

Class meets Thursdays 1:30-4:30 pm in SSC 2020

Instructor: Dr. Anna Zajacova

Email: anna.zajacova@uwo.ca

Office: SSC 5330

Office hours: Wednesdays 1-3 pm, Thursdays 11-12 pm

Teaching assistant: Mr. Riley Rier

Email: rrier@uwo.ca

Office: SSC 5311

Office: Tuesdays 1-2 pm

Prerequisite(s) 1.0 from: [Sociology 1020](#), [1021E](#), [1025A/B](#), [1026F/G](#), [1027A/B](#).

Antirequisite(s): [Sociology 2245](#).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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
- Critically evaluate the how a society's views on health and medical care fit within its broader cultural and structural perspectives.

CLASS STRUCTURE

The classes will combine lectures with student participation, individual and group exercises, in-group discussions, and active documentary viewing. In order to participate in the class, students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to the class.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Germov and Hornosty (Eds.) 2016. "Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology, Second Canadian Edition (Paperback)." Oxford University Press. ISBN-10: 0199018138
- **Additional readings as posted on OWL.**

**EVALUATION****Evaluation Breakdown**

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|---|------------|
| • Class attendance and participation | 10% |
| • 3 written assignments | 30% |
| • Mid-term exam | 25% |
| • Final exam | 35% |

There is no extra credit. Please work consistently throughout the semester. The timing, quantity, and types of assessment are carefully chosen to give you timely feedback on your performance and to draw on a broad spectrum of your skills and strengths.

In keeping with departmental grade guidelines, it is expected that the **class average for this course will be around 72%**. Should the final overall grades yield a value significantly lower, grades will be adjusted upward to ensure an appropriate mean for the class.

There is no routine provision for make-up examinations, tests or assignments.

Evaluation Details

- **Class preparation and participation (10% of the final grade).** The rationale behind this part of your grade is to come to class regularly and be prepared for the day's lecture by having completed all assigned readings. You are of course not expected to master the material prior to the lecture, only to read the assigned material so you are primed to absorb the lecture optimally, and to be able to contribute to discussions meaningfully, as well as to ask questions about issues that weren't clear. The evaluation will be via written answers to questions posed during a class and turned in or uploaded to OWL. Only your best 8 scores will count toward the final grade; therefore, no additional academic accommodations apply.

- **Written assignments (30% of the final grade).** There will be **3** assignments during the semester, each worth the same proportion of the final grade (10%). The assignment will be about 2-3-pages of analysis, reflection or other writing as assigned. The rationale of this item is to encourage you to think more deeply about topics we cover and practice writing in a low-stakes non-exam setting.
- **Midterm exam (25% of the final grade).** A mixed-format test, includes material covered up to reading week.
- **Final exam (35% of the final grade).** A mixed-format cumulative test, with greater emphasis on material covered since the midterm.

Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 8 percent of the per day late.

A crosswalk between letter, number, and adjectival grading

A+	90-100	Exceptional work, remarkable for an undergraduate student
A	80-89	Outstanding work, exceeds all or most requirements
B	70-79	Satisfactory, solid performance, meets all requirements
C	60-69	Competent work, meets most requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, meets some requirements, minimally acceptable
F	0-50	Unsatisfactory work, fails to meet requirements

IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday 1/10	First class
Thursday 1/31	Assignment 1 due
Thursday 2/21	Spring reading week, no class
Thursday 2/28	Mid-term exam
Thursday 3/14	Assignment 2 due
Thursday 4/4	Assignment 3 due, last class
Sunday 4/14, 2-4pm	Final exam, room TBD

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSOCIATED READINGS

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

Week 1, 1/10	Introduction to medical sociology Readings: Chapter 1
Week 2, 1/17	Theory and methods in sociology of health and illness Readings: Chapter 2 (pp 27-39 and 43-45) and Chapter 3 (pp 52-61)
Week 3, 1/24	Social status and health Readings: Chapter 4 and Mikkonen, Juha, and Dennis Raphael. (2010). <i>Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts</i> . Chapters 2-11. York University School of Health Policy and Management. http://thecanadianfacts.org/the_canadian_facts.pdf Choose 2 or 3 chapters that interest you and skim briefly.
Week 4, 1/31	Demographic inequalities in health Readings: Chapters 5, 6, 7 (select pages)
Week 5, 2/7	Social-psychological factors in health (stress, social support) Readings: Weiss, Gregory L. and Lynne E. Lonquist. 2012. "Social Stress." Pp. 94-115 in <i>The Sociology of Health, Healing, and Illness</i> : Prentice Hall. Parker-Pope, Tara. 2010. "Is Marriage Good for Your Health?" in <i>The New York Times</i> .
Week 6, 2/14	Social construction of health and illness, medicalization Readings: Chapter 9 Khullar, Dhruv 2018. "A Profusion of Diagnoses: That's Good and Bad." <i>The New York Times</i> , November 6 2018. Available as a pdf on OWL or https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/06/well/live/a-profusion-of-diagnoses-thats-good-and-bad.html
	Spring Reading Week
Week 7, 2/28	Mid-Term Exam
Week 8, 3/7	Experience of illness, aging, and dying Readings: Chapter 10 (select pages only) and Chapter 11. From Chapter 10: p. 220 "Understanding Illness: It's Not Just Biological to p.231 Conclusion
Week 9, 3/14	The medical profession Readings: Chapter 12 and Kaba, R., & Sooriakumaran. (2007). "The Evolution of the Doctor-Patient Relationship." <i>International Journal of Surgery</i> 5: 57-65. Skim, read the section about the Szasz and Hollender models more closely.

Week 10, 3/21	Nursing and allied health professions Readings: Chapter 15 and Stein, L. (1967). "The Doctor-Nurse Game." <i>Archives of General Psychiatry</i> 16(6): 699-705.
Week 11, 3/28	Health care systems – models and evaluation Readings: Strohschein, Lisa and Rose Weitz. 2014. "Health Care in Other Countries." Pp. 258-277 in <i>The Sociology of Health, Illness, and Health Care in Canada: A Critical Approach</i> . Nelson, and One-page Summary of International Health systems
Week 12, 4/4	Health care system in Canada Readings: Chapter 13

SOC 2246 FAQs

What if I have questions about the class?

First, check the syllabus. Students often find that the syllabus provides answers to many questions about the class.

Second, contact your instructor via email. I strongly encourage you to email me as soon as questions or issues arise so we can work together to get your question answered or issue resolved. You can generally expect replies within 24 hours during regular work days or 48 on weekends. I will aim to answer faster than that.

Please write **"SOC 4408" in the subject line** – otherwise it's easy for your email to get lost in the slew of incoming messages. The "SOC 4408" in the subject line makes your email a priority for me.

How do I write good emails?

You rightfully expect that your instructors treat you with respect and in a professional manner. We expect the same from you. Please make sure your email communication is professional and tend toward a bit formal. Emails to your instructors are NOT like texting your friends. Please be professional and use proper salutation and correct spelling and grammar. For instance, your college instructors should be addressed "Professor XYZ" or "Dr. XYZ," not "Hey there" or "Hi Jane" or "Dear Mrs. Green."

What if I miss a class?

If you are absent from a class, two rules apply:

- 1) **Do not** email me. Unfortunately there is little I can do with the information explaining your absence. However, if there is something going on in your life that could affect your class performance in a significant way and/or over an extended period of time, please let me know ASAP we can work together to get you back on track.
- 2) **Do** get notes and all information from your classmates. You are responsible to keep up with the class. I will post key information on OWL but make sure you talk to your colleagues in advance (or afterwards) and ask them to take notes for you (or share their notes).

Tip: tell one or two classmates ahead of time that you will need their notes. This will be a bonus for them as well: when they miss a class, they will feel comfortable asking you to return the favor. Moreover, they will write extra complete and clear notes that day – a win-win.

Do I really need to attend classes?

Regular class attendance is essential to learning at the university level. Attending classes AND doing all assigned readings is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for earning a high grade in this class.

You are responsible for all announcements, lecture notes, and activities we cover in class even if you have a valid reason to miss a class. **If you miss a class, please contact your classmates to get all information about what we did.**

What's expected of me in class?

Appropriate professional and respectful behavior is expected of all students, in order to facilitate a supportive learning environment. Any activities not related to the class material must be conducted outside of the classroom, including any social media or in-person communication. Cell phones must be on silent and no conversation or texting is acceptable. **If your behavior does not abide by these basic rules, you may be asked to leave the class.** Please understand I do not wish to use this policy but it is disruptive to other students if someone near them is online or texting.

What is the policy on electronics in class?

Laptops are permitted in class for note-taking although I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand. (See a fascinating article on note-taking by hand vs. electronically [here](#).) However, texting, browsing the web, or social networking on Instagram or Twitter or any of the myriad other apps is tremendously disruptive. Even if you feel you can follow the class while networking/browsing/texting, such behavior makes it difficult to those around you to pay attention. Students may be reprimanded, asked to turn off the device, or possibly even asked to leave the class.

Please make sure that your cell phones are silent or turned off at the beginning of class; beeping and ringing distracts your colleagues and is disruptive in a classroom setting.

What if I miss an assignment deadline?

Due dates for the assignments are posted on OWL. You will be able to upload your assignment after the deadline; it will just be marked as late. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 8% of the assignment value per day. As an example, suppose you earn 75% on an assignment that was two days late: two days late is 16% penalty, so you earn $75 * 0.84 = 63\%$.

What can I have with me on exams? Policies on Examinations

Only pen or pencil is allowed for mid-term and final tests. Electronic devices of any sort, including phones, are not allowed.

Note that computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

What if I think there is a mistake on OWL gradebook?

Check your OWL marks regularly. If you have any questions or concerns, email us immediately. Especially toward the end of the semester, make sure you contact us before final grades are calculated and submitted.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES**Note Regarding Plagiarism**

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Copyright

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any

specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health @Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.