

SOC 365W: SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH & ILLNESS
Fall, 2009
3 Credit Hours

Class Meeting Times: TU/TH 12:30pm – 1:50pm

Location of Class Meeting: CHSS 206

Instructor: Dr. Jin Young Choi

Office: CHSS, Room 270V

Office Hours: TU/TH 11:00am to 12:30pm or by appointment

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Required Text: Rose Weitz. 2009. The Sociology of Health, Illness, and Health Care: A Critical Approach, 5th Edition: Thomson Wadsworth. USA

Course Description

This course is designed to explore social aspects of health, illness, and the health care system. Students will be exposed to key concepts and fundamental theories in sociology of health and illness. The course focuses on the social factors and meanings of health and illness, relationships between doctors and patients, medicalization, disparities in health and health care along with age, gender, social class, and race/ethnicity lines, and the current health care crisis in U.S. and cross-national contexts. Special attention is given to the roles of social, cultural, and institutional factors in understanding the health and health care issues in the United States and in other countries.

Course Objectives

1. To gain fundamental knowledge of the concepts and theories related to health, illness, and health care.
2. To gain a broader sociological understanding of health, health care, and disparities among different segments of the society.

Course Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on two exams, two analytical reviews, and an applied research project.

(a) Exams (200 pts total)

There will be **two** exams. Each exam will cover the course materials (assigned chapters of the textbook, lectures, and other relevant readings and presentations). **Each exam will be equally weighted (100 points) for a total of 200 points. Make-up exams will *only* be given if arranged with the professor prior to the day of the scheduled exam to be missed and only if the instructor considers the reason for the absence valid.** The make-up exams will likely be more difficult than the regular scheduled exams. There will be no cell phones or headphones allowed during the exam.

(b) Analytical reviews (100 pts total)

During the semester, **three** media materials related to various social issues of health/illness and health care will be presented in class. Students are expected to choose **two of them and write an analytical review** (at least **three pages, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, Times New Roman 12pt font**) for each media material. **Each paper is worth 50 points.** Details of this assignment will be provided to students in class. The due date for reviews will be due in class on **October 29. No late assignments will be accepted after the due date.**

(c) Applied Research Project (200 pts total)

Students are required to produce a research project related to social aspects of health and illness and health care issues with creative but scientific methods. Students are expected to form a group (**each group cannot have more than 6 students**) for the project. This project is segmented out into **four parts** that build onto each other and result in a quality of research that **can be presented a professional conference as an oral presentation or a photo essay:** Topic submission; Abstract; Class presentation; and Final paper.

- (1) **Research topic** (10 pts): Each group **must contact the professor** to discuss the project topic and methods **before September 17.** Students are expected to submit their **research topic with a brief description** about their research (**one paragraph**) by **September 22.**
- (2) **Abstract** (30 pts): Each group must submit an abstract of their research project (**Professional Conference format**) by **October 1.**
- (3) **Presentation** (80 pts): Students are expected to present their research project in a creative way using a power point or media materials during the class on a designated date. **Presentation materials must be submitted to the professor before the presentation.**
- (4) **Final Paper** (80 pts): Students are expected to submit a completed final paper, **5-7 pages (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, Times New Roman 12pt font, ASA style) with proper and complete citations and references (at least three academic references)** by **3pm on Dec. 11.**

Further details will be provided to the students throughout the semester.

All students in the group must participate in every stage of producing their group research project to obtain points. Group research projects will be graded based on two components: one is the **professor's evaluation**, while the second is that of **the group members.** Each group member will evaluate the contribution of their group members. To evaluate contribution of each student, the average of the evaluations from the other students will be multiplied by the points given by the professor. Students will grade their group members using a 0 to 1 scale in which A = 1; B = .85; C = .75; D = .65; and F = .55. **Students who do not participate in their group project can receive 0 points. This rule is applied to all five stages of the project, separately.** If you have questions or need advice, please see Dr. Choi during her office hours or make an appointment.

Grading

The final grade for the course will be based on the course requirements presented above. **A total of 500 possible points** will be available. Final grades will be assigned as follows:

- 500- 450 = A
- 449- 400 = B
- 399- 350 = C
- 349- 300 = D
- 299- 0 = F

Extra credit

Students will have several opportunities to earn extra credit points during the semester. Those opportunities will be announced in class. **Late submissions will not be accepted.** Furthermore, some extra credit opportunities will be provided as a part of class activities during the class. Students who miss those opportunities due to their absence will **not be given another opportunity to earn the points.** I will discuss extra credit more as the semester progresses. Earning extra credit is recommended.

Attendance Policy

SHSU policy is that attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all classes and participate fully in class activities. **Attending class means you are actively alert and you are in class for the duration of the entire class period.** Tardiness will be not accepted. Students who are not present 5 minutes after the start of class will be counted absent. **Students who attend all classes will receive 5 extra points towards their total accumulated points.** Students are expected to show an appropriate cause for both absences and tardiness and are also expected to initiate action to satisfy all missed class work. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused. **Students are responsible for obtaining class materials for the classes that they miss.** Failure to do so will affect students' grades.

Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive the grade of zero (0) for that assignment or exam with more severe sanctions as appropriate. Students who cheat more than once will receive an automatic F in the class. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines*
<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center and then arrange a conference with the instructor in order that accommodations can be made to assure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Religious Holidays

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete

an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. “Religious Holy Day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. Students should contact the instructor as soon as possible regarding any missed classes due to “Religious Holy Days”. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines*

<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Classroom Rules of Conduct

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students shall arrive to class on time and be respectful to their other students. If a student needs to arrive to class late or leave class early the student will make the professor aware of these needs prior to class time. **All cell phones, iPods, and beepers must be turned off and stowed away while in the classroom.** Students who disrupt the class will be contacted by the professor to adjust their behaviors. In extreme cases students who cannot comply with these requirements can be removed and resigned from the class. See the following link for details: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>.

Visitors to the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to the class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor’s discretion whether or not the visitor is allowed to remain in the classroom.

COURSE OUTLINE

Aug. 25	Introduction
Aug. 27	The Sociology of Health, Illness, & Health Care (CH1)
Sept. 1	Media presentation I: Social aspects of Illness
Sept. 3-8	The Social Source of Illness (CH2)
Sept. 10	The Social Distribution of Illness in the US (CH3)
Sept. 15	Illness and Death in Developing Nations (CH4)
Sept. 17	Application I: Social Issues of health and illness
Sept. 22	The Social Meanings of Illness (CH5); <u>Research Topic Due</u>
Sept. 24	The Experience of Disability, Chronic Pain, & Chronic Illness (CH6)
Sept. 29	The Sociology of Mental Illness (CH7)
Oct. 1	Review; <u>Abstract Due</u>
Oct. 6	Exam I
Oct. 8-13	Media Presentation II: Pharmaceutical Industry
Oct. 15	Health Care in the United States (CH8)
Oct. 20	Health Care in Other Countries (CH9)
Oct. 22-27	Media Presentation III: Health Care System (U.S. & Other countries)
Oct. 29	Health Care Settings & Technologies (CH10); <u>Essay Due</u>
Nov. 3	The Profession of Medicine (CH11)
Nov. 5	Health Care Providers (CH12)
Nov. 10	Issues in Bioethics (CH13)
Nov. 12	Application II: Health care and health care policy
Nov. 17-24	Student Group Presentations
Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING
Dec. 1-3	Student Group Presentations
Dec. 8	Review
Dec. 10	Exam II
Dec. 11	Final Paper Submission (Before 3pm)