

Sociology C115: The Sociology of Health and Medicine
UC Berkeley, Spring 2022

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Tues/Thurs 12:30 - 1:59 PM
Mulford 159

Office Hours: TBD on Zoom

Sign up: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/siwtw>

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand what sociology contributes to our understanding of illness and health.
2. To understand how social conditions influence health (*social determinants of health*).
3. To appreciate how illness, health, and medical authority are socially constructed (*social construction of health*)
4. To understand how politics and the economy shape health (*political economy of health*)

COMPONENTS

25% Paper 1: Social Determinants of Health Interview Analysis (**250 points**)

You will conduct two (anonymized) interviews about health using standard questions provided by me. In 4-5 pages (double-spaced), you will analyze these interviews and relate them to the social determinants of health. **DUE 2/24 at 11:59PM**

25% Paper 2: Cultural Representation of Illness and Health (**250 points**)

You will choose a cultural representation of health, illness, or medicine (e.g., movie, TV show, news coverage, novel, etc.). In 4-5 pages (double-spaced), you will analyze this representation according to what we've learned in class, plus two outside readings.

DUE 4/12 at 11:59PM

25% Final Exam (**250 point**)

Open note, take-home test. Short answer and essay question format. Questions will be issued two days before the test is **DUE on 5/12 at 11:59PM.**

Late assignments lose a letter grade for each day (or fraction thereof) that they are late.

25% Daily Quizzes (**250 points**):

Goal: 1) To keep you on top of assigned reading. Format: Three questions in yes/no, multiple-choice, and/or fill-in-the-blank format. Schedule and duration: every Tuesday and Thursday before class from 8:00AM to 12:39 PM (lecture starts at 12:40PM). You have 10 minutes. Content: Basic concepts and key arguments from readings and assigned videos. You can look at your materials for the quiz, but you won't have a ton of time to do so. Buffer/Stress Reducer: The three lowest grades will be dropped. No make-up quizzes.

GRADING

This course has a total of **1000 points**:

Papers: **500 points** (250 each)

Final exam: **250 points**

Daily quizzes: **250 points**

A	94-100%	B+	87%-89.99%	C+	77%-79.99%	D+	67%-69.99%
A-	90-93.99%	B	84-86.99%	C	74-76.99%	D	64-66.99%
		B-	80-83.99%	C-	70-73.99%	F	<63.99%

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes are the last resort when true medical or other emergencies make it impossible to complete coursework on time. To be considered for an incomplete grade, you need to have done passing quality work all semester; you need to speak with me about taking an incomplete by the last day of class; and you must provide documentation of the reason for the request.

“Borderline” Grades: After you receive your final grade, please do not ask me to raise your grade if you feel that you are very close to the next highest grade. Because I drop three quizzes, your grade has already been raised. I will only change grades if there has been a factual error in calculation.

If you need **accommodations** for a disability or medical condition, or have a conflict due to the observance of religious holidays, please email or speak with me early in the semester.

MATERIALS

Assigned readings and videos are available in two places (sometimes in both):

1. As PDFs in **bCourses** under **Files → Readings**, where they’re listed by week.
2. **Links** and **hyperlinks** in the syllabus.¹ These direct you to various websites and digital library books. (Check the syllabus for these ones; don’t rely on bCourses to tell you what to read!)

If a reading is missing or a link is bad, please email me! I’ll fix things as soon as I can.

For some weeks, I include a **reading guide**. These are in the bCourses Readings folder.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The course has four sections: 1) the social determinants of health; 2) the social construction and production of health; 3) the political economy of health; and 4) alternatives and activism.

POLICIES

Attendance

Lectures will *reinforce* and *clarify* the assigned materials; *broaden* and *deepen* your knowledge with new information; and offer opportunities to *apply* this knowledge. Attendance and participation are not required, but I do take note of consistent and generative student participation.

¹ Some hyperlinks are blue, some aren’t, but all of them are underlined.

However, if you are experiencing any COVID symptoms, please stay home. It's still a wacky world, and we need to be cautious.

Academic Integrity and Honesty:

Academic dishonesty of any kind (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and falsification) will not be tolerated, as specified in UC Berkeley's Code of Student Conduct: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity/addressing-misconduct>. All course assignments are checked by Turnitin, a plagiarism detection tool. You will get **no** credit for a paper with plagiarism. Other instances of dishonesty may result in **zero** points for the **entire** course component. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. It is possible to plagiarize without intending to do so (e.g., failing to cite references properly; sticking too closely to an author's original wording). If you have any questions about plagiarism, do not hesitate to contact me.

