FALL 2013  
SOC 6720-001: MEDICAL SOCIOLOGY  
F 2:00 – 5:00  
BEH S 315

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Terrence D. Hill, PhD  
Office Location: BEH S 411  
Office Hours: T 1:00 – 1:45 and by appointment  
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REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Books:  

Articles:  
See course calendar.

Chapters:  
See course calendar.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to study of medical sociology. Medical sociology is the scientific study of  
the social causes and social consequences of health and illness. In accordance with the current focus of  
the Sociology of Population and Health program (http://soc.utah.edu/graduate/description.php#SPH), this  
course will emphasize the social causes of health and illness (i.e., social epidemiology). Our purpose  
during the semester will be to examine the link between social position (and socially patterned conditions)  
and health patterns in the US population. Two central questions will be addressed: (1) Which groups in  
society are more or less advantaged in terms of health and longevity? Why are certain groups in  
society more or less advantaged in terms of health and longevity? To answer these questions, we will  
begin with an introduction to medical sociology and social epidemiology, mind-body-society processes,  
and key health-related concepts and methodologies. The bulk of the semester will be devoted to  
understanding how social position (and socially patterned conditions) might contribute to health and  
longevity patterns. Specific topics include socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, family, religious  
involvement, and neighborhood context.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be prepared to describe/explain:

(1) The fields of medical sociology and social epidemiology  
(2) How sociology contributes to the study of health and longevity  
(3) How health and longevity are measured?  
(4) How health and longevity are distributed in society  
(5) How health and longevity are shaped by social characteristics
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING STANDARDS

Quizzes 30%  A = 90% - 100%
Final Exam 70%  B = 80% - 89%
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Total 100%  C = 70% - 79%
D = 60% - 69%
F = 0% - 59%

QUIZZES

Quizzes will be offered periodically throughout the semester, without prior notification. Quizzes cover assigned readings for a given week. You can expect at least one quiz per week. Some weeks could include two quizzes. Quizzes are equally weighted and graded as follows: Satisfactory (2 points), Unsatisfactory (1 point), and No credit (0 points). Please note that arriving late or leaving class early will result in the loss of quiz credit for the day. Make-up quizzes are only offered to students with excused absences.

CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM

Students are required to complete one cumulative final exam. This exam will cover lecture material and assigned readings. Exam questions may refer to any assigned reading material, regardless of whether the material was presented or discussed in class. The exam is entirely essay based.

GRADES AND EXTRA CREDIT

Final grades are based solely on course requirements. There are no extra credit opportunities in this course. As the instructor of record, it is my responsibility to evaluate your performance. All grades are final. With the exception of mathematical error, grades are not open to debate.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Students at the University of Utah are members of an academic community committed to basic and broadly shared ethical principles and concepts of civility. Integrity, autonomy, justice, respect and responsibility represent the basis for student rights and responsibilities. Participation in the University of Utah community obligates each member to follow a code of civilized behavior. In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct misrepresenting one’s work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. For more information, see Section V—Student Academic Conduct (http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A student who is not officially registered may not attend a university course. The university expects regular attendance at all class meetings. Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. Accommodations for these excused absences will be made and will do so in a way that does not penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. Students are not automatically dropped from class(es) if they do not attend. Students must officially drop their class(es) by the published deadline in the academic calendar to avoid a “W” grade.
EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to attend every class. Students are expected to be on time. Students are expected to be prepared for class, having completed all assigned readings for the week. Students are expected to participate knowledgeably in class discussions. Provided that students attend class, participation is very important. Participation indicates to the instructor that students are actively engaged in the learning process. I strongly encourage questions, comments, and the sharing of ideas as they relate to course material. Although commonsense knowledge and personal experiences are welcome, it should be emphasized that these are not adequate substitutes for informed discussions.

Disruptive behavior during lectures and discussions will not be tolerated. All laptops, cell phones, and other potentially disruptive devices should be turned off and packed away when class is in session. No reading newspapers or studying for other courses. No socializing. No sleeping. No leaving early or coming late without prior notification. No disparaging remarks. Please be considerate.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Reasonable accommodation is provided to students with known physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, please contact the Center for Disability Services (http://disability.utah.edu/) - 162 Olp in Union Building, (801) 581-5020.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
# COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td><strong>Course Overview</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 2     | *Introduction to Medical Sociology and Social Epidemiology*  
             READ: Weiss (2009, pg. 1–11); SC (pg. 3–7); Freund (2003a, pg. 10–23); Link (2000); Cockerham (2005) |
| Sep. 6     |                        |
| Week 3     | *Mind, Body, and Society*  
| Sep. 13    |                        |
| Week 4     | *Key Concepts and Methodologies*  
             READ: SC (pg. 23–71); Crimmins (2001); MacKinnon (2008, pg. 23–45); Aiken (1991, pg. 1-8);  
             Bowling (2005a–e, optional) |
| Sep. 20    |                        |
| Week 5     | **No Class**  
             **Independent Study** |
| Sep. 27    |                        |
| Week 6     | *Socioeconomic Status and Health (Part 1)*  
             READ: SC (pg. 77–84); Hummer (2011); Krueger (2011) |
| Oct. 4     |                        |
| Week 7     | *Socioeconomic Status and Health (Part 2)*  
             READ: Adler (1999); Ross (2010); Ross (2000) |
| Oct. 11    |                        |
| Week 8     | **No Class**  
             **Fall Break** |
| Oct. 18    |                        |
| Week 9     | *Race, Ethnicity, and Health (Part 1)*  
             READ: Williams (2010); Bratter (2005); Williams (1995, pg. 359–381) |
| Oct. 25    |                        |
| Week 10    | *Race, Ethnicity, and Health (Part 2)*  
             READ: Hummer (1996); Franzini (2001); Bamshad (2005) |
| Nov. 1     |                        |
| Week 11    | *Gender and Health (Part 1)*  
             READ: SC (pg. 95–112); Rosenfield (2010); Courtenay (2000a) |
| Nov. 8     |                        |
| Week 12    | *Gender and Health (Part 2)*  
             READ: Verbrugge (1985); Rieker (2010, pg. 52–74); Courtenay (2000b); Hill (2013a) |
| Nov. 15    |                        |
| Week 13    | *Family Status and Health*  
             READ: SC (pg. 84–95); Umberson (1999); Hill (2013b); Ross (1990, pg. 1061–1068); Umberson (1987) |
| Nov. 22    |                        |
| Week 14    | **No Class**  
             **Thanksgiving Break** |
| Nov. 29    |                        |
| Week 15    | *Religion Involvement and Health*  
             READ: Ellison (1998); George (2002); Magyar-Russell (2006); Hill (2010); Sloan (1999) |
| Dec. 6     |                        |
| Week 16    | *Neighborhood Context and Health*  
             READ: Fitzpatrick (2000, pg. 1–17); SC (pg. 145–156); Hill (2013c); Ross (2001); Robert (1999) |
| Dec. 13    |                        |
| Week 17    | **Cumulative Final Exam** |
| Dec. 20    | **Friday, 6:00pm – 8:00pm** |

NOTES: Dates, topics, assignments, and due dates are subject to change. SC = *Social Causes of Psychological Distress.*
ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS


