

Soci 321, **Sociology of Health and Illness**, Fall 2018  
Sociology Department Website: [www.soci.ucalgary.ca](http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca)  
MWF 11:00 – 11:50, Room EEEL 161

Instructor: **Dr. Ariel Ducey**

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Office hours: as needed TBA, [ddsteful@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ddsteful@ucalgary.ca)

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This course is designed to acquaint you with the sociology of health and illness, one of the largest sub-disciplines in sociology. This course will cover a necessarily select group of topics, but those covered are challenging and provocative. The course focuses on three major areas: the social construction of illness and the practice of medicine; social determinants of health; and health care policy and comparative health care systems.

To be successful in this course, students must strive to think about health, medicine, and health care sociologically and to recognize issues and questions that are central to sociology as a discipline. The readings for this course are original research articles, therefore students must regard them not primarily as statements of facts (though they contain much useful information and important facts), but as *arguments*. The authors of the articles are engaged in debate, and using facts and information to persuade readers to think about an issue differently or, often, to think in a way that is not the usual, dominant way of thought. In this course, students will learn important facts about the organization of health care and illness, but the course requires students to show an understanding of the arguments presented in the class and readings, and of sociological perspectives.

### Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

- To learn major terms and concepts used in the sociology of health and illness
- To be able to interpret events in health, medicine, and health care from a sociological perspective
- To become familiar with the range of themes and topics that medical sociologists study
- To become familiar with some of the debates within the sociology of health and illness about what to study and how to study it
- To achieve a basic understanding of how health care and medicine is financed and organized in western, capitalist countries

### Readings

Required course readings are available for access on D2L, either as .pdfs or through UofC library links. Students are responsible for downloading and, if they wish, printing the articles.

Readings should be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned. We will be reading about 50 pages per week for this course. Readings will be addressed during lecture, but they will

not always be covered in detail—rather they will be used as starting point for more advanced discussion. Your experience of the lecture will depend on whether you have done the readings in advance. I may add, omit, or change some readings during the semester as needed. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on D2L. Students are responsible for attending class and checking the D2L site regularly.

### Course website on D2L

*You should plan to log on to the course site about every other day.* The site is used to post slides from lecture, deadlines, changes to the course schedule (which will also be announced in class), optional readings, helpful links, and anything else that you might find interesting.

### Examinations

There will be three examinations in this course: two midterms and a final. They will consist of multiple-choice questions and possibly one or two short answer questions. The multiple choice portion of the exams are not cumulative. Short answer questions may be cumulative. The exams will be based on the assigned reading and any material presented in class. Exam study guides will be provided on D2L about one week prior to each exam. Additional aids are *not* allowed for the exams.

### In-class “work days” & informal assignments

There will be four in-class work days (see the schedule) during the term, in which we will “flip the classroom.” There will be no lecture on these days, but instead we will use the time for organized, interactive activities, in which students can more deeply explore the concepts and controversies discussed in the course. For each of these work days, advance preparation will be required (typically watching a video and/or re-reading a class article) and in some cases submitted ahead of time (via D2L). Preparation work will be due no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day *before* the in-class work day (so: Sept 18, Sept 30, Oct 18, Nov 29). In addition, there will be, on occasion, informal assignments carried out in class (such as written responses to prompts or reflection pieces). These assignments will be given one of four possible marks, listed below. These marks cannot be appealed. At the end of the term, these assignments will be used to adjust your grade, however the assignments will not be used to pull grades down, only as a bonus when earned. If your final average on these assignments is higher than your final course average, the assignment average will be used to calculate a 5% bonus. The average of these assignments will also be weighted such that the in-class work days count for 80% of this grade component, and all other informal work counts for 20%.

- 0 = assignment not completed, or late
- 5 = participation, less than satisfactory effort or quality
- 8 = participation, good effort or quality
- 10 = participation, excellent effort or quality

## Grading

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

1. Exam 1                    30%
2. Exam 2                    35%
3. Exam 3                    35%

Bonus grade element:

4. Other assignments    5% (80% prep for in-class work days, 20% other assignments)

You are not required to pass a particular course component in order to pass the course as a whole. The following scale converts percentage grades to letter grades for this class.