Email and Communication

After this class, I have to rush off to another lecture, so email is the best way to get in touch or ask a question. I try to reply within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. If you don't hear back within 48, feel free to write me again (but note that I don't reply to questions that are answered in the syllabus). Please include "SOC C115" in the subject line. Regularly check your school email for emails from me and sign up for bCourses daily updates.

Devices and Distraction

Non-assistive devices like your phone, laptop, or tablet compromise your learning by splitting your attention. Studies show that the mere presence of a cell phone can be distracting, so let's keep devices turned off and out of sight during class. We're here to focus! Students who use their phones, laptops, tablets, etc. will be marked down one whole grade, period. If you have an accommodation allowing an assistive device OR you use a tablet to take notes by hand, let me know within the first week. If you're facing extenuating circumstances and need to have your phone on vibrate, also let me know before class.

Back Up Your Work

Save your paper and exam response somewhere other than your computer, such as a thumb drive, an external hard drive, Dropbox, or Google Docs—or just email yourself a copy when you're done doing a chunk of work. Computers can fail, and we don't want to lose the fruits of our effort. I expect you to back up your work. This means I will not be lenient in grading if you say your computer crashed and you lost what you wrote.

Classroom Culture and Academic Citizenship

We have the opportunity to engage important scholarly debates that will deepen our understanding of current social issues and our own lives. Meaningful engagement depends on everyone feeling comfortable with sharing their thoughts—and their confusion. It will help if we all approach this course with *curiosity* and *humility*. Curiosity involves wanting to understand what other people think and why, as well as interrogating why *we* think what we think. Humility requires recognizing that we don't always have the answer and being open to reconsidering our views. Finally, we must all engage each other and the course material with *respect*. Disagreement is fine—it can even be really fruitful—but we need to keep derogatory language and personal criticisms at the door.

COVID Precautions and Disruptions

Campus COVID policies will be enforced. Everyone must wear a mask covering nose and mouth. You will be asked to wear a mask if you come without one. Those who do not comply must leave the room. Let me know early in the semester if you have a medical exemptions.

We may also experience disruptions due to COVID. Possible interruptions include moving back online or me staying home due to illness or potential exposure. If I am unable to teach synchronously, I will pre-record lectures and post them to bCourses.

Recording Lectures

I record lectures for future course planning. If you speak up, keep in mind!

OFFICE HOURS:

Office hours can feel intimidating, but don't be scared and don't worry about asking "stupid" questions. There's nothing dumb about wanting to learn or just say "hi." Research shows that office hours can be especially intimidating for first-gen college students, who often think that academic success comes from toughing it out alone, or who they feel unprepared to interact with authority figures. I was a first-gen student, too, struggling with money and problems back home. Don't be afraid to come on by. Sign up at: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/siwtw/edit>

OTHER INFORMATION:

Feedback: I benefit immensely from your feedback on what works and what doesn't. You'll have the chance to give feedback during midterm course evaluations, but you can email me or come to office hours at any point in the semester, too. The sooner I know, the sooner I can change things!

"USER AGREEMENT"

A syllabus is like a contract that outlines the rights and responsibilities of instructor and student alike. Students are responsible for understanding the syllabus and its policies.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

Economic, Food, and Housing Support

If you need economic, food, or housing support, you can find help at basicneeds.berkeley.edu. You may be eligible for money to buy groceries via calfresh.berkeley.edu or our Food Assistance Program: <https://financialaid.berkeley.edu/financial-literacy-and-resources-financial-literacy-and-resources/basic-needs/>. If you need of food immediately, please visit our UC Berkeley Food Pantry at pantry.berkeley.edu/.

Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Services

Survivor Support Services provides information on these issues, including how to file a report and receive support services: <http://survivorsupport.berkeley.edu>. Please note that I am legally required to report incidents of sexual harassment or violence that students disclose to me. To speak to a confidential care advocate: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate/>

SCHEDULE AND TOPICS:

Below is a schedule of reading assignments and topics of discussion. **Readings must be completed by the time you come to class that day.** Our pace and agenda may change somewhat throughout the term. Some readings are TBD or may change (with enough advance notice).

I will keep you informed of such changes.

Class, Date	Topic
1 1/19	Introduction: How Do Sociologists Study Health and Medicine? No Reading
2 1/21	Other Approaches: Behavioral Economics Thaler and Sunstein. 2008. <i>Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness</i> . "Introduction," Ch. 1 "Biases and Blunders" but SKIP pp. 25 through 35 (from Availability through Status Quo Bias); Ch. 10 and Ch. 11 Online PDF
1. SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH	
3 1/25	Fundamental Cause Theory and Socioeconomic Status Link, Bruce G. and Jo Phelan. 1995. " Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease ." <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 35, pp. 80–94. Online and bCourses Life at the Top isn't Just Better, it's Longer . <i>New York Times</i> (2005) Daniel, Caitlin. 2016. "Economic Constraints on Taste Formation and the True Cost of Healthy Eating." <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> . bCourses
4 1/27	Status, Stigma, and Stress Marmot, Michael. "Status Syndrome." <i>Significance</i> . https://rss.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1740-9713.2004.00058.x Fuller, Andrea. 2016. "Surviving the Holidays While Poor." <i>Poverty Talks</i> . https://talkpoverty.org/2016/01/05/surviving-holidays-poor/ (short essay) Daniel, Caitlin. 2021. " Boosting Op-ed: Boosting SNAP Will Put More Food on Millions of Tables. It Will Also Prevent Depression and Anxiety ." <i>Civil Eats</i> . (short essay) online Puhl and Heuer. 2010. "Obesity Stigma: Important Considerations for Public Health." <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> . Pp: 1019-1028 bCourses
5 2/1	Social Ties: Networks, Support, and Solitude Perry and Pescosolido. (2015). "Social network activation: the role of health discussion partners in recovery from mental illness." <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> bCourses "Social Isolation and Health." 2020. <i>Health Affairs Health Policy Brief</i> . online "The Double Pandemic Of Social Isolation And COVID-19." 2020. <i>Health Affairs Forefront</i> . online Gawande, Atul. 2009. "Hellhole." <i>The New Yorker</i> . bCourses

Recommended:

Christakis and Fowler, 2008. "[The Collective Dynamics of Smoking in a Large Social Network](#)." *New England Journal of Medicine*. **online**

6 2/3 Racism

Watch: Dorothy Roberts, TedX Talk: "[The Problem with Race-Based Medicine](#)"

Watch: David Williams (2016). TedMed Talk: "[How Racism Makes Us Sick](#)"

Carpenter, Zoe. 2017. "[What's Killing America's Black Infants?: Racism is fueling a national health crisis](#)." *The Nation* **online**

McClain, Dani. 2017. "[What It's Like to Be Black and Pregnant When You Know How Dangerous That Can Be](#)." *The Nation* **online**

Third reading TBD

7 2/8 Gender

*Dusenbery. 2018. Introduction of *Doing Harm*. **bCourses**

Ross and Bird. 1994. "Sex Stratification and Health Lifestyle: Consequences for Men's and Women's Perceived Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. **bCourses**

Springer and Mouzon. 2011. "'Macho Men' and Preventive Health Care: Implications for Older Men in Different Social Classes." **bCourses**

8 2/10 Immigration and Legal Status

Viruell-Fuentes, Edna et al. (2012). "More than Culture: Structural Racism, Intersectionality Theory, and Immigrant Health." *Social Science & Medicine*. **bCourses**

Gonzales, Roberto et al. (2013). "No place to belong: Contextualizing concepts of mental health among undocumented immigrant youth in the United States." *American Behavioral Scientist* **bCourses**

9 2/15 Interactions with Medical Professionals / Navigating Care

Shim, Janet K. 2010. "Cultural Health Capital: A Theoretical Approach to Understanding Health Care Interactions and the Dynamics of Unequal Treatment." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)*. Pp: 1–15. **bCourses**

Holmes, Seth. 2013. Ch. 5 "Doctors Don't Know Anything," pp: 111-154 in *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. [UC Berkeley Library](#)

10 2/17 **Review and Paper Prep**

2. THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION AND PRODUCTION OF ILLNESS AND HEALTH

11	2/22	Making Medical Authority Starr, Paul. 1984. <i>The Social Transformation of American Medicine</i> . pp. 3- 29. bCourses and UC Berkeley Library
12	2/24	Making Medical Professionals: Medical Socialization Smith and Kleinman. 1989. “Managing Emotions in Medical School.” ² <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> . bCourses Blumhagen, Dan. 1979. “The doctor's white coat: the image of the physician in modern America.” <i>Annals of Internal Medicine</i> pp: 111-116. bCourses Becker, Howard. <i>Boys in White</i> . Selections bCourses
→ → PAPER 1 DUE to bCourses at 11:59PM		
13	3/1	Medicalization: Making Social Conditions Medical Problems Conrad, Peter. 2007. Ch. 1 “Medicalization: Context, Characteristics, and Changes” and Ch. 3 “Expansion: From Hyperactive Children to Adult ADHD” from The Medicalization of Society . bCourses
14	3/3	Framing: the Social Production of Disease Aronowitz, Robert. 2008. “Framing Disease: An Underappreciated Mechanism for the Social Patterning of Health.” <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 67: 1-9 bCourses Saguy, Abigail. 2013. Ch.1 “Introduction” to <i>What’s Wrong with Fat?</i> UCB Library “ Rethinking Fatness: Why Everything You’ve Been Told About Weight May Be Wrong. ” <i>Prevention Magazine</i> . “ Why Exercise is More Important for Weight Loss for a Longer Life. ” <i>New York Times</i> .
15	3/8	Case Study: Obesity “Epidemic” Saguy, Abigail. 2013. Ch. 2 “Blame Frames” and Ch. 4 “Fashioning Frames” in <i>What’s Wrong with Fat?</i> UCB Library Manne, Kate. 2021. “Diet Culture Is Unhealthy. It’s also Immoral.” https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/opinion/diet-resolution.html
16	3/10	Case Study: Mental Health Phelan, Jo. (2005). “Geneticization of deviant behavior and consequences for stigma: The case of mental illness.” <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i> , 46(4), 307-322. Online
17	3/15	Illness Experience

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfo1nleoVBs&t=2496s> at 30:38

		Kirmayer, Laurence J. 2001. "Cultural Variations in the Clinical Presentation of Depression and Anxiety: Implications for Diagnosis and Treatment." <i>Journal of Clinical Psychiatry</i> pp: 22–30. bCourses
		Charmaz, Kathy. 1995. "The Body, Identity, and Self: Adapting to Impairment." <i>The Sociological Quarterly</i> 36(4): 657–80. bCourses
18	3/17	Healthism: Health as Status Marker Crawford, Robert. 2006. "Health as a Meaningful Social Practice." Pp. 401-420. bCourses "Aileen Suzara Uplifts Filipino Health and Wellness." <i>NBC News</i> . 2017. Stic. 2013. " How To Eat Good on a Hood Budget ."
19	3/29	DISCUSSION, REVIEW, and PAPER PREP
NO CLASS SPRING BREAK 3/21 - 3/25 NO CLASS		
3. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF HEALTH		
20	3/31	Pharmaceuticals Case, Anne and Angus Deaton. 2019. Chapter 9, "Opioids." <i>Deaths of Despair</i> . UC Berkeley Library online Additional reading TBD
21	4/5	Can Economic Systems Kill? Case, Anne and Angus Deaton. 2019. Ch. 1 <i>Introduction</i> and Ch. 4 "The Lives and Deaths of the More (and Less) Educated." <i>Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism</i> . UC Berkeley Library online
22	4/7	The Welfare State Ólafsdóttir, Sigrún. 2007. "Fundamental Causes of Health Disparities: Stratification, the Welfare State, and Health in the United States and Iceland." <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> 48: 239-253. bCourses
23	4/12	Getting by Without Health Care Raudenbush, Danielle. 2020. Ch. 3 "Sick, Poor, and Without Care" in <i>Healthcare Off the Books</i> . bCourses Lee, Jooyoung. 2013. "The Pill Hustle: Risky Pain Management for a Gunshot Victim." <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> pp: 162-168. bCourses
		→ → PAPER 2 DUE
24	4/14	Healthcare Policy and Reform in US

Quadagno, J. 2010. "Institutions, Interest Groups, and Ideology: An Agenda for the Sociology of Health Care Reform." *JHSB* pp: 125–36. **bCourses**

Castañeda, H. 2017. "Is Coverage Enough? Persistent Health Disparities in Marginalised Latino Border Communities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* pp: 2003–19.

4. ALTERNATIVES and ACTIVISM

25 4/19 Alternative and Complementary Medicine

READINGS TBD

26 4/21 Health Social Movements

Epstein, Steven. 1995. "The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in the Reform of Clinical Trials." *Science, Technology & Human Values* 20: 408-437. **bCourses**

27 4/26 Health Social Movements

Nelson, Alondra. 2013. Ch. 3 "The People's Free Medical Clinics" in *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination* pp: 75-114. **bCourses**

28 4/28 **DISCUSSION AND REVIEW**

RRR Week 5/2-5/6

→ 5/12 → **Take-home test due by 11:59PM to bCourses**
