

Course Syllabus for Medical Sociology (SOC 3600 – 101)

Term: Spring 2020, **Days:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, **Time:** 2:00-3:15PM, **Where:** Chapell Wilson Hall 206
Department of Sociology, Appalachian State University

Course Instructor: David Russell, PhD

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-11:00AM; 3:30-5:00PM, in CW228B, or by appointment

Catalog Description: A study of health care, medical settings, and the medical professions. Includes the creation and epidemiology of disease and illness, the structure of the health care industry, doctor-patient interaction, and major health care problems.

Course Goals and Objectives: This course explores the social causes and contexts of health and healthcare delivery in the United States. Why does the U.S. spend more on healthcare than any other country yet has some of the poorest health outcomes among its citizens? How is healthcare organized in the U.S. and in other countries around the world? How do social characteristics and experiences, such as ones' social networks and socioeconomic upbringing shape trajectories of health and longevity? We will explore sociological perspectives in relation to each of these questions, and review and analyze landmark scientific research studies in the field. At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to recognize the social determinants of health, evaluate recent changes in U.S. healthcare policy and their import for vulnerable populations, and identify societal trends and disparities that influence health and healthcare.

Student Learning Goals and Outcomes: There are six learning goals for this course: 1) describe the development of medical sociology as a field of inquiry; 2) identify major theories in medical sociology and their roles in explaining the origins and distributions of health and illness, healthcare utilization, the structure of healthcare systems; 3) describe the development of the major health professions, their training and roles within the healthcare system; 4) collaborate with other students in the course to prepare presentations on selected topics within medical sociology; 5) develop your writing skills through a course paper.

Required Text: William C. Cockerham (2017). Medical Sociology 14th Edition. Routledge.

Course Requirements: This is a lecture-based course and classroom attendance is mandatory for all scheduled sessions and will be factored into the final grade through participation in class exercises. Students will be required to complete a midterm and final examination on lecture materials and course readings. Additional assignments include weekly reading quizzes, student presentations, and a course paper.

Grading Rubric:

25%	Course Paper
15%	Reading Quizzes
10%	Student Presentations
10%	Class Exercises
20%	Midterm Examination
20%	Final Examination

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	A-	90-92%			
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%	
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%	
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	D-	60-62%	F 0-59%

Course Paper: Students will write a 10-page (excluding references) double-spaced paper (12-point font, Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins). References should be formatted in the American Sociological Association style. This paper is designed to offer you the opportunity to demonstrate your mastery of a particular area in medical sociology and exploration of current issues in that area. You will choose an area of interest (most likely from the course areas of interest) for your paper. The goal will be to move your own interests and work forward in ways that articulate with the subject matter we are addressing. This can involve providing either a broad overview or investigating a specific substantive topic. For example, a literature review of a particular health-related construct, theory, or issue; policy development around health-related institutional arrangements; current states of health inequalities; the culture differences around health risks and behaviors, etc. Students are encouraged to share their ideas for this paper with the Professor. The paper will be due on Thursday, April 30; the paper will be submitted through the as-u-learn course website.

Reading Quizzes: Throughout the semester, students will be required to complete multiple quizzes based on readings assigned during the week of class in which the quiz is administered. For instance, the Reading Quiz in Week 4 will be based on the reading materials assigned in Week 4 of class, including the textbook and other supplemental articles. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice, multiple answer, and/or true/false questions. All quizzes are administered on-line through the ASU Learn website. Reading Quizzes will be made available beginning on the Monday morning of each week and will be due by weeks end on Sunday night at 11:59PM.

Student Presentations: Over the course of the semester, you will be paired with two other students and asked to give two 15-minute presentations to our class on selected topics in medical sociology. The Professor will assign you to a group and indicate the topics and dates for your presentations during the first week of class.

Midterm Examination: The midterm exam will be administered on Thursday, March 5. The midterm is comprehensive and covers all material reviewed up until the date on which the exam is administered.

Final Examination: The final will be administered on Tuesday, May 5 at 2:00PM in CW206. The final is comprehensive and covers all material reviewed in the course.

