

Sociology 475: Medical Sociology

Units: 4.0

Fall 2018 | MW | 3:30pm to 4:50pm

Location: Grace Ford Salvatori Hall (GFS) 212

Professor Josh Seim

Office: Hazel and Stanley Hall Building (HSH) 218

Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00am to 12:00pm, or by appointment

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Course Description

Welcome to Medical Sociology! This course is divided into three parts. First, we'll examine the social roots of sickness. We'll consider how things like class, race, and gender inequalities affect bodily health. Second, we'll study medicine as a social institution. We'll consider how health care is embedded in, and helps reproduce, the social world. The third part of this course will be dedicated to unique case studies on health and medicine. Each student will use course materials to examine a case of their choice. For better or worse, this class will focus primarily on the United States.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the social roots of sickness and medicine as a social institution
2. Learn key theories in the sociology of health and medicine
3. Communicate analysis of course issues through writing and discussion

Course Materials

All readings are posted on Blackboard. You are *required* to bring a printed or digital copy of the day's assigned reading to class.

I will post short reading and seminar summaries every Friday to Blackboard. You should treat these weekly messages as supplemental text. While they cannot substitute a thorough reading of our primary text or an engaged attendance in our seminars, these summaries should help you better understand and navigate the course.

Student Evaluation

Grading Breakdown	
Attendance and Participation	10%
Reading Responses	15%
Take-Home Exams	50%
Final Paper: Case Study	25%

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are integral to your success in this course. You are allowed two absences. For each additional absence, you will lose ten percent of your attendance and participation grade, or one percent of your final grade in the course. However, simply showing up is not enough. You must also be engaged in class discussion. Among other things, this means *you must bring a printed or digital copy of the assigned reading to class*. Should I become concerned with your level of participation, I will reach out to you directly by email. If, for whatever reason, you remain uncommitted to the course, I will consider lowering your attendance and participation grade.

Reading Responses

You are expected to carefully and critically read 20 texts. *For 18 of these readings, you must answer one of its corresponding questions listed in the course schedule*. While reading response formatting is question specific, you will always have the option of either writing a response (three to four sentences with specific page citations) or diagraming/tabling a response (with specific page citations). All reading responses must be submitted by 12:00pm the day of the assigned text via Blackboard. Written responses must be submitted using the assignment text box and diagramed/tabled responses must be attached as a standard image file (e.g., JPG). All reading responses are graded on a pass/fail basis. While “wrong” answers will not be penalized, I may ask you to resubmit a reading response if your initial submission is obviously careless. Late reading responses will not be accepted.

Take-Home Exams

Your performance on two written take-home exams will determine half of your grade in the course. For each exam, you will be given multiple days to answer a few questions. These exams will challenge you to bring course readings in conversation with one another. The first exam will be distributed in class on October 1st (Monday) and is due October 5th (Friday) at 5:00pm via Blackboard. The second exam will be distributed in class on November 12th (Monday) and is due November 16th (Friday) at 5:00pm via Blackboard. Exams turned in late will be docked one full letter grade for each day they are tardy. *No exam will be accepted beyond 72 hours of its designated submission time*. Additional instructions and requirements will be provided on the exam prompts.

Final Paper: Case Study

The course ends with a final paper that will challenge you to analyze a special case of your choice. For example, you may write about the social determinants of asthma attacks, employment status as a “fundamental cause” of health, the pathologization of gender identity, racial disparities in cancer screening, Obamacare, or the Los Angeles Fire Department as a frontline institution of poor people’s medicine. The possibilities are seemingly endless, but you must make whatever case you select directly speak to one or both of the course’s major themes (i.e., the social roots of sickness and medicine as a social institution).

