Sociology 1576 – Introduction to Sociology for Health Professions (3 cr)
Fall 2017 – T/R 2:00-3:20pm – Anderson Hall 00023
Prof. Tania M. Jenkins
tania.jenkins@temple.edu
Office hours: Tuesday & Thursdays 3:30 – 5:00 pm or by app’t / Gladfelter 758

“We [as sociologists] can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of the component individuals” —Max Weber, 1968

Catalog description:
This course offers an introduction to the discipline of sociology. Focused on a systematic study of social life, the discipline of sociology offers distinctive concepts and methods to understand human beings and the societies they inhabit. The primary operating principle of sociology is to shift analytic emphasis—common to the health professions—from individual characteristics to the characteristics of broader social contexts, groups, and institutions. This Introduction to Sociology is specifically intended for those with interests in the health professions. We apply each topic we study to issues in health and medicine, pairing general sociology readings with readings specifically on health and medicine. Students preparing for the revised MCAT (2015) are especially encouraged to take this course.

Course overview:
Sociology is the study of society. It’s the branch of science that examines how human beings interact with others and their environment to create groups, institutions, structures, and oftentimes, problems. But why should future health professionals study society when their future work will focus on individuals (patients), or better yet—individual body parts, like the pancreas? The short answer is that patients (and their pancreases) don’t exist in isolation; they come from families, live in communities, and interact with social institutions, all of which can influence their health and wellbeing. This course will therefore introduce future health professionals to the concepts, problems, theories, and methods that will help them come to view individuals as social, as well as biological, creatures. To this end, lectures and reading assignments will be specially curated for students majoring in health-related fields, with a special emphasis on how each topic/theme relates to medicine and health. As this is an introductory-level course, no prerequisites are required.

Course objectives:
By the end of this course, students should be able to:
• Develop a sociological imagination through which to critically examine themselves, others, their (future) profession, and society more broadly;
• Gain a critical understanding of some of the major topics, concepts, and issues studied by sociologists;
• Understand and critique sociological methods and their application;
• Effectively communicate these reflections in written and oral form, through the assignments described below.

Course Requirements:
• Participation (15%): I expect you to come to every class prepared to learn. That means arriving on time, leaving on time, and actively participating in class discussions. Every class will begin with a conversation about current events; you’ll therefore be expected to read/watch the news daily and come prepared to discuss recent happenings. Active participation in class discussions is a requirement for this course (come see me in the first week of class if regular participation is not possible for some reason).
• Pop quizzes (15%): To make sure that readings are being done carefully, pop quizzes will be administered without prior notice on a regular basis throughout the term. There are no make-up quizzes so be sure to attend class regularly.

• Midterm (20%): The mid-term will be held in-class on Thursday, October 12, 2017 during class and will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and short essay questions. Make-up exams are only allowed if you have a documented university-accepted absence (e.g. doctor’s note, police report, funeral program). Note that make-up exams may differ in content/format from original exams.

• Letter to my Future Self: Writing Assignment (20%): You will be required to write a short (2-3 page, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1 inch-margins, stapled) letter to your future health professional self. You will first pick a concept from the course that you found particularly compelling (e.g. socialization) and define it in 1-2 paragraphs using plain English (remember, you’ll be reading this in 10-15 years, long after your first Intro to Sociology class). Then, you will use the remaining space to explain why this concept may be important to your future work as a health professional. You’ll be expected to use concrete examples to help support your claim that this concept matters to health work. Come talk to me in office hours if you have difficulty choosing a concept. Students are also strongly encouraged to make an appointment with the Temple University Writing Center (http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/index.asp) prior to submitting their work, as spelling and grammar will count towards the grade. This writing assignment is due on the last day of classes, Thursday, December 7, at the very beginning of class (2 pm EST). Late submissions will be docked one letter grade per day (including December 7th) except for documented university-accepted absences (e.g. doctor’s note, police report, funeral program).

• Final Exam (30%): The final exam will be held during the Final Examination period, on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 from 1:00-3:00 PM (location TBA). It will be cumulative and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. Make-up exams are only allowed if you have a documented university-accepted absence (e.g. doctor’s note, police report, funeral program).

Grading system (letter grade / numerical grade / grade points)

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<th>Grade</th>
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Required texts:
One textbook is required for this course and is available for purchase at the Temple Bookstore or online (e.g. Amazon.com):

• Conley, Dalton (2017). You May Ask Yourself, Fifth Edition (the one with the turquoise cover). New York: W. W. Norton & Company

All other required readings will be available via Canvas (canvas.temple.edu). Students are encouraged to print out non-textbook readings to make a reader which can they can mark up with notes and comments, and bring to class.