Course Website: as-u-learn (Moodle) allows our classroom interactions to extend onto the web. I will post course information, quizzes, and assignment submission links on this website. You can find our course syllabus, readings, and lecture slides on this website. Please refer to it frequently. You can find additional resources and training for using as-u-learn on this website: <https://asulearnhelp.appstate.edu/>

Academic Integrity, Disability Services, and Attendance Policy

Detailed information concerning the Academic Integrity Code, Disability Services, and Attendance Policy at Appalachian State University are provided on the following website:

<https://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/resources/syllabi-policy-and-statement-information>

Course Calendar

Week	Class Activities and Required Readings
Week 1 January 14 January 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce course and class assignments, review syllabus • Scope and history of the medical sociology field • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 1 • Assignment: Reading Quiz

<p><u>Week 2</u> January 21 January 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epidemiology concepts and measures • Disease and the modernization of American society • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 2 • Reading: Case, A., & Deaton, A. (2015). Rising morbidity and mortality in midlife among white non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st century. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 112(49), 15078-15083. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<p><u>Week 3</u> January 28 January 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of social class and their relationship with health • Socioeconomic gradient in life expectancy • Disparities in access to quality healthcare • Reading: Chetty, R., Stepner, M., Abraham, S., Lin, S., Scuderi, B., Turner, N., ... & Cutler, D. (2016). The association between income and life expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014. <i>Jama</i>, 315(16), 1750-1766.
<p><u>Week 4</u> February 4 February 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess how social factors can be fundamental causes of health and disease • Explore how neighborhoods and communities influence health risks • Opportunities to reduce health disparities between socioeconomic groups • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 3 • Reading: Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. (1995). Social conditions as fundamental causes of disease. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 80-94. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<p><u>Week 5</u> February 11 February 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aging population and its implications for healthcare and society • Gender and racial/ethnic disparities in health & mental illness • Characteristics among vulnerable groups and threats to their health • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 4 • Reading: Mechanic, D., & Tanner, J. (2007). Vulnerable people, groups, and populations: societal view. <i>Health Affairs</i>, 26(5), 1220-1230. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<p><u>Week 6</u> February 18 February 20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressful situations and their effect on physical and mental health • Types of social stress and coping mechanisms for dealing with stress • Social capital, socioeconomic status, and stress exposure • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 5 • Reading: Desmond, M., & Kimbro, R. T. (2015). Eviction's fallout: housing, hardship, and health. <i>Social Forces</i>, 94(1), 295-324. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<p><u>Week 7</u> February 25 February 27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships between health lifestyle behaviors and socioeconomic status • The influence of geography and living conditions on health and lifestyle • Use of preventive care and barriers to access • Theoretical models of health service use • How sociodemographic factors are related to use of healthcare services • The influence of social networks on healthcare use and behaviors • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 6 and 7 • Reading: Andersen, R., & Newman, J. F. (2005). Societal and individual determinants of medical care utilization in the United States. <i>The Milbank Quarterly</i>, 83(4), Online-only. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<p><u>Week 8</u> March 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sick role and illness as a form of deviant behavior • Midterm Examination on Thursday, March 5

March 5	
<u>Week 9</u> March 10 March 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class on March 10 and March 12 (Spring Break)
<u>Week 10</u> March 17 March 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicalization and the definition of health conditions • Stigmatization of health conditions • Social class and patient-physician communication • Gender and racial/ethnic concordance in patient-physician relationships • Cultural differences in health communication • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 8 and 9 • Reading: Barker, K. K. (2008). Electronic Support Groups, Patient-Consumers, and Medicalization: The Case of Contested Illness. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i>, 49(1), 20-36. • Reading: Shim, J. K. (2010). Cultural health capital: a theoretical approach to understanding health care interactions and the dynamics of unequal treatment. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i>, 51(1), 1-15. • Reading: Scott, J. (2005). Life at the top in America isn't just better, it's longer. <i>New York Times</i>. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 11</u> March 24 March 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physicians and professional authority • The socialization of physicians • The structure of American medicine • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 10 • Reading: Starr, P. (1982). <i>The social transformation of American medicine: The rise of a sovereign profession and the making of a vast industry</i>. Basic books. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 12</u> March 31 April 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of nursing as an occupation • Nursing roles, education, and specialization • Gender, doctor-nurse relationships, and medical authority • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 12 • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 13</u> April 7 April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hospital as a social institution • Trends in hospital ownership and organization • The rising cost of hospitalization • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 14 • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 14</u> April 14 April 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to healthcare reform and policy in the United States • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 15 • Reading: Quadagno, J. (2004). Why the United States has no national health insurance: Stakeholder mobilization against the welfare state, 1945-1996. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i>, 25-44. • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 15</u> April 21 April 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance • Healthcare costs and quality of care • Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Gawande, A. (2009). The Cost Conundrum: What a Texas town can teach us about health care. <i>The New Yorker</i> • Assignment: Reading Quiz
<u>Week 16</u> April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future of healthcare reform in the United States • Equity in healthcare services • Reading: Cockerham, W.C. (2017). Medical Sociology, Chapter 15 • Reading: Gawande, A. (2011). The Hot Spotters: Can we lower medical costs by giving the neediest patients better care? <i>The New Yorker</i> • Assignment: Course Paper Due on Thursday April 30
May 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam on Tuesday May 5 between 2:00PM– 4:30PM in CW206