

Soci 321, **Sociology of Health and Illness**, Spring 2010  
Sociology Department Website: [www.soci.ucalgary.ca](http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca)  
T/Th 11:00 – 1:50 EDC 386

Instructor: **Dr. Ariel Ducey**

Office Hours: Th 2:30-3:30, and by appointment

Office: Social Sciences, Room 938

Contact: [aducey@ucalgary.ca](mailto:aducey@ucalgary.ca), 220-5054

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### Course Overview

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 four major areas: the experience of illness, the practice of medicine, social determinants of health, and health care systems. This course is also the core requirement for the concentration in the Sociology of Health for sociology majors.

To be successful in this course, students must strive to think about health, medicine and health care *sociologically* and come up with questions about health and illness-related topics that a sociologist might ask. Please keep in mind that the goal of this course is to further your sociological imagination, no matter what your future goals; along the way you will also learn something about the organization of health care and medicine, but the former objective is just as important.

The goals for students in this course are:

- To learn major terms and concepts used in medical sociology
- 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 sociology and medical sociology 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

- 1) There is one book for this course, available in the University of Calgary bookstore: Peter Conrad, *The Sociology of Health and Illness*, Worth Publishers, EIGHTH edition.
- 2) There is also a *custom course packet* available in the bookstore, containing a number of articles.

Readings must be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned. 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 heavily 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 Blackboard, but you are responsible for attending class and checking the site.

### Examinations and Essay

There will be three examinations in this course: two midterms and a final. The exams will be based on the readings and any material presented in class. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions. The *exams are not cumulative*. Exam study guides will be provided on Blackboard about one week prior to each exam, which will detail the concepts and readings covered by, as well as format of, each exam.

Students are also required to write one short essay for the course. Details of the essay assignment can be found on the blackboard site.

### Blackboard Site

The course blackboard site will be used to post announcements, slides for lectures, readings, changes to the course schedule (if needed), grades, and extra resources related to the course. You should log in to the Blackboard site at least twice a week.

### Grading

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

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|----------|------------|
| 1. Exams | 28% (each) |
| 2. Essay | 16%        |

The following scale converts percentage grades to letter grades for this class.

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

### Instructor Contact Information

I am available during my office hours and at other times by appointment. There is also a discussion board on blackboard (“Dr. Ducey’s Virtual Office”) where you may post questions about administrative and scheduling matters to which I will respond.

I am happy to meet with students, but please observe the following so that I may respond to students in a way that is fair and attentive:

- 1) I prefer that you **contact me by email for administrative purposes only**. For instance, you may email me to schedule an appointment outside of office hours.
- 2) Students with substantive questions should come to office hours or schedule an appointment. If you have questions related to grading, readings, or wish to discuss the course in greater depth, see us during office hours or make an appointment.

Exam Policies: You must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take an exam. All requests for deferral of an examination 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 physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferred exams may be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. If you have missed an exam for a legitimate reason, you will be able to write a “make up” exam as close to the original exam as possible. The date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department. Travel arrangements and misreading of the course outline are not valid reasons for requesting a deferred exam. Deferred exams will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

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 Departmental 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: cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

Since it is important that you read and discuss the work of others in academic papers and research, please take the time to review the following website: [Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Recognize and Avoid It](#).

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor’s office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during

class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

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**

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

#### Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Topic</b>
May 18	Introduction to the course 1: McKinlay & McKinlay	Medical authority and professional dominance
	16: Conrad & Schneider 17: Wertz & Wertz	
May 20	Film: "Deadly Deception" (50 minutes) Farmer, Ch. 8, "New Malaise" (CP)	
May 25	Klass (CP) 31: Anspach	Medical discourse and the role of medical practitioners
	38: Zola Kaw (CP) 29: Mishler (optional) 30: Timmermans (optional)	
May 27	13: Barker 44: Pitts Ehrenreich (CP) 14: Conrad (optional)	Medicalization and the experience of illness
June 1	<b>Exam 1</b>	Income/inequality and health
	5: Banks, et al. 2: Syme & Berkman 9: Wilkinson	
June 3	7: House, Landis, Umberson 8: Klinenberg	Social relationships and health; political economy of health
	Farmer, Ch. 1, "On Suffering and Structural Violence" (CP) 48: McKinlay	
June 8	Pollan (CP) Film: "Frankensteer" (50 minutes)	Food politics and health Risk discourses
	37: Lupton 36: Hahn, et al. (skim) 6: Brown	
June 10	<b>Exam 2</b>	Markets and health care
	Lecture (no new reading)	
June 15	46: Deber 25: Bodenheimer & Grumbach Evans, "Canada" (CP)	Canada and U.S. health care systems
	27: Weiss 24: Quadagno	
June 17	45: Light 47: Gabe	British and German health care systems
June 22	Gladwell, "Moral-Hazard Myth" (CP) Roos et al, "Does universal comprehensive..." (CP) Sepehri and Chernomas (CP)	The politics of health care in Canada
June 24	Film: "Sicko" or "Medicare Schmediare" CHSRF Mythbuster, 2005 (BB) Pilot results of AB Hip & Knee Replacement project (BB)	
June 28, 29 or 30 (TBA)	<b>Final Exam</b>	