All case studies must include the following: a) an adequately sourced summary of the case, b) an original examination of the case using two of the course readings, and c) a reflection on the limitations of using your selected course readings to explain your case. You will submit your case study as a short paper (five to seven double-spaced pages) by 4:00pm on December 10th (Monday) via Blackboard. A works cited page is required. Your final paper grade is also dependent on your performance on three workshop assignments, which are due November 19th, November 26th, and November 28th via Blackboard (all by 12:00pm). More details regarding assignment expectations will be discussed toward the end of the semester.

Additional Policies

Technology: Laptops and tablets are permitted in class for notetaking and/or reading access only. Please turn off your Wi-Fi during class.

Plagiarism: Presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Independent Work: This is an extension of the plagiarism policy. You must complete all assignments and exams independently. That said, you are encouraged to discuss course material with your peers outside of the class.

See also: “List of Support Systems” at the end of this syllabus.

Abbreviated Schedule (RR = Reading Response, WA = Workshop Assignment)

Introduction			
Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
08/20	Syllabus	N/A	N/A
Part I: The Social Roots of Sickness			
Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
08/22	Durkheim's Legacy	Durkheim	RR by 12pm
08/27	Engels' Legacy	Engels	RR by 12pm
08/29	Du Bois' Legacy	Du Bois	RR by 12pm
09/05	Fundamental Causes	Link and Phelan	RR by 12pm
09/10	Relative Positioning	Marmot	RR by 12pm
09/12	Social Ecology	Klinenberg	RR by 12pm
09/17	Racism	Williams and M.	RR by 12pm
09/19	Gender and Constrained Choice	Bird and Rieker	RR by 12pm
09/24	Embodiment	Krieger	RR by 12pm
09/26	The Violence Continuum	Holmes	RR by 12pm
10/01	Review Part I / Distribute Exam I	N/A	N/A
10/03	Unnatural Causes	N/A	N/A
10/05	N/A	N/A	Exam I by 5pm
Part II: Medicine as a Social Institution			
Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
10/08	Medical Roles	Parsons	RR by 12pm
10/10	Medical Social Control	Zola	RR by 12pm
10/15	Medical Irony	Waitzkin	RR by 12pm
10/17	Medical Gaze	Foucault	RR by 12pm
10/22	Medical Authority	Starr	RR by 12pm
10/24	Capitalist Medicine	Navarro	RR by 12pm
10/29	Medicalization	Conrad	RR by 12pm
10/31	Biomedicalization	Clarke et al.	RR by 12pm
11/05	Care Work	Rodriguez	RR by 12pm
11/07	Carceral Medicine	Sufrin	RR by 12pm
11/12	Review Part II / Distribute Exam II	N/A	N/A
11/14	The Waiting Room	N/A	N/A
11/16	N/A	N/A	Exam II by 5pm
Part III: Case Studies			
Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
11/19	Case Study Workshop 1	N/A	WA by 12pm
11/26	Case Study Workshop 2	N/A	WA by 12pm
11/28	Case Study Workshop 3	N/A	WA by 12pm
12/10	N/A	N/A	Final Paper by 4pm

*Detailed Schedule***INTRODUCTION****Monday, August 20th | Syllabus**

No reading.

PART I: THE SOCIAL ROOTS OF SICKNESS**Wednesday, August 22nd | Durkheim's Legacy**

Durkheim. 1897. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. (pp. 152-155, 157-160, 171, 173, 202-205, 208-215, 217-221, 241-243, 245-249, 252, 276 [only footnote 25])

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What are the differences in suicide rates between Catholics and Protestants? (diagram/table)
- B) What is the difference between egoistic and altruistic suicide? (write)
- C) What is the difference between fatalistic and anomic suicide? (write)

Monday, August 27th | Engels' Legacy

Engels. 1845. *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*. (pp. 106-130)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is social murder? (write)
- B) What are the role of education, law, and medicine? (write or diagram/table)
- C) Why is "the insecurity of his position" so "demoralizing" for the working man? (write)

Wednesday, August 29th | Du Bois' Legacy

Du Bois. 1899. *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*. (pp. 147-163)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) Detail some factors that help explain the death rate of blacks in Philadelphia? (diagram/table)
- B) What might Du Bois say to Durkheim? (write)
- C) What might Du Bois say to Engels? (write)

[No Class on September 3rd, Labor Day]

Wednesday, September 5 | Fundamental Causes

Link and Phelan. 1995. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is Link and Phelan's critique of epidemiology and Western culture? (write)
- B) What are "risk of risks" and why are they important? (write)
- C) What constitutes a "fundamental cause" of disease? (write or diagram/table)

Monday, September 10th | Relative Positioning

Marmot. 2004. *The Status Syndrome: How Social Standing Affects Our Health and Longevity*. (pp. 1-12, 43-5, 78-81, 160-3, 188-9, 240-1)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the "status syndrome"? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What is the association between autonomy and the gradient in health? (diagram/table)
- C) What is the association between social participation and health? (diagram/table)

Wednesday, September 12th | Social Ecology

Klinenberg. 2002. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. (pp. 1-13, 79-128)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is a "social autopsy" and how does Klinenberg use this method? (write)
- B) Detail the ecological differences between North Lawndale and Little Village (diagram/table)
- C) What is the author's critique of the CDC investigation? (write)

Monday, September 17th | Racism

Williams and Mohammed. 2013. "Racism and Health I: Pathways and Scientific Evidence."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) How does institutional racism affect health? (write or diagram/table)
- B) How does cultural racism affect health? (write or diagram/table)
- C) How does racial discrimination affect health? (write or diagram/table)

Wednesday, September 19th | Gender and Constrained Choice

Bird and Rieker. 2008. *Gender and Health: The Effects of Constrained Choices and Social Policies*. (pp. 16-45, 57-73)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What are Bird and Rieker's critiques of biology and sociology? (diagram/table)
- B) What is the relationship between gender roles and health? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What are "constrained choices" and how do they affect gendered health differences? (write)

Monday, September 24th | Embodiment

Krieger. 2005. "Embodiment: A Conceptual Glossary for Epidemiology."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is embodiment? (write or diagram/table)
- B) How can embodiment inform our understanding of health inequality? (write)

Wednesday, September 26th | The Violence Continuum

Holmes. 2013. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. (pp. 89-110)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) How is Abelino's knee injury an embodiment of structural violence? (write or diagram/table)
- B) How is Crescencio's headache an embodiment of symbolic violence? (write or diagram/table)
- C) How is Bernardo's pain an embodiment of political violence? (write or diagram/table)

Monday, October 1st | Review Part I / Distribute Exam I

No reading.

EXAM I DISTRIBUTED. DUE: 10/5 (FRIDAY), 5:00PM VIA BLACKBOARD.

Wednesday, October 3rd | Unnatural Causes

No reading.

In-class video. *Unnatural Causes*. 2008. (episode 1)

PART II: MEDICINE AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION**Monday, October 8th | Medical Roles**

Parsons. 1951. "Illness and the Role of the Physician: A Sociological Perspective."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the sick role? (write)
- B) What is the role of the therapist? (write)
- C) What is the relationship between the sick person and his/her therapist? (diagram/table)

Wednesday, October 10th | Medical Social Control

Zola. 1972. "Medicine as an Institution of Social Control."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) How is medicine becoming a major institution of social control? (diagram/table)
- B) How does "moral condemnation" differ for the criminal and the sick? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What are some potential consequences of medical social control? (write or diagram/table)

Monday, October 15th | Medical Irony

Waitzkin. 1993. *The Politics of Medical Encounters: How Patients and Doctors Deal with Social Problems*. (pp. xiii-xiv, 3-10, 75-106)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the irony of medicine? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What is the role of ideology and control in medicine? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What is consent and why is it important for understanding medical encounters? (write)

