

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
Departmental Website: [www.soci.ucalgary.ca](http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca)

**Sociology 403.02: Gender and Health  
Winter, 2009**

**Class Time and Location: TR, 11:00 AM- 12: 15 PM, SH 278**

**Instructor: Rebecca J. Carter**

Office hours: TR, 9:45 AM-10:45 AM, SS\_, or by appointment

Email: [rjcarter@ucalgary.ca](mailto:rjcarter@ucalgary.ca)

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### **Course Overview**

This is a senior-level seminar focused on a gendered analysis of health, illness and medical care. This course will chiefly explore how and why the social construction of gender differentially structures women and men's experiences of health, illness and resultant medical care. In exploring these issues, students will develop an understanding of the gendered discourses and practices underpinning contemporary definitions of 'health'; the development and legitimizing (or resistance) of medical knowledge; the various 'treatments' for illness and the methods used to administer them; the health care workforce that administers treatment; and finally, the non-medical institutions that also influence health, illness and medicine (including the criminal justice and educational systems). Exploring these issues will elucidate how gender inequalities are produced and reproduced in the context of health, illness, and medicine, and how this may impact other aspects of social life, including the family, workplace, and political arenas.

Course content will aim to develop a gender 'lens' with which to examine contemporary health/illness/medical topics by synthesizing theoretical perspectives from the sociology of gender relations and the sociology of health, illness and medicine. Utilizing this gender lens, the course will explore a broad range of substantive topics, including: menopause and menstruation; AIDS; disease epidemiology; birthing of and caring for children; violence and its connections to health; cosmetic and gender (re)assignment surgeries; contraception; mental health; eating disorders; obesity; cancer; and the gendered organization of health human resources. The confluence of gender with race/ethnicity, class and ability will be emphasized throughout the course.

### **Required Reading**

1. Lorber, Judith and Lisa Jean Moore. 2002. *Gender and the Social Construction of Illness*, second edition. Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press.
  - This text is available for purchase at the University of Calgary Bookstore.
2. A series of peer-reviewed journal articles, available for viewing and/or printing through Blackboard (accessible through [blackboard.ucalgary.ca](http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca) or [my.ucalgary.ca](http://my.ucalgary.ca))

- These articles will be posted in the ‘Assigned Readings’ section of Blackboard, and will be posted at least one week (i.e., two classes) in advance.

## **Evaluation**

There are five components of the student’s grade:

1. A first mid-term examination, to be held in class on Tuesday, February 10, 2009: **25% of final grade.**
  - The mid-term will be comprised of lecture and reading material from the January 13-February 5 sessions.
2. A second mid-term examination, to be held in class on Thursday, March 19, 2009: **25% of final grade.**
  - The mid-term will be comprised of lecture and reading material from the February 12-March 17 sessions.
  - Topics and potential questions will be distributed one week prior to each mid-term examination. Additionally, students will be permitted a one-page, single-spaced, typed (1 inch margins, 12 point font) ‘cheat sheet’ during the exam. This is intended to focus study and reinforce key points, rather than concentrate on memorization.
3. An in-class oral presentation, to be held in class during the April 2-April 16, 2009 sessions: **10% of final grade.**
  - Students will briefly summarize the focus and proposed organization of their final paper. This will provide students with an opportunity to plan and discuss their work with fellow students.
  - Presentations will be entirely oral (i.e., no Power-Point or overheads) and no longer than 10 minutes. Students should offer a 5 minute summary of their proposed work and allow for 5 minutes of questions/discussion.
  - Students will begin to sign up for presentation times on Tuesday, March 19, 2009.
4. A term paper, due Monday, April 20, 2009: **30% of final grade.**
  - Papers will be on a course-relevant topic of the student’s choice.
  - Papers must be 3000-4000 words in length and integrate at least 10 peer-reviewed journal articles (other sources are certainly permitted and encouraged, but not required).
  - More detailed instructions for the final paper will be posted on Blackboard on Tuesday, February 10, 2009 and discussed in class on Thursday, February 12, 2009. Office hours for the collection of papers will be arranged and communicated.
5. Class participation and attendance: **10% of final grade.**
  - Students are expected to attend class regularly, complete all readings *in advance*, and participate in class discussions and film viewing. Engagement in these activities will be noted throughout the term.

## **Grading**

The following grading scale will be used to convert percentage grades to letter grades:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage Grade</b>
A+	96-100
A	90-95
A-	85-89
B+	80-84
B	75-79
B-	70-74
C+	66-69
C	63-66
C-	60-63
D+	55-59
D	50-54
F	49 or less

## **Course Organization**

Course sessions will consist of lecture material, class-based discussions, videos and guest lectures. Attendance and participation in all of these activities—particularly class discussions—is expected and will be noted throughout the term. Additionally, questions or ‘guides’ to accompany the assigned reading will often be posted on Blackboard. The posting of these questions or guides will be announced at least two classes in advance, and are expected to inform the basis of our class discussions. All students are expected to formulate informal notes and/or thoughts around these questions in advance of the session we discuss them.

