

Soci 321, **Sociology of Health and Illness**, Spring 2012  
Sociology Department Website: [www.soci.ucalgary.ca](http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca)

Instructor: **Kate Hickey**

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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 only a portion of this widely productive sub-discipline, but the topics covered are drawn from the most popular or the most challenging and provocative trends found in this area. The course focuses on three major areas: (1) the social understanding, manufacturing, construction and experience of illness; (2) the social determinants of health; and (3) health care politics, politics and health care systems.

A key goal of this course is for you to further develop and apply your sociological imagination. Knowing and understanding medicine, health and illness from perspectives outside of sociology will not be enough to do well in this course. Successful students will use critical thinking skills and engage sociologically with questions and materials related to health, illness and medicine.

The learning outcome goals for students in this course are:

- To become familiar with major themes, debates, topics, concepts, and terms common in medical sociology.
- To be able to interpret events in health, medicine, and health care from a sociological perspective.
- To achieve a basic understanding of how health care and medicine is financed and organized in western, capitalist countries.
- To use and develop critical thinking skills when reading academic work.
- To develop skills for collecting, evaluating, organizing and summarizing scholarly material in ways that may be useful for future academic goals.

### **Two notes about readings**

1. There is one book to purchase for this course, available at the UofC bookstore:

Germov, J. & Hornosty, J. (2012) *Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology*, Oxford University Press: Don Mills, Ontario University Press.

2. For your written assignment you will need to read 5 articles (or book chapters) of your choosing from the list of supplementary recommended readings provided on Blackboard. You are *not* responsible for reading *all* of the readings in the list I provide on Blackboard. However, if you are struggling with the lecture material these readings may be helpful for you.

### **Important information regarding materials for which you are responsible**

The materials from lecture and the assigned readings will be tested on. The assigned readings and the class lectures are separate but complementary components of this course. Choosing to come to lectures and to skip reading the text *or* choosing to only read the text and to skip coming

to lectures is not sufficient to do well in this course. The lectures will often introduce materials *not contained in your text*, just as your text will provide you with information *not contained in lectures*. Thus, it is **strongly** suggested that you complete your readings *and* come to class. Readings may be addressed during lecture, but they will not always be covered in detail. You will likely obtain the best use of the readings if you complete them *before* the class for which they are assigned. Many of the lectures correspond well with several chapters in your text. In such instances, I have bolded the chapters that are *most* compatible with each lecture so that you may focus your reading accordingly. 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 Blackboard site regularly.

### **Methods of Evaluation**

This course contains: one quiz, one midterm exam, one final exam and one written assignment.

The quiz will be completed in class on **May 22nd**. The quiz will test your knowledge of material from *May 10th up to and including May 22nd*. The quiz will be no more than 10 questions long and will be composed of matching, fill in the blank, and short written definitions.

The midterm exam will take place during class time on **May 31st**. The midterm exam will test your knowledge of material from *May 10th up to and including May 31st*. The midterm exam may consist of multiple choice questions, true or false questions, fill-in questions, definitions, and short answer.

The final exam will be held on a date to be determined by the Registrar. Once the date is communicated to me (your instructor) I will announce it in class and post this information on Blackboard. The final exam will cover materials from *May 31st up to and including June 21st*. While the midterm and final exams are not cumulative, knowledge of materials covered earlier in the course may be required for successful performance on the second exam (for example, it will be assumed that you understand social constructionist theory regarding health and illness and the work surrounding the manufacturing of illness when we discuss health care politics and policy).

*The exams will be based on the assigned reading and any material presented in class.* Exam study guides will be provided on Blackboard about one week prior to each exam. Notes, the textbook and other aids are *not* allowed for the exams.

There is one written assignment in this course. The written assignment is to be completed during your own time. The written assignment is due **in paper format in class** on **June 21st**. An **electronic version** of your assignment is due on **June 21st** before midnight. Your written assignment *will not be graded until you submit an electronic copy to me*. We will review the expectations for the written assignment in class and you may also find this information on the Blackboard site for this class.

### **Blackboard**

On Blackboard you will find a discussion page where you can post questions and raise topics that you find interesting and wish to discuss with the class. You are encouraged to engage in

discussions with your peers on Blackboard. *This is voluntary and is not a graded component of this course.* The details of the online discussion courtesy and behavior expectations are posted on Blackboard and it is expected that you review them.

