

University of Manitoba  
Department of Sociology

**SOC 3660 Sociology of Mental Disorder** (3 credit hours)

A01 May Day: May 5 – 28, 2014 (CRN: 30138)

Monday-Friday: 1:30-3:30 am in 406 Tier

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**Objectives of the course:**

This course provides a critical analysis of the social construction of mental disorder, specifically 'psychotherapeutic' knowledge and practice. Through readings and lectures the course examines the social processes involved in defining mental illness and how these concepts are applied to human experience and action. The topics to be addressed include: gender and mental disorder, images of madness, theories of mental disorder as well as the ways in which problems in living are individualized and medicalized.

**Required text:**

McLeod, J. D., and E. R. Wright (Eds). **The Sociology of Mental Illness: A Comprehensive Reader**, Oxford University Press, New York: 2010.

**Course requirements:**

The final grade for the course will be based on the following requirements:

- 1) In-class test (25% of final grade): Friday, May 16, 2013.
- 2) Group presentation: (25% of final grade): TBA
- 3) In-class group exercises (20% of final grade):
  - a) Friday, May 9 (10%)      b) Friday, May 23 (10%)
- 4) Attendance (10%): each missed class will result in a loss of two points
- 5) In-class test (20% of final grade): Wednesday, May 28, 2013.

Study questions for the in-class tests will be distributed in advance. The group film presentation/analysis will be detailed in a separate handout. There will be two (2) group exercises assigned in-class that are of equal value (10% each) and you must be present for these exercises. Please note that no provisions have been made for make-up tests, late assignments or missed group work. Requests for special consideration must be supported by appropriate documentation, including any absences from class. No exceptions.

The voluntary withdrawal date for May Day half courses is **Thursday, May 22, 2014**.  
100% refund deadline is **May 7, 2014**

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating and exam personation ("**Personation at Examinations**" (**Section 5.2.9**) and ("**Plagiarism and Cheating**" **Section 8.1**) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at: <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/index.html>

Any term work that has not been claimed by students will be held for four (4) months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. At the conclusion of this time, all unclaimed term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.

\*The course requirements will be based on the readings, lectures and class discussions. As indicated in the course requirements, students are required to attend class and, also to complete the readings in advance of the lectures so that any problems, concerns or issues can be raised for discussion in class. Participation in class discussion is both welcomed and encouraged.

**Disruptions:** On the issue of politeness, please note that disturbances due to talking or early departures are disruptive and unacceptable. Please be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of others in the class. Students should be aware that persistent disruption and/or inappropriate behavior may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving early should inform the instructor at the beginning of the class. **It should also be noted that lap top computers may only be used for the purpose of taking notes; any other uses will result in this privilege being withdrawn. Cell phones are to be turned off during class and, text messaging is strictly prohibited or students will be asked to leave.**

**Grade distribution:**

A+ 95-100	B+ 80-85	C+ 65-71	D 50-59
A 86-94	B 72-79	C 60-64	F <50

The course work will be evaluated with a letter grade, not a point system. The benchmarks of the grade ranges are defined as follows:

**D/F** An answer which is factually weak, faulty analysis and very poor organization. (D: marginal / F: failure)

**C** An answer which is mostly complete in terms of facts but suffers from poor analysis, organization and integration. Knowing the facts is a good start, but only a beginning. (C: adequate / C+: satisfactory)

**B** An answer which is factually accurate and mostly complete as well as organized and integrated. (B: good / B+: very good)

**A** An answer which is factually complete, well organized, providing a sophisticated analysis which demonstrates a sound comprehension of the issues and their implications. (A: excellent / A+: exceptional)

## **Class Schedule:**

This is a tentative class schedule and may be modified as we proceed. Our progress through the course materials will be monitored to determine whether any changes are appropriate.

**May 5: Introduction and overview of the course**

### **May 6 – May 15:**

The first section of the course examines issues that are critical to a Sociology of Mental Disorder including the role of social factors in the construction and definition of mental illness, the methods used to study mental disorders and the social control of deviance.

Readings: McLeod and Wright, Parts I, II and III (Specific items in this edited text will be assigned in-class)

**Friday, May 9: In-class group exercise (10% of final grade)**

**Friday, May 16: In-class test (25% of final grade)**

**\*Monday, May 19: No classes: Victoria Day \***

### **May 20 – May 27:**

The second section of the course engages a focused analysis of the various responses to and implications of being defined as mentally ill, including labeling and stigma. In this context we will critically assess theories of mental disorder, including, for example, biological explanations, feminist psychologies and socio-political processes. These attempts to 'explain' mental disorder will be scrutinized in relation to the regulation of normality and the contribution of a sociological perspective.

Readings: McLeod and Wright, Parts IV, V and VI. (Specific items in this edited text will be assigned in-class)

**Friday, May 23: In-class group exercise (10% of final grade)**

***Group presentations will be scheduled between May 20 and 27, 2014***

**Wednesday, May 28: In-class test (20% of final grade)**