Students contemplating careers in medicine are encouraged (but not required) to read Intern: A Doctor’s Initiation by Sandeep Jauhar (2008), a candid look at a doctor’s first year of practical training.
Course policies:

- **Absence policy:** Although it will not be directly graded, please note that attendance is indirectly reflected in in-class participation and pop quizzes, which together count for 30% of your final grade. Therefore, miss class at your own peril; only students with university-excused absences will be able to make up quizzes and participation. High school homecomings, heavy drinking the night before, or the death of your pet iguana are sadly not examples of valid excuses for making up missed work.
- **Grading policy:** I strive to grade exams and assignments fairly and accurately. That said, mistakes do happen. If you believe there has been a mistake on the grading of an exam or assignment and would like to have the grade reviewed, you will have one week after the work has been returned to write a one-page summary detailing the error/inconsistency. **Note that upon review, your grade is subject to either increase or decrease.**
- **Contacting me:** I encourage you to drop by my office hours (see above) to discuss anything related to the course, sociology, or your broader career trajectory. If you need to reach me outside of office hours or class time, you can send me an email with Soc 1576 in the subject line and your name somewhere in the body of the email. **You can usually expect a response within 48 hours or less,** although if your question is of a nature that might be best answered in person, I may suggest that you come discuss it in office hours.
- **Electronics policy:** Tablets and laptop computers are permitted in class ONLY for taking notes. Do so at your own peril, however; studies have found that taking notes by computer, rather than by hand, leads to worse learning outcomes (see https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/). Please silence and stow all other electronic devices including cellphones, Fitbits, Tamagotchi pets, or anything else that makes noise, vibrates, or generates light. Using electronics that distract the learning process during class will result in getting a grade of zero for attendance during that class.
- **Respect policy:** To ensure that everyone feels fully comfortable participating, all students in the class must treat others with civility and respect and conduct themselves in a way that does not interfere with the opportunity of other students to learn. The classroom will be a safe space and mutual respect will be strictly enforced.

University Policies:

- **Academic Honor Code:** Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Essential to intellectual growth and the university's core educational mission is the development of independent thought and respect for the thoughts of others. Academic honesty fosters this independence and respect. Academic dishonesty undermines the university's mission and purpose and devalues the work of all members of the Temple community. Every member of the university community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are responsible for adhering to the principles of academic honesty and integrity. For more information, see the Student Conduct Code (Policy #03.70.12) at http://policies.temple.edu/PDF/398.pdf

  ***Plagiarism or cheating in any form will not be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly according to university policy***

To avoid unintentionally plagiarizing, please visit the following website from Temple University’s Writing Center: http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/plagiarism.htm

- **Disability Disclosure:** Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability, including special accommodations for access to technology resources and electronic instructional materials required for the course, should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation by the end of the second week of classes or as soon as practical. If you have not done so already, please contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS) at 215-204-1280 in 100
Ritter Annex to learn more about the resources available to you. I will work with DRS to coordinate reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities.

- **Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities**: Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has a policy on Student and Faculty and Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: [http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02)

- **Incomplete policy**: Department of Sociology policy dictates that no student may be given an Incomplete in a course without first receiving permission from the instructor and signing a contract with that professor specifying the remaining work to be completed and the agreed-upon time frame for its completion.

**COURSE OUTLINE**: 

**PART I: The Fundamentals**

Week 1 (Aug 29/31): Thinking like a Sociologist
- Conley pp. 3-17; skim 23-41; 102-107

Week 2 (Sept 5/7): Methods to the Madness
- Conley pp. 45-69

Week 3 (Sept 12/14): Danger! Society at Work: Social Construction
- Conley pp. 136-139

Week 4 (Sept 19/21): Fitting in: Socialization / Groups, Networks, and Organizations
- Conley pp. 117-136; 165-176; 181-183

Week 5 (Sept 26/28): Keeping Tabs: Deviance & Social Control
- Conley pp. 190-199; 205-220

*Please note that this syllabus is a living document and is subject to minor revision throughout the semester. What will not change are your assignments and their respective due dates.*
Week 6 (Oct 3/5): Nurture without Nature: Culture
- Conley pp. 77-92

Week 7 (Oct 10/12): Structure v. Agency / Midterm

***MIDTERM EXAM: Thursday, October 12 during class ***

PART II: The Fault Lines of Social Inequality

Week 8 (October 17/19): The Bottom Line: Wealth & Class
- Conley pp. 247-250; 260-265

Week 9 (Oct 24/26): The Color Line: Race & Ethnicity
- Conley pp. 325-371

Week 10 (Oct 31/Nov 1): The Bathroom Line: Sex, Gender, Sexuality
- Conley pp. 279-294; 300-321
- Murphy, Marie. 2014. Hiding in Plain Sight: The Production of Heteronormativity in Medical Education. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 45(3):256-89.

PART III: Social Institutions

Week 11 (Nov 7/9): Who’s in Charge? Government & Economy
- Conley pp. 550-571; 584-586; 593-605

Week 12 (Nov 14/16): Agents of Socialization: Religion, Family, and Education
- Conley pp. 615-620; 471-493; 497-513

***FALL BREAK – November 21/23: No Class***

Week 13 (Nov 28/30): In Sickness and in Heath: Healthcare & Medicine
- Conley pp. 411-447

Week 14 (Dec 5/7): Hey, It’s Not All Bad: Social Change
- Conley pp. 704-724; 729-735

***FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 from 1:00-3:00 PM (location TBA)***