
- Assignment 2: Analysis of "The Yellow Wallpaper."
- Assignment 3: Inequalities in Health, patterns & causes paper.
- Assignment 4: Discretionary final project.

- I reserve the right to 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.

In-class exercises or quizzes.

If there is little class discussion (indicating that students might not be reading the assigned works) I will assign in-class exercises or quizzes a few times during the semester. Each exercise/quiz will be worth up to 10 points. You will hand in your work at the end of each of these classes and we will grade them as quickly as possible.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

- You will not receive letter grades for exams or assignments; I will add your points for all 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 I will post grade distributions and "approximate letter grade equivalents" for each score on an exam or total scores, to the date of posting. Note that anything at or below 50% of points possible will earn an "F" regardless of the class curve.

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

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throughout the process. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Policy: <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>

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.

CLASSROOM COURTESY

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

E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

In every e-note you send me or the course teaching assistants, please include your *first and last name, the course and the section number or date/time of our class*. If you do not include this critical information, I will likely reply to your note with an automated or blank reply since I might not know who "abc1234.fsu.edu" is or what course they're referring to!

Before asking questions about basic course information, please check the course Bb site and the syllabus. You will get the information you need much more quickly.

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
Website: <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

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

As specified in FSU policy, absences due to the following can be excused: religious holidays; representing FSU at official functions (e.g., intercollegiate debate or varsity sports events); verified emergencies, including medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals. *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.