A+ = 95-100	B+ = 80-84	C+ = 65-69	D+ = 50-54
A = 90-94	B = 75-79	C = 60-64	D = 45-49
A- = 85-89	B- = 70-74	C- = 55-59	F = below 45

The following description of letter grades comes from the U of Calgary Calendar:

- A indicates superior performance, excellent mastery of the material.
- B indicates above average performance, good mastery of the material.
- C indicates satisfactory performance, a basic understanding of the material.
- D indicates marginal performance, minimal understanding of the material.
- F indicates unsatisfactory performance.

## Contacting the Instructor

I am available by appointment and during office hours. I am happy to meet with students, but please observe the following: except for cases in which you have been instructed to email something, **contact the instructor by email for administrative purposes only**. For instance, you may email to schedule an appointment.

## Technology use in class

*The use of laptops or tablets for the purposes of taking notes is permitted during lectures. Please turn off sounds and dim screens of such devices to minimize disruption to fellow classmates. The use of cellphones, and other electronic devices for purposes unrelated to the course, is NOT permitted.* Please be sure to turn off your cell phone during class. Student found to be using devices in ways that are distracting to others and/or not related to the class will be asked to leave the classroom.

## Additional Course Notes:

### **Emergency Evacuations**

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom, please proceed to the assembly point at **ICT – Food Court**.

### **Handing in Papers, Assignments**

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. **Protection of Privacy:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

### **Ethics Research**

Students are advised that any research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

### **Deferrals**

When possible, please provide advance notice if you are unable to write an exam or complete/turn-in assignments on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the health issue rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements, misreading the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

**Deferred Final Exam Form:** Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar’s Office. Further information about deadlines, and

where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>

**Deferred Term Work Form:** Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at  
[https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred\\_termwork15\\_0.pdf](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf)

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

### **Student Representation**

The 2018-19 Students' Union VP Academic is Jessica Revington ([suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)).

For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student's Union, please visit this link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/>

You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/contact>

### **Safewalk**

The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

### **Academic Accommodation**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

### **Student Resources**

[SU Wellness Centre](#)

[Campus Mental Health Strategy](#)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Readings (located on D2L)	Topic	
Sep 7 F	Introduction to the course		Medical authority, medical practice and knowledge, the social construction of health & illness
Sep 10 M	Wertz & Wertz	Medical authority and medical knowledge	
Sep 12 W	No class		
Sep 14 F	Farmer & Campos, "New Malaise" Film: "The Deadly Deception"		
Sep 17 M	Berg Ryn & Fu	Practice variation, medical errors, evidence-based medicine	
Sep 19 W	In-class work day 1: different perspectives on how the social affects medical practice		
Sep 21 F	Timmermans	Social construction of illness, medicalization, medical control	
Sep 24 M	Zola		
Sep 26 W	Barker Ehrenreich		
Sep 28 F	Frank		
Oct 1 M	In-class work day 2: differing perspectives on the social construction of illness		
Oct 3 W	Catch-up, exam review		
Oct 5 F	<b>EXAM ONE</b>		
Oct 8 M	Banks, et al.	Health inequality, political ideology and disease prevention	Social model of health, politics of health promotion, political economy of health
Oct 10 W	Tesh, "Disease, Causality, Politics"		
Oct 12 F	Phelan, Link & Tehranifar		
Oct 15 M	Wilkinson		
Oct 17 W	Syme		
Oct 19 F	In-class work day 3: differing perspectives on the social determinants of health		
Oct 22 M	McKinlay	Political economy, environment, structural violence, and health	
Oct 24 W	Film TBA		
Oct 26 F	Farmer, "On Suffering and Structural Violence"		
Oct 29 M	Catch-up, exam prep		
Oct 31 W	<b>EXAM TWO</b>		
Nov 2 F	(No new reading)	Canada's health care system	Health care systems and organization
Nov 5 M	Evans, "Canada"		
Nov 7 W	Bodenheimer & Grumbach		
Nov 9 F	(no new reading)	Other health care systems (UK, U.S., Germany)	
Nov 19 M	Gabe		
Nov 21 W	(no new reading)		
Nov 23 F	Gladwell, "Moral-Hazard Myth"		
Nov 26 M	Reading TBA		
Nov 28 W	Film: "Medicare Schmedicare"		

Nov 30 F	In-class work day 4: the representation of health care systems	The politics of health care in Canada	
Dec 3 M	Fraser Institute Reports CHSRF Mythbuster, 2005		
Dec 5 W	(no new reading)		
Dec 7 F	Catch-up, exam prep		
	<b>FINAL EXAM, DATE TBA</b>		