Wednesday, October 17th | Medical Gaze

Foucault. 1973. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. (pp. ix-xix, 97, 136, 164, 190)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What are the key differences between Pomme and Bayle? (diagram/table)
- B) What does the clinical/medical gaze do? (write)
- C) What are the stages of the "medicine of the sick organs"? (diagram/table)

Monday, October 22nd | Medical Authority

Starr. 1982. *The Social Transformation of American Medicine: The Rise of a Sovereign Profession and the Making of a Vast Industry*. (pp. 3-29)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the difference between social and cultural authority? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What explains the growth of medical/professional authority? (diagram/table)

Wednesday, October 24th | Capitalist Medicine

Navarro. 1983. "Radicalism, Marxism, and Medicine."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the "dual function" of medicine? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What is the relationship between class struggle and medicine? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What is the difference between socialist and capitalist medicine? (write or diagram/table)

Monday, October 29th | Medicalization

Conrad. 2007. *The Medicalization of Society: On the Transformation of Human Conditions into Treatable Disorders*. (pp. 3-19, 146-164)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What explains medicalization? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What are some consequences of medicalization? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What does Conrad say about resistance to medicalization? (write or diagram/table)

Wednesday, October 31st | Biomedicalization

Clarke et al. 2003. "Biomedicalization: Technoscientific Transformations of Health, Illness, and U.S. Biomedicine."

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is biomedicalization? (write or diagram/table)
- B) What are the "key processes" of biomedicalization? (diagram/table)

Monday, November 5th | Care Work

Rodriguez. 2014. *Labors of Love: Nursing Homes and the Structures of Care Work*. (pp. 1-19, 115-137)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is care work according to Rodriguez? (write)
- B) What are some of the constraints placed on nursing home workers? (write or diagram/table)
- C) What is Rodriguez's critique of Hochschild? (write)

Wednesday, November 7th | Carceral Medicine

Sufrin. 2017. *Jailcare: Finding the Safety Net for Women behind Bars*. (pp. 1-14, 21-24)

Reading Response (select one and submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

- A) What is the relationship between the "carceral" and "safety" nets? (write or diagram/table)
- B) How does Sufrin advance our understanding of "care"? (write or diagram/table)

Monday, November 12th | Review Part II / Distribute Exam II

No reading.

EXAM II DISTRIBUTED. DUE 11/16 (FRIDAY), 5:00PM VIA BLACKBOARD.

Wednesday, November 14th | The Waiting Room

No reading.

In-class video. *The Waiting Room*. 2012.

PART III: CASE STUDIES**Monday, November 19th | Case Study Workshop 1: Researching Your Case**

No reading.

Workshop Assignment 1 (submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

Submit a one-paragraph summary of your case. No need to include outside sources at this point. Simply summarize the case for a reader who knows nothing about it. Come to class prepared to discuss your case with others. (Remember: select a case that you can envision yourself analyzing using one or more of the course readings).

[No class on November 21st, Thanksgiving Break]

Monday, November 26th | Case Study Workshop 2: Analyzing Your Case

No reading.

Workshop Assignment 2 (submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

Submit a three-paragraph proposal. Be sure to include the following: a) a re-written summary of your case, b) a brief reflection on at least one case-relevant text from outside the course, and c) a loose plan for how you intend to use one or more of the course authors to analyze your case. Come to class prepared to discuss your case and outside text(s) with others.

Wednesday, November 28th | Case Study Workshop 3: Concluding Your Case

No reading.

Workshop Assignment 3 (submit by 12:00pm via Blackboard)

Submit a detailed bullet-point outline of your final paper. Be sure to clearly indicate how you will address the following portions of the case study: a) an adequately sourced summary of the case, b) an original examination of the case using two of the course readings, and c) a reflection on the limitations of using your selected course readings to explain your case. Come to class with your outline and be prepared to discuss it with others.

FINAL PAPER. DUE 12/10 (MONDAY), 4:00PM VIA BLACKBOARD.

List of Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety

UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu