

Sociology C115 and Public Health C155
Health, Illness, and Medicine

John Kaiser, PhD
UC Berkeley
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In a speech to the Medical Committee for Human Rights in 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King said, “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.” Although this course doesn’t focus exclusively on issues of social justice and healthcare, the ways that various types of inequality fundamentally shape health and illness appear repeatedly. Analyzing the interconnection between well-being, morbidity, mortality, and inequality best reveals the socially-constructed nature of health and illness in both the symbolic and the material sense. This perspective also highlights aspects of inequality that might otherwise go unobserved.

Medical sociology is quite large, with many exciting topics and studies, so this course can only take us on a stroll through the field, as we visit its more inviting spots. We begin with an introduction to the sociological approach to health and illness, followed by empirical data on the distribution of health and illness by race, gender, class, and age in the United States (Part I).

Although our analysis of the empirical data includes some theory, most of our material on the explanations and causes of these patterns comes in the section that follows (Part II), where we explore the many forces— beyond healthcare— that shape morbidity, mortality, and well-being. These include relations of domination and subordination, stress, environmental toxins, food industry/sugar/meat, environmental racism, epidemics, access to nutritious food, relationships and love.

Since healthcare is an important and particularly visible mediator of health, the entire section that comes next (Part III) focuses on the social organization of medical care, including access, financing, insurance, policy, and reform. In this section, we also go deeper into analyzing the United States in a global context.

The last section (Part IV) turns to healthcare delivery interactions, medical culture, and practitioners, including physicians’ professional power vis-à-vis other groups, such as witches, midwives, nurses, corporations, patients, and government. The course ends with empathy in care delivery and our hopeful discussions of continuing positive transformation.

NOTE: In our bCourses document entitled “Recommended Reading,” you will find a list of interesting and important topics—and readings for each— that we do not have time to include in the syllabus.

Attention! Students who miss any of the first four classes may be dropped.

Grading

This class emphasizes participation and critical engagement with a research topic for the final paper, which, with the proposal and rough draft, is worth 30% of your grade. We will have a midterm exam and a final exam, both worth 15% of your grade. The relatively low weight of the exams is designed to place value on the paper, which allows freedom to choose your topic and to go deep into focused analysis. Ongoing reading response memos help you engage the material and contribute to discussions. You choose the days to write your memos, but be careful not to wait too long or you will run out of chances to do them all. Lastly, students will take turns doing group presentations on a topic/day of their choosing. You will find more-detailed descriptions of these course components below.

Attendance and Participation.....	20%
Reading Response Memos.....	10%
Group Presentations.....	10%
Midterm Exam.....	15%
Research Paper	
Proposal.....	5%
Rough Draft.....	5%
Final paper.....	20%
Final Exam.....	15%

Due Dates

Monday, May 22.....	Email me your presentation day preferences
Monday, June 5.....	Proposal
Monday, June 19.....	Rough Draft
Thursday, June 8.....	Midterm Exam
Thursday, June 29.....	Final Exam
Friday, June 30.....	Research Paper
Memos.....	Ongoing (plan so you complete all five)
Group Presentations.....	Ongoing; schedule to be determined by May 23

Attention! All assignments must be submitted on paper and on time. No late or electronic submissions will be accepted.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are essential to doing well in this course. Students are expected to participate regularly by coming prepared and contributing to our discussions. Keeping up with the weekly readings is a condition of possibility for meaningful participation. Please be mindful of group dynamics so that everybody feels comfortable enough to speak up. Participation includes active listening, positive attitude, taking responsibility, knowing the syllabus, and contributing to discussions, in addition to any other in-class work and quizzes.

You can miss one class before losing attendance points. A penalty of one letter grade will be assessed for every class you miss after the first. That penalty may be waived if you have a legitimate reason—and evidence—for missing. Arriving late counts as half-missed class.

Any quizzes, writing, or other in-class work will count towards participation grade. In-class work, quizzes, and participation cannot be made-up under any circumstances, even if you have a legitimate reason (and evidence) for missing class.

Reading-Response Memos

There will be 5 reading-response memos, each 1-2 pages in length (MAX), on the substantive reading. For each memo, answer the following:

What is the author's(s') main argument(s)?

If only one reading: what is the structure of the author's argument?

If two or more readings: how do the readings speak to each other?

What does the reading tell us about health and illness?

At the end, evaluate the reading (what did you find surprising, interesting, puzzling, problematic, etc.)

Memos are thoughtful and analytical, not simply statements of opinion or summaries. They must be written in a formal discussion style (no bullet points, lists, etc.). You do not have to address the above points in order; however, if you do not go in order, be extra sure that you clearly address each point. Cite the text (direct quotations and paraphrase) and analyze it to support and illustrate your points.

Each student must write 5 memos of at least passing quality to receive full credit (check = passing, check-minus = non-passing). Non-passing memos yield zero points or one point, depending on quality. Passing memos are worth 2 points each. No more than 5 memos will be accepted. With some exceptions, each memo must analyze all of the chosen day's assigned reading (2 of 2, 3 of 3, at least 3 of 4 or 5), and should discuss them in relation to each other. Each should be 1-2 pages long.

A hard copy of each memo must be submitted at the beginning of the class whose "reading due" corresponds to the texts analyzed in the memo (don't arrive late because you were working on your memo!). No late memos will be accepted under any circumstances. Memos may not be redone or made up under any circumstances. Only one memo per class/assigned reading is allowed. You may submit only five memos.

Please do not ask the instructor for an exception to this policy. If you wait too long to write memos, you will run out of time to complete all five, so plan accordingly.

Group Presentations

Students will prepare an interactive group presentation on their chosen day's topic. The presentation should last at least 30 minutes, and everyone must participate in some capacity during the presentation. Each group will help lead a discussion after their presentation.

Each presenter will receive an individual grade based on: 1) preparation and effort; 2) creativity, performance, and interaction; and 3) content. Anybody who does not present for any reason, including missing class, will receive a "zero." Presenters should check in with the instructor as a group over email (use a group thread) a few days before the presentation to go over their plan.

Research Paper, Proposal, and Rough Draft

This course is designed to give students the freedom to study a specific topic closely through the Research Paper, and this assignment is an important part of the class. For this paper, students will use secondary sources to research a course topic— or a line of analysis that is closely-related to a course topic— of their choosing.

Don't wait to read through the course schedule to figure out what topic you find most interesting; the Proposal is due Monday, June 5— you should know your topic several days before that so you have time to work on it.

The final draft of the Research Paper will be 8-10 pages long and will require at least 10 outside academic sources. Detailed instructions for the Proposal, the Rough Draft, and the Final Paper will be given out in the first week of class.

Midterm and Final Exams

Both the Midterm and the Final are worth 15% of your grade. You will not need a bluebook. You will have 90 minutes for each. The Final is not cumulative. Both exams will take place in our classroom.

Guidelines and Resources

Formatting

All work must be formatted correctly. Familiarize yourself with MLA style formatting. Refer to The Purdue Owl Writing Lab.¹ Then, note the following variations that we use in our course's modified MLA format style:

- single space* the header at the top-left of your first page (name, course, assignment, date);
- center your creative title above the start of your text;
- no title page;
- single space* and indent block quotations;
- no contractions;
- 1" margins;
- doubled-spacing;
- pagination;
- 12-point Times New Roman font;
- staple pages together;
- justify the left, but not the right.

See the example of writing format posted to bCourses. Taking responsibility for formatting your work correctly will prevent problems.

¹ <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Accessibility Accommodations

If you need disability-related accessibility accommodations in this class please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students who need academic accessibility accommodations should contact the Disability Students Program (DSP) , 260 Cesar Chavez Center.

Student Learning Center (SLC)

The SLC provides peer writing tutors. You are expected to make use of their services. You do not need an appointment. Find them in the Chavez Center (<http://slc.berkeley.edu>).

NOTE: Plagiarism, broadly put, is the presentation of another's words and/or ideas as one's own. It is grounds not only for automatic failure, but also for administrative disciplinary action. This also applies for other forms of academic dishonesty (a.k.a. cheating). Please see the Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct, Section III B, Academic Violations, and Section IV, Disciplinary Procedures.

Office Hours and Email

Office hours are an integral part of college learning, and I encourage you to make use of them. I ask students to email me to arrange an appointment so we can find a time that works. For this summer course, the best time for regular office hours is Thursday afternoons; however, I will also be available Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays for those who cannot make Thursdays and for people who would like to have a relatively brief meeting right after class.

My email address is: j_kaiser@berkeley.edu. Please allow at least 24 hours for a reply, though I will reply sooner than that whenever possible. I usually do not use email over the weekend, on holidays, or after hours.

Course Materials

Seven books, available at the campus bookstore, are required for this course:

Apesoa-Verano, Carolina and Charles Varano. *Conflicted Health Care: Professionalism and Caring in an Urban Hospital*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014.

Brawley, Otis and Paul Goldberg. *How We Do Harm: a Doctor Breaks Ranks about Being Sick in America*. NY: St. Martin's Press, 2011.

Conrad, Peter and Valerie Leiter. *The Sociology of Health and Illness*. 9th edition. NY: Worth Publishers. 2013. (Abbreviated "H&I" in Course Schedule).

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deidre English. *Witches, Midwives, & Nurses: a History of Women Healers*. 2nd edition. NY: The Feminist Press, 2010.

Halpern, Jodi. *From Detached Concern to Empathy: Humanizing Medical Practice*. NY: University of Oxford Press, 2001.

Reid, T.R. *The Healing of America: a Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health Care*. NY: Penguin Books, 2001.

Siegel, Bernie. *Love, Medicine, and Miracles: Lessons Learned about Self-Healing from a Surgeon's Experience with Exceptional Patients*. NY: Harper and Row, 1986.

Additional materials will be available on bCourses (under "files") and via hyperlinks.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The instructor may make changes to any part of this syllabus at any time. The most-current version of this syllabus is on bCourses (under “files”).

Monday, May 22: Course Overview

Email the instructor with your top three presentation day preferences by this evening.

Unit I: Distribution of Health and Illness

Tuesday, May 23 The Sociological Perspective on Health and Illness

“Body Ritual Among the Nacirema.” 14-17. bCourses.

“Introduction,” “The Social Nature of Disease,” “Medical Measures and the Decline of Mortality,” and “Who Gets Sick?” H&I 1-26.

Wednesday, May 24 SES

“Social Class, Susceptibility, and Sickness.” H&I 28-32.

“Socioeconomic Disparities in Health in the United States.” 186-194. bCourses.

“Racial-Ethnic, Gender, and Age Disparities in Health and Their Relation to Socioeconomic Position.” 71-86. bCourses.

Thursday, May 25 Race

“Understanding Racial-ethnic Disparities in Health.” H&I 34-42.

“Race, Social Contexts, and Health.” 92-102. bCourses.

“Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Health: the Added Effects of Racism.” 174-185. bCourses.

Monday, May 29: No Class

Tuesday, May 30 Gender

“Sex, Gender, and Vulnerability.” H&I 34-55.

“Understanding Gender and Health.” 52-68. bCourses.

“Pathways of Health and Death.” 377-387. bCourses.

Unit II: Social Causes of Health and Illness

Wednesday, May 31 Causality

“Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Health Inequalities.” 29-40. bCourses.

“Physical Health and Life Expectancy.” bCourses. 74-87.

Thursday, June 1 Access to Healthcare v. Socially-Mediated Causes of Illness

“Medical Sociology and Health Services Research: Past Accomplishments and Future Policy Challenges.” 108-115. bCourses.

“A Case for Refocusing Upstream.” H&I 583-593.

“Healthcare ≠ Health.” 29-47. bCourses.

Monday, June 5 Epidemics

“Health, Security, and New Biological Threats.” 363-375. bCourses.

“The Campaign to Lead the World Health Organization.” <https://nyti.ms/2ovIAQk>

“Pandemic Panic.” <http://time.com/4766624/next-global-security/?iid=sr-link1>

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE!!!!!!!!!!

Tuesday, June 6 Environmental Toxins and Food

“The Health Politics of Asthma: Environmental Justice and Collective Illness Experience in the United States.” H&I 81-92.

“In Poor Health: Supermarket Redlining and Urban Nutrition.” 125-132. bCourses.

“The Shady History of Big Sugar.” <https://nyti.ms/2k5BaqA>

“Health Leaders Must Focus on Threats from Factory Farms.” <https://nyti.ms/2rHcZJ6>

Wednesday, June 7 Relationships and Care

“The Roseto Mystery.” 3-11. bCourses.

“Social Relationships and Health.” H&I 93-100.

“Dying Alone: the Social Production of Urban Isolation.” H&I 102-114.

Thursday, June 8 **MIDTERM EXAM!!!!!!!!!!**

Unit III: The Social Organization of Healthcare

Monday, June 12 American Healthcare in Global Context

The Healing of America (all).

“Comparative Models of Health Care Systems.” H&I 543-556.

Tuesday June 13 Financing Medical Care

“Financing Medical Care.” H&I 322-325.

“Paying for Health Care.” H&I 326-336.

“Doctoring as a Business: Money, Markets, and Managed Care.” H&I 337-344.

“The Cost Conundrum.” H&I 344-354.

Wednesday, June 14 Healthcare Reform

“Sociology of Healthcare Reform” H&I 357-365

“Historical and Comparative Reflections on the US National Health Insurance Reforms.” H&I 373-9.

“Health, Healthcare, and Health Policy in America.” 1-15. bCourses.

“Healthcare Reform: Necessary but not Nearly Sufficient” 19-28. bCourses.

Thursday, June 15 Current Events in Healthcare Policy

“House Passes G.O.P. Bill to Repeal Obamacare.” <https://nyti.ms/2pKoOkj>

“Who Wins and Loses in the Latest G.O.P. Health Care Bill.” <https://nyti.ms/2pLdKTN>

“In Rare Unity, Hospitals, Doctors, Insurers Criticize Health Care Bill.” <https://nyti.ms/2pbBf4J>

“Aetna Says Sayonara to ObamaCare.”

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/aetna-says-sayonara-to-obamacare-1494544522>

Unit IV: Healthcare Providers, Medical Culture, and Care Delivery

Monday, June 19 A Physician's Perspective on Care Delivery

How We Do Harm (all).

“Cancer Treatment Hype Gives False Hope.”

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/04/27/cancer-treatment-hype-gives-false-hope-many-patients/100972794/>

ROUGH DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE!!!!!!!!!!

Tuesday, June 20 The Rise of Medical Power

“The Rise and Fall of the Dominance of Medicine.” H&I 213-215.

“Professionalization, Monopoly, and the Structure of Medical Practice.” H&I 216-221.

Witches, Midwives, and Nurses (all).

Wednesday, June 21 Medicalization and the Decline of Power

“The Medicalization of American Society.” H&I 495-6.

“Medicine as an Institution of Social Control.” H&I 497- 506.

“The Shifting Engines of Medicalization.” H&I 507-516.

“Counterveiling Power: The Changing Character of the Medical Profession.” H&I 260-268.

Thursday, June 22 Medical Culture

From Detached Concern to Clinical Empathy (vii-xxiv, 1-38, 129-145).

“Social Death as Self-Fulfilling Prophecy.” H&I 409.

Monday, June 26 Hospital Nursing

Conflicted Healthcare (1-84, 128-153).

Tuesday, June 27 Empathy in Care Delivery

Love, Medicine, and Miracles (all)

“Negative Emotions in Cancer Care.” bCourses.

Wednesday, June 28 Research Paper Workshop

Thursday, June 29 FINAL EXAM!!!!!!

RESEARCH PAPER DUE BY FRIDAY, JUNE 30, IN MY BOX IN 410 BARROWS BY 2PM.

No late or electronic submissions will be accepted.