## Course Timeline

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings
January 13	Course Introduction and Overview	
January 15	The Sociology of Gender: Theoretical Review	
January 20	The Sociology of Health, Illness and Medicine: Theoretical Review	1. Conrad, Peter. (1992). Medicalization and social control. <u>Annual Review of Sociology</u> , 18: 209-232.  2. Lorber, Pp. 1-12
January 22	Gender and Social Epidemiology: Differences Across the Lifespan	1.Lorber, Chapter 2
January 27	Bearing and Caring Bodies: Abortion, Childbirth and Postpartum Depression	1.Cahill, H.A. (2001). Male appropriation and medicalization of childbirth: an historical analysis. <u>Journal of Advanced Nursing</u> , 33(3): 334-342.
January 29	The Medicalization of Natural Occurrences: Menstruation & Menopause	1.Lorber, Chapter 5  2.Lock, M. & Kaufert, P. (2001). Menopause, local biologies and cultures of aging, <u>American Journal of Human Biology</u> , 13:494-504.
February 3	Cosmetic Surgeries  <b>*Midterm Questions Distribution*</b>	1. Gillespie, R. (1996). Women, the body and brand extension in medicine: cosmetic surgery and the paradox of choice. <u>Women &amp; Health</u> , 24(4): 69-85.
February 5	Contraception  Film: "The Pill"	
February 10	<b>*Mid-Term Examination 1 (25% of final grade)*</b> <b>*Term Paper Instructions Posted on Blackboard*</b>	
February 12	Theorizing Men's Health  Discussion of Term Paper Instructions	1. Courtenay, W.H. (2000). Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: a theory of gender and health. <u>Social Science &amp; Medicine</u> , 50(10): 1385-1401.  2. Cameron, E. & Bernardes, J. (2008). Gender and Disadvantage in Health: Men's Health for a Change. <u>Sociology of Health &amp; Illness</u> , 20(5): 673-693.
February 17	Reading Week: No Class	
February 19	Reading Week: No Class	

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings
February 24	Men's Health Issues: Prostate Cancer and Eating Disorders	<p>1. Chapple, A. &amp; Ziebland, S. (2002). Prostate cancer: embodied experience and perceptions of masculinity. <u>Sociology of Health &amp; Illness</u>, 24(6): 820-41.</p> <p>2. Drummond, M.J.N. (2002). Men, Body Image, and Eating Disorders. <u>Men's Studies Press</u>, 1(1): 89-103.</p>
February 26	The Global AIDS Epidemic and Gender	1. Lorber, Chapter 7
March 3	Guest Speaker on AIDS	
March 5	Deviant Bodies: Disability and Obesity	<p>1. Lorber, Chapter 4</p> <p>2. Wray, S. &amp; Deery, R. (2008). The medicalization of body size and women's healthcare. <u>Health Care for Women International</u>, 29(3): 227-243</p>
March 10	The Gendering of Medical Treatment: Mental Health & Sexuality	<p>1. Blum, L.M. &amp; Stracuzzi, N.F. (2004). Gender in the Prozac nation: popular discourse and productive femininity. <u>Gender &amp; Society</u>, 18(3): 269-286.</p> <p>2. Hartley, H. (2006). The 'pinking' of Viagra culture: drug industry efforts to create and repackage sex drugs for women. <u>Sexualities</u>, Volume 9(3): 363-378.</p>
March 12	<p>Gendering Bodies: Female Genital Mutilation, Circumcision and Inter-sex Surgeries</p> <p><b>*Midterm Questions Distribution*</b></p>	1. Lorber, Chapter 6
March 17	<p>Inter-sex Surgeries, Part 2</p> <p>Film: "Sex: Unknown"</p>	
March 19	<b>*Mid-Term Examination 2 (25% of final grade)*</b>	
March 24	The Gendered Health Workforce	<p>1. Lorber, Chapter 3</p> <p>2. Evans, Joan. (2008). Men in nursing: issues of gender segregation and hidden advantage. <u>Journal of Advanced Nursing</u>, 26(2): 226-231.</p>

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings
March 26	Gendered Violence and Health: Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence	1. Wood, K., Maforah, F. & Jewkes, R. (1998). "He forced me to love him": putting violence on adolescent sexual health agendas. <u>Social Science &amp; Medicine</u> , 47(2): 233-242.  2. Long, S. (2004) When doctors torture: the anus and the state in Egypt and beyond. <u>Health and Human Rights</u> 7(2):114-141.
March 31	Student Presentations	
April 2	Student Presentations	
April 7	Student Presentations	
April 9	Student Presentations	
April 14	Student Presentations	
April 16	Student Presentations & Course Conclusion	

### **Important Conventions**

- 1) **Deadlines and Submission of Course Components:** Graded course components submitted late will be penalized by a deduction of 5% per day, except in the case of documented illness and/or extenuating circumstances brought to the instructor's notice in advance of the due date and time.
- 2) **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.
- 3) **Missed Examinations:** If a mid-term examination is missed due to documented illness and/or extenuating circumstances brought to the instructor's notice in advance of the exam, the student may either 'make-up' the exam as close in time as possible to the original test OR transfer the percentage weight of the exam to the other midterm examination. If the student chooses to 'make up' an examination, its date and location will be determined by the Department of Sociology.
- 4) **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.

- 5) **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.
- 6) **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.
- 7) **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.
- 8) **Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades:**
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

9) **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.**