

Medical Sociology, Fall 2008
SYO 4402, Section 1
T & R, 2:00-3:15 p.m., LON, Room 201

Last updated on 9/18/08

Instructor: Dr. Annette Schwabe
Office: 425 Bellamy Building
Office Hours: T & W: 11-12:30
or by appointment

E-mail: aschwabe@fsu.edu
Phone: 644-4456 (my office)
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Note: You may leave printed materials for me in the Department of Sociology office, 5th floor Bellamy
Or slide materials under my office door.

Teaching Assistants (TA):

- JoEllen Pederson, 506 Bellamy. Office hours: M: 11-noon; F: 11-1 and by appointment.
- Nadia Hernandez-Quan, 506 Bellamy. Office hours: T: 11-1; R: 11-12:30 and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Medicine is a social institution that has grown in size and importance economically and in social life. Accordingly, the field of medical sociology is currently one of the fastest growing and largest sub-discipline in American sociology, 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 social issues 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 health and the practice of health care 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. In this course, 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 & REQUIRED READINGS

Text

Brown, Phil. 2008. *Perspectives in Medical Sociology, 4th Edition.* Waveland Press.

10-digit ISBN: 1-57766-518X 13-digit ISBN: 978-1-57766-5182

The text will be available at the FSU Bookstore and at Bill's. Used copies available at the "usual" websites, including Amazon, for about \$28.00.

Additional readings may 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

- Conrad**, Peter and Valerie Leiter. 2004. "Medicalization, Markets, and Consumers." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 45 (Extra Issue):158-176.
- 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.
- Japsen**, Bruce. 2008. "MDs: Secret Shoppers Aren't Cure." *Chicago Tribune*, June 16.
- 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.
- Kolata**, Gina. "Live Long or Die Young." *New York Times*, Aug. 31, 2006 (on life expectancy).
- Kowalczyk**, Liz. "On Sly, Workers Rate Hospital Service." *Boston Globe*, June 13.
- Link**, Bruce and Jo Phelan. 1995. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Extra Issue: 80-94*.
- Scott**, Janny. 2005. "Life at the Top in America isn't Just Better, its Longer." *New York Times*.
- Singer**, Natasha. 2007. "Is the 'Mom Job' Really Necessary?" *New York Times, October 4*.
- Science Friday** show on Schiavo and end of life issues:
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4583139> (You are required to view first 12 minutes)
- Smith**, Daniel Jordan. 2007. "Modern Marriage, Men's Extramarital Sex, and HIV Risk in Southeastern Nigeria." *American Journal of Public Health*, 97:997-1005.
- Woolhandler**, Steffie, Terry Campbell, and David U. Himmelstein. 2003. "Costs of Health Care Administration in the U.S. and Canada." *New England Journal of Medicine*, 349:768-775.

Suggested Reading: Conrad, Peter. 2007. "Men and Medicalization of Andropause, Baldness, and Erectile Dysfunction." Chapter Two in *The Medicalization of Society*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. (In Dirac Science Library, RA418.C686 2007).

COURSE CONTENT AND OUTLINE

Part I: Social Factors and Health

WEEK 1.

- T, Aug. 26** Introductions, course review, class exercise.
R, Aug. 28 Approaches to health, illness and healthcare

- ❖ **Reading**: Link and Phelan article on fundamental causes (posted on Bb)
Brown (text/reader), Introduction, pp. ix-2 and Chapter 31 (Starr).

WEEK 2

- T, Sept. 2** Epidemiology & epidemiological transition
R, Sept. 4 Social sources of illness, "fundamental causes"

- ❖ **Reading**: Brown, Chs. 4, Limits of Epidemiology & 10, Worker Health and Safety.
Kolata (on Bb)
- ❖ **Film**: Carter & Kristof on "worms" in Africa, Carter in application of public health principles, McNeil on low-tech solutions to unclean water.

WEEK 3

- T, Sept. 9** Social inequality and health.
R, Sept. 11 " " "

- ❖ **Reading**: Brown, Chs. 1-3; Scott articles from the *NYT* (on Bb).
- ❖ **Film**: "Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?"

Exam I (Take Home) due in class on Tuesday, 9/16/08

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WEEK 4

T, Sept. 16 Perspectives on health and illness: medicalization, social resources, place.
R, Sept. 18 “ “ “ “ “

- ❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 6-8.
Assignment 1 due Tuesday, 9/23/08

WEEK 5

T, Sept. 23 Wrap up (and review if time permits).
R, Sept. 25 **In-class Assignment 1 (focus on inequality readings and lecture weeks 4 & 5).**

- ❖ **Reading:** Conrad & Leiter article on Medicalization and Singer's "Mommy Job" (on Bb)
- ❖ **Other:** Clip on medicalization (SouthPark)

Part II: Meanings and Experiences of Illness, Bioethics

WEEK 6

T, Sept. 30- **EXAM II**
R, Oct. 2 Social meanings of illness & illness careers.

- ❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 11, 13, & 15
- ❖ **Other:** Clip on college student and depression (NYT)

WEEK 7

T, Oct. 7 Social meanings of illness & illness careers.
R, Oct. 9 Patients and providers: interaction and trust.

- ❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 16, 17 & 19
- ❖ **Film:** Billy Fell on His Head (time permitting)

Assignment 2 (Gilman's Yellow Wallpaper). Due by class time on Tuesday, 10/14/08

WEEK 8

T, Oct. 14 Bioethics and medical technologies.
R, Oct. 16 “ “ “

- ❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 20, 22, & 23.
- ❖ **Podcast:** NPR's Science Friday on Schiavo case (April, 2005). See readings list, above for link.
- ❖ **Film:** The Deadly Deception.

WEEK 9

T, Oct. 21 **EXAM III**

Part III: Health Care Systems, Settings, and Providers

R, Oct. 23 U.S. health care system and reform.

- ❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 25-26.
- ❖ **Film:** Healthcare Around the World.

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WEEK 10

T, Oct. 28 U.S. health care system and reform.
R, Oct. 30 **Quiz & Team-based learning activity** on the health care system.

Reading: Brown, Ch. 27.
Woolhandler et. al. on costs in Canada and the U.S.

❖ **Film:** "Big Bucks, Big Pharma."

WEEK 11

T, Nov. 4 Health care provision.
R, Nov. 6 " " " " and wrap up section

❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 28 & 29
Gazelle (hospice).

WEEK 12

T, Nov. 11 **NO CLASS – VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY**
R, Nov. 13 **EXAM IV**

Reading: Japsen, Kowalczyk (medical secret shoppers).

Assignment 3 due by class time on Tuesday, 11/18/08

WEEK 13

T, Nov. 18- The medical profession.
R, Nov. 20 " " " "

Reading: Chs. 32 & 34
Klass (easy and fun read)

Part IV: Social Change: Health Social Movements

WEEK 14

T, Nov. 25- **In-class Assignment 2** (secret shoppers)
R, Nov. 27 **NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Holiday break**

❖ **Reading:** Brown, Ch. 35.

Assignment 4 DUE by class time on Tuesday, 12/02/08

WEEK 15

T, Dec. 2- Approaches to movements, AIDS activism, environmental justice.
R, Dec. 4 Course review and wrap up.

❖ **Reading:** Brown, Chs. 36 & 38.

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, 12/09/08 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 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.

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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.

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 section 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 five assignments, (briefly listed below); 2 in-class and 3 out. 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: Inequalities in Health.

Assignment 2: Analysis of "The Yellow Wallpaper."

Assignment 3: Final project.

In-class Assignment 1: Medicalization.

In-class Assignment 2: Secret shoppers.

- 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 TBLs.

There will be one Team-based learning activity in this course. This "TBL" will consist of a 10-item multiple-choice quiz on Chapter 26 (by Dr. Quadagno) in your text. I will then allow students to meet in groups and re-take the same quiz. I will average the two scores. Then, I will have the entire class debate the pros and cons of different health care systems and write up conclusions in a group.

If it seems that students might not be reading the assigned works or are having difficulty grasping the material, I will assign an *additional* TBL. You will hand in your work at the end of each of these classes and we will grade them as quickly as possible.

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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 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/>

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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.