Social Epidemiology
Sociology 3673-001
Fall Semester, 2009
University of Utah
M/W/F 9:40-10:30 am, BHE S 116

Instructor:
Ming Wen, PhD     Phone: 801-581-8041
Associate Professor     Email: Blackboard/Vista (preferred)
or ming.wen@soc.utah.edu
Department of Sociology     Office: 428 BEH S
University of Utah

Teaching assistant:
Peter Dien     Email: peter.dien@utah.edu

OFFICE HOURS
11:00-12:00 Wednesday or by appointment
I am available for consultation during office hours, before or after class, by appointment, or via email.
E-mail will be responded within 48 hours. Please use Blackboard/Vista Mail to communicate with me via email. I will check Vista Mail often.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Epidemiology is the study of the distribution and determinants of health and disease in human populations. This course introduces the basic principles of epidemiologic study design, analysis and interpretation using lectures, readings, assignments, in-class exercises, and discussions. We will discuss topics such as how a disease spreads across a population and how public health interventions or medical technology can help control or reduce the spread of disease. We will explore the various types of research methods used in epidemiology, as well as how to statistically identify the risk factors or causes of a disease. Finally, we will review epidemiology as a social science by reviewing the social causes and consequences of health.

CLASS OBJECTIVES:
- To be able to critically read and understand epidemiologic studies
- To be able to calculate and interpret simple measures of disease occurrence and measures of disease-exposure associations
- To understand the contributions of the science of epidemiology to clinical research, medicine and public health
- To understand the central questions of social epidemiology

PREREQUISITES:
The course fulfills the Quantitative Reasoning (QB) or Quantitative Intensive (QI) requirement of the University of Utah. Knowledge of basic algebra and elementary statistics is required before taking this course.
READINGS


The textbook is on reserve in the Marriott library. Four additional required readings are available through the Marriott e-reserve which can be accessed through Blackboard/Vista.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

- **Homework (10%)** – There will be homework assignments throughout the semester. Homework assignments will be posted on Blackboard/Vista. Homework will not be graded for correctness but you earn one point for each assignment as long as you complete it and submit it. The answers will be reviewed in class. Assignments will be posted on Blackboard/Vista and I will announce the due dates in class.

- **Quizzes (25%)** – There will be six open-book, timed quizzes posted and completed on Blackboard/Vista. Quizzes will be accessible for at least a week until the day I go over them in class. *Do not open the quiz before you plan on taking it!* Once you begin a quiz, the timer starts and you will be unable to stop it. Make sure you are ready to take the quiz and you are in a stable computer environment before you start it. Please note that no make-up quizzes will be given even under emergency situations; however, I will drop your lowest quiz score from your final grade.

- **Exams (65%)** – There will be four in-class open-book exams (not comprehensive). The exams will be based on all the course contents including the textbook, the films, and the additional required readings. Due to the size of the class, I will not allow students to make up exams under ANY circumstances (emergencies included); however, I will drop your lowest exam score from your final grade. No extra credits are available.

**AMERICAN WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA)**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

Please discuss any concerns with the professor before they become problems.

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

It is assumed that all work submitted for evaluation will be your own work. Plagiarism, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, and falsification of information are serious offenses that warrant severe sanctions. Students should be familiar with the formal definitions of academic misconduct, as outlined in the University of Utah Student Code at [http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html](http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html).
## COURSE SCHEDULE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>READING ASSIGNMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 24, 26, 28</td>
<td>Ch 1 - Introduction&lt;br&gt;Ch 2 - The Dynamics of Disease Transmission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                 | **Aug 31, Sep 2, 4**<br>Ch 3 - Morbidity Measures<br>Sep 7 - Labor Day Holiday - No Class<br>9, 11, 14 - Ch 4 - Mortality Measures<br>Online Quiz 1 on Blackboard/Vista for the First Four Chapters<br>16 - Go Over Online Quiz 1<br>18 - Exam I<br>21, 23, 25 - Ch 7, 8 - Randomized Trials<br>28, 30 - Ch 9 - Cohort Studies<br>Oct 2 - Film - "The Great Leveler" ([available at the university media streaming](http://services.tacc.utah.edu/m/show_grouping.php?q=09742693697e42788))<br>5, 7, 9 - Ch 10 - Case-control, Cross-Sectional Studies, Ecological Studies<br>Online Quiz 2 on Blackboard/Vista for Chapters 7, 8, 9 and for the film<br>12, 14, 16 - Fall Break - No Class<br>19 - Discussion - Film "The Great Leveler"<br>Go Over Online Quiz 2<br>Exam Review<br>21 - **Exam II**<br>23, 26, 28, 30 - Ch 5/6 - Validity and Reliability / Survival and Prognosis<br>Ch 14/15 - Association vs. Causation / Bias, Confounding, & Interaction<br>Nov 2 - Film - "Epigenetics" ([available at the university media streaming](http://data.scl.utah.edu/fmi/xsl/stream/details.xsl?-recid=800&a::v=2iOia47E7i))<br>4, 6, 9, 11, 13 - Discussion - Film "Epigenetics"<br>16 - Go Over Online Quiz 3<br>Exam Review in Class<br>18 - **Exam III**<br>20, 23 - Discussion - Social epidemiology (Syme and Yen 2000)<br>Discussion – Film “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?: In Sickness and In Wealth” ([available at the university media streaming](http://data.scl.utah.edu/fmi/xsl/stream/details.xsl?-recid=701&a::v=2iOia47E7i))<br>25 - Online quiz 4 on Blackboard/Vista for the film<br>27 - Thanksgiving Holiday - No Class<br>Nov 30 - Film - "Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?: Place Matters" ([available at the university media streaming](http://data.scl.utah.edu/fmi/xsl/stream/details.xsl?-recid=705&a::v=2iOia47E7i))<br>Online Quiz 5 on Blackboard/Vista for the film<br>Dec 2 - Discussion – Films “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?: In Sickness and In Wealth” & “Place Matters”<br>4, 7 - Lecture & Discussion - Social epidemiology<br>(Berkman & Kawachi 2000; Berkman & Syme 1979; Ross 2000)<br>9 - Online Quiz 6 on Blackboard/Vista for the Three Articles<br>11 - Exam IV

* The schedule is subject to change.
ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS


