

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology

SOC 7370 ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE
Life Chances and Health Choices: Social Inequality and Health

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2006–07, Fall Term
A01, 3 Cr. Hrs.
Tuesday, 1:00-4:00 pm
Room 335 Isbister Bldg.

Office Hours: by Appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVE: This seminar will examine the nature of the relationship between social inequality and health disparities.

COURSE OUTLINE

SOCIAL STATUS AND HEALTH STATUS

September

- 12 Introduction - Adopting a Population Health Perspective
- 19 Social Determinants of Health: Structural and Personal Factors
- 26 Understanding the Social Gradient and Health

SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND HEALTH

October

- 3 Income and Health: Can Money Buy Good Health?
- 10 Employment and Health
- 17 Gender and Health
- 24 Minority Status, Immigration and Health

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND HEALTH: UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL PATHWAYS

October

31 The Convergence of Structure and Agency: Health Lifestyles

November

7 Psychological Distress, Sense of Control, and Social Inequalities in Health

RESEARCH PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS

November

14

21

REDUCING INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH

28 Health Policy Initiatives: From Lalonde (1974) to Romanow (2002)
and Beyond

December

5 Policy Brief – Population Health Promotion Strategy

EVALUATION INFORMATION

The formal requirements of this seminar consist of **three class presentations and two papers**.

Assignment One

Presentation: Each student will be required to give a **class presentation** on one of the structural determinants of health (i.e., one of the topics listed in the section entitled **Social Inequality and Health**). The topic selected will determine the date of the class presentation. **(10 MARKS)**

Paper: The first paper will take the form of a **comprehensive review essay** on the issue selected for class presentation. This essay will critically synthesize the literature and will be **due no later than one week after the date of the presentation**. **(35 MARKS)**

Assignment Two

Presentation: The **second class presentation** will be on a research problem selected for investigation. Any aspect of social inequality and health may be selected, but the **instructor must approve the research topic.**

Each student will be required to distribute a one-page abstract of their presentation and suggested readings to all members of the seminar **one week in advance** of the date of the presentation. This is intended to facilitate discussion and constructive feedback. The presentation should highlight both conceptual and methodological aspects of the research topic. The date of this presentation will be scheduled in class. **(10 MARKS)**

Paper: The second paper will take the form of a **research proposal**. This paper should include: conceptualization of the research problem; formulation of testable hypotheses (if appropriate); review of relevant research literature; and a prospective research design (e.g., sampling, measurement and data analysis strategy). A clear rationale must be provided for the methodology selected.

More specifically, the **research proposal** should include the following:

Statement of Objectives: a clear statement of the purpose of the proposed research, the uniqueness of the study and its expected contribution;

Literature Review: relevant background information and a summary of the present state of knowledge in the field;

Conceptual Framework: the theoretical/conceptual model guiding the research including specific testable hypotheses or the research questions to be addressed;

Research Design: a description and justification of the proposed methodology including sample selection and data collection procedures (e.g., specific data sources and types of measures to be used);

Data Analysis Strategy: a description of the data management techniques and statistical tests to be used;

Timeframe and Feasibility of the Study: a statement of the length of time and types of resources necessary to successfully complete the study successfully;

Policy and Program Implications of the Research: relevance of the proposed study to health policy in Canada and to national population health strategies.

The second paper will be **due no later than one week after the last day of classes. (35**

MARKS)

Assignment Three

Presentation: The **third class presentation** will be a policy brief to be presented to the Minister of Health recommending the best strategy for population health promotion. This presentation will be in the last scheduled class. **(10 MARKS)**

PLEASE NOTE:

LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE GRADED.

Academic Integrity: Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on "Personation at Examinations" (Section 7.2) and "Plagiarism and Cheating" (Section 7.1) found in the University of Manitoba Graduate Calendar.

Voluntary withdrawal deadline date: November 15, 2006.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION: The grade distribution for this course is as follows:

A+	90-100%	C+	65-69%
A	80-89%	C	60-64%
B+	75-79%	D	50-59%
B	70-74%	F	less than 50%

CLASS PRESENTATION SCHEDULE**SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND HEALTH**October

3

10

17

24

RESEARCH PROPOSALNovember

14

21

POLICY BRIEFDecember

5

REFERENCES

The following references are organized in terms of the topics included in the course outline. It is expected that the literature reviewed for the class presentations and the required papers will not be restricted to this reading list.

A POPULATION HEALTH PERSPECTIVE

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Labonte, R. (1995) Population health and health promotion: What do they have to say to each other? Canadian Journal of Public Health, 86: 165-168.

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SOCIAL DETERMINANTS AND THE SOCIAL GRADIENT IN HEALTH

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Wilkinson, R. (1996) Unhealthy societies: The afflictions of inequality. New York: Routledge.

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INCOME INEQUALITY AND HEALTH

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EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH

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GENDER AND HEALTH

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inequalities in health. Social Science and Medicine, 60: 2129-2133.

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REDUCING HEALTHY INEQUALITIES: HEALTH POLICY INITIATIVES

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