This course will provide an introduction to central topics in the sociology of health and illness, with an emphasis on its ongoing redefinition by science and technology studies. We will explore multiple domains: the healthcare workgroup or how health professionals interact with one another and with their clients; the research settings where medical knowledge is produced; the circulation of ideas about health and illness; the state and market institutions that transform social inequalities into health disparities; the social movements that shape medicine and challenge the authority of experts; and the bodies and selves that are remade by illness.

Some notes. Although many of the themes we will address have a long history in the subfield, the emphasis in our class will be on developments of the last several decades. The course focuses largely on the United States, though we will try along the way to consider global contexts. While the majority of the scholarship we will consider is sociological (broadly speaking), some of it is drawn from other fields. Students from other disciplines are welcome.

REQUIREMENTS

- **Attendance and Participation.** (15%) Attendance will be taken at the end of class and participation will be considered in grading. You are expected to attend and participate actively in all classes. If you must miss a class meeting, please notify me via email as soon as you know that and indicate the cause of your absence. Unexcused absences detract from your grade.

- **Paper/Interview Transcript and Analysis (25%):** This assignment will be fun and challenging. You will interview three individuals about their health, healthcare and social histories and provide an analysis using the medical sociology concepts from the class. This will be due April 18th via bcourses. We will spend a significant chunk of time preparing to execute these interviews and what kind of analyses we are after. You should not miss the session on Feb 21st as we will go over interview methods in detail. You will provide the (1) interview transcript, (2) three pages of analysis of each interviewee (single space, 12 point font, one inch margins), and (3) one page of cross-analysis (single space, 12 point font, one inch margins) in which you attempt to build a theoretical understanding through comparisons in your admittedly small sample.

- **Exams** (60% of total) Three tests (20% each) will assess your knowledge of course material and will ask you to analyze theoretical and empirical facts, debates, and interpretations covered in the course. It will employ a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and/or short essay. Test questions may come from any aspect of the course (e.g., lectures, videos,
class activities, the textbook, and supplemental readings). Each test will focus on material learned in the respective third of the course; however, because some material will naturally be relevant throughout the course, the second may not be exclusively non-cumulative. The final will be cumulative.

COURSE POLICIES:

- If you will require academic accommodations, please inform the professor at the beginning of the semester. Requests for religious accommodation should be submitted directly to the professor at the beginning of the semester (preferably within the first two weeks) using this form provided by the university: https://callink.berkeley.edu/submitter/form/start/132891. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor in writing by the second week of the semester of any potential conflict of an exam with an extracurricular activity. **Students who need disability accommodations will be accommodated but need to apply with DSP for services.**
- Please familiarize yourself with the University’s academic honesty policy: http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.
- We only have 3 hours per week together in class and a lot of material to cover. Thus I ask that you please come to class prepared and attentive. It’s a better experience for everyone if you are ready to participate.
- To that end, please turn off cell phones and restrict use of technology to course-relevant activities in class. Consider this research in deciding whether to take notes on the laptop or by hand: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/.
- You are expected to attend lecture on a regular basis (and on time) on Wed. Participation can give you a boost in deciding on borderline grades. I will post slide handouts after class, but these are meant as a study aid and not as a substitute for attendance. I urge you to become an active participant in discussions and activities to enhance your learning experience. **You will find that discussion is the main form of lecture in my class.**

READINGS. There is no textbook in this course. All readings/materials are posted on bcourses. **This is a tentative schedule and list of materials and will change throughout the semester.** Communication about the course material will be communicated through bcourses throughout the semester. Test dates are firm.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

*asterisked readings are recommended

**Week 1, Jan 17th: Class Overview**

No reading.
Week 2, Jan 24th: Three Examples in Medical Sociology


Week 3, Jan 31st: The Contested Goals of Medical Sociology


Note: As you read the following three articles, please think of each as a different sort of alternative vision of the field set forth by Bird, Conrad, and Fremont:


Week 4, Feb 7th: Social Conditions and the Embodiment of Inequalities/Review Session


Week 5, Feb 14th: **In-Class Test**

Week 6, Feb 21st: Learning How to Interview for Paper

Learning From Strangers.

Week 7, Feb 28th: Constructing Illness, Medicalizing Society


Week 8, Mar 7th: Constructing Medical Objects and Subjects


Week 9, Mar 14th: Cultures of Risk and Responsibility/Review Session


Week 10, Mar 21st ***In-Class Test***

Week 11, Mar 28th Spring Break

Week 12, Apr 4th: Health Activism, Expertise, and Biocitizenship.


Week 13, April 11th: Making Medical Practice “Scientific”


Week 14, April 18th: No Class/Papers due at 5pm via Bcourses

Week 15, Apr 25th: Review Session

Week 16: Reading Week

Week 17: Final