*You should plan to log on to Blackboard about every other day.* Even if you do not participate in the online discussions, you will want to check the site for other reasons: the course instructor will use the Blackboard site to post slides from lecture, instructions for the written assignment, Instructions for online participation, deadlines, changes to the course outline (which will also be announced in class), optional readings, helpful links, and anything else that you might find interesting. Additionally, the list of approved readings for your assignment can be found on Blackboard. Blackboard is intended to make this course more interactive than usually possible in a lecture course.

### **Grading**

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

1. Exams                                25% and 35%
2. Quiz                                    10%
3. Written Assignment    30%

If you fail to complete any component (i.e. the written assignment) then you will receive an incomplete in the course until you have completed it. You are not required to earn a passing grade in every course component in order to pass the course as a whole. However, *you must complete all aspects of the course in order to pass the course.*

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

A+ = 95-100	A = 90-94	A- = 85-89
B+ = 80-84	B = 75-79	B- = 70-74
C+ = 67-69	C = 63-66	C- = 59-62
D+ = 54-58	D = 50-53	F = below 49

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 and roles**

I am available during office hours and at other times by appointment. There is also a discussion board on Blackboard (“Virtual Office”) where you may post non-urgent 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. Except for cases in which I have instructed you to email something, 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. Students with questions related to lectures, readings, grading, or who simply wish to discuss the course in greater depth, should see me during office hours or make an appointment.

### **Other Administrative Information**

#### ***Emergency evacuations:***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the ICT Food Court.

#### ***Deferrals:***

If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay 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 physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus 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:

[http://ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM\\_0.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM_0.pdf)

#### ***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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.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).

**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:** Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. 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.

**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. Written 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, phone 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 in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or grading assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and 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 be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

**COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)**

<b>Week &amp; Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
	The Foundations of Sociology of Health and Illness. Focus: Individual level of analysis	
1 -- May 10	Introduction to the course Conceptualizing Health, Illness and Disease Major theoretical approaches History of the sociology of health and illness	<i>Second Opinion (S.O.)</i> Chapters 1, 2, 3
2 -- May 15	The Illness experience	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapter 10
2 -- May 17	The Social Construction of Illness	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 9, & 11
3 -- May 22	The Social Construction of Illness Continued. <b>In-Class Quiz</b>	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 9, & 11
3 -- May 24	Medical Authority & Dominance	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapter 12
4 -- May 29	Catch-up Class T.B.A. Midterm Exam Review	
	The Foundations of Sociology of Health and Illness. Focus: Population level of analysis	
4 -- May 31	<b>Midterm Exam</b> (First half of class) Global Issues of Health and Illness <b>Written Assignment Explanation</b>	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
5 -- June 5	The Social Production, Understanding and Distribution of Disease.	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
5 -- June 7	The Social Production, Understanding and Distribution of Disease Continued.	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
	The Foundations of Sociology of Health and Illness. Focus: Comparative analysis	
6 -- June 12	<b>Written Assignment Early Deadline</b> <b>Group Presentations</b> Healthcare politics, policies & systems	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16
6 -- June 14	Healthcare politics, policies & systems continued.	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16
7 -- June 19	Healthcare politics, policies & systems continued.	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16
7 -- June 21	<b>Written Assignment Deadline</b> Submit via email to <a href="mailto:kjhickey@ucalgary.ca">kjhickey@ucalgary.ca</a> <b>And</b> Submit in paper form <i>during class time</i> .	<i>S.O.</i> , Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16

	Catch-up Class (Tying it all together) <b>Final Exam Preparation</b>	
8 -- June 21-28 <b>No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b> Office Hours T.B.A. – Final Exam Questions	
? -- T.B.A.	<b>Final Exam and Course Closure</b>	

## Assignments and Evaluation

### At a Glance

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Exercise	Date	Total % of Grade
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<b>In Class Quiz</b>	<b>May 22, 2012</b>	<b>10%</b>
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- Matching, Definitions and Fill-in-the-blank
  - *Second Opinion: An introduction to Health Sociology* chapters 1-3.
  - Class lectures May 10<sup>th</sup> – May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>May 31, 2012</b>	<b>25%</b>
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- Multiple Choice, Fill in the blank, Definitions and Short Answer
  - *Second Opinion: An introduction to Health Sociology* chapters 1-3, and 9-12.
  - Class lectures May 10<sup>th</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>.

<b>Written Assignment</b>	<b>June 21, 2012</b>	<b>30%</b>
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- *See appendix 1*

<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>T.B.A.</b>	<b>35%</b>
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- Multiple Choice
  - *Second Opinion: An introduction to Health Sociology* chapters 4-8, and 13-16
  - Class lectures May 31<sup>st</sup> – June 21<sup>st</sup>