

**UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA**  
**Department of Sociology**  
**Sociology 2490 Section A01**  
**Sociology of Health and Illness**  
**Fall 2007, 3 credit hours**

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*“But it is particularly necessary, in my opinion, for one who discusses this art to discuss things familiar to ordinary folk. For the subject of inquiry and discussion is simply and solely the sufferings of these same ordinary folk when they are sick or in pain.” - Ancient Medicine - The Hippocratic Corpus, circa 400 BCE -*

Instructor: Dr. Christopher J. Fries, PhD  
Time & Place: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays: 1:30 pm - 2:20 pm, 403 Tier Building  
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### 1. Nature and Scope of the Course

Though most people have some idea of what it means to be in good health, health is not as straightforward a concept to understand as may appear. In a sociological perspective health is understood as a social construction. That is, both the health and illness of our bodies and the manner in which we understand these concepts are influenced by social factors. The purpose of the course is to provide a sociological framework for understanding the health and health care behaviour of Canadians.

### 2. Objectives of the Course

- ✓ Students will develop their own sociological imaginations which will help them to think about health and illness sociologically; examining and understanding this aspect of their own lives.
- ✓ Students will learn to think of health, medicine, and the body as social constructions.
- ✓ Students will become familiar with the range of themes and topics that sociologists of health and medicine study.
- ✓ Students will learn to interpret events in health, medicine, and health care from a sociological perspective.
- ✓ Students will develop their ability to communicate their sociologically-based analysis orally and in writing.

### 3. Required Texts

- ⇒ Segall, A. and Chappell, N. (2000). Health and Health Care in Canada. Toronto: Prentice-Hall (available at the University of Manitoba Bookstore).
- ⇒ In addition to the required textbook, supplementary readings have been selected from various sources (i.e., published journal articles and chapters). These readings have been duplicated and placed on 2 HOUR RESERVE in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library where they are available for photocopying. Links to these readings are also available through WebCT where you may download and print your own copies.

#### 4. Organization of the Course

This class will meet in the place and at the times indicated in the timetable. Basically, the course will consist of informal lectures - consequently, students are encouraged to participate in the class by making points and asking questions. From time to time, there may be guest lecturers, films may be shown, and we may do some group work.

#### 5. My Expectations

☛ **Collegiality:** Together, we can create and maintain a collegial learning environment; one in which we all develop as individuals and scholars and in which the free and respectful exchange of ideas occurs. Please be polite and respectful of your fellow students and myself!

☛ **Participation:** This is **YOUR** course so I expect you to take ownership of it through your contribution. Questions and discussion are as much a part of the class as are the lectures. As critical sociological theorist, Theodor Adorno said, “what is vaguely put is poorly thought”. Your participation will be evaluated on the quality of your research, communication, writing, and presentation skills.

☛ **Independent Scholarship:** You will be held responsible for all required readings and course materials, such as films and study guides, whether discussed further in class or not. Please do your homework!

☛ **Attendance and Missed Tests / Assignments:** If it is necessary for you to miss a lecture please inform me by email **PRIOR** to your absence so that you may find out what material you will miss. Tests and assignments missed due to unexcused absences will result in a grade of zero, except under documented reasons for missing a test or assignment, i.e., a doctor’s note. Ordinarily, tests must be made-up within one week. Failure to request a make-up test within the expected time frame may result in ineligibility for a make-up test and a mark of zero for the missed test.

☛ **Late Assignments:** Late assignments will not be graded. In exceptional circumstances (illness, etc.) an extension may be granted, provided you receive the instructor’s permission **BEFOREHAND**. If an extension is granted, a new due date will be set. Work missing this date will not be graded.

☛ **Personal Copies:** Students are instructed to always keep a personal copy of any submitted work in the case that they are required to submit another copy.

☛ **Academic Integrity:** I encourage collaborative and cooperative work ethics. Feel free to discuss your thoughts with other members of the class and thereby develop your comprehension and critical analysis. But remember, when it is time to prepare your exams and assignments, do your own work. Please don’t be a cheat!

☛ **Instructor Availability:** I appreciate that sociology may be a relatively new area of study for you and you may feel overwhelmed by the material. Anxiety over one’s performance on, and preparation for, lectures and exams is normal. If you are unclear about the material, my lectures, or my expectations, please ask for clarification during class, or if you prefer, make an appointment to meet with me individually.

☛ **Sociological Engagement:** As the central learning objective of this course is the development of your own sociological imagination, I expect you to think about and discuss course material with others outside class. That is, you are to be a “sociologist of life”!

☛ **Roadmap:** Read and use this outline as your roadmap for the course: It will be your course reference throughout the term. Most of the questions students ask are answered on it. Further copies are downloadable through WebCT.

☛ **WebCT:** An abundance of course and supplementary material is made available to you through WebCT. For example, here you will find lecture notes containing basic terms and concepts that form the basis of my course overheads and film study guides. Please check the course website regularly for newly posted material.

## 6. Student Expectations

☛ Students are encouraged to review the University of Manitoba's "Responsibilities of Academic Staff with regard to Students" document, which can be found online at:

[http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/278.htm](http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/278.htm)

I comply fully with all University of Manitoba policies regarding teaching.

☛ As supplement to the above policies, by the second full week of classes I will collect, summarize, and attach as an addendum to this syllabus your expectations of myself; your instructor.

## 7. University Policies and Resources

☛ **Required Prerequisite:** Sociology 1200: Introduction to Sociology is a prerequisite for all other sociology courses, which means students must complete Sociology 1200 with a minimum grade of C if they intend to enroll in more advanced sociology courses. If you have not completed Sociology 1200 with a minimum grade of C, you cannot enroll in this sociology course!

☛ **Postexamination Review of Final Grades:** University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307 requires "a postexamination review of final grades in multisectioned courses that will ensure an equitable correspondence between grades and level of performance in all sections." Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve this equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

☛ **Religious Holidays:** The University recognizes the right of all students to observe recognized holidays of their faith, which fall within the academic year. With instructor discretion, necessary arrangements can be made to ensure studies are not jeopardized. The instructor should be notified in writing of a student's intended absence in advance and at least three weeks notice of absence should normally be given where special arrangements are sought.

☛ **Missed Films:** If you miss a film, you will need to arrange to view it at an alternate time. Making this arrangement is a student responsibility, and must be undertaken in ways that do not inconvenience Educational Support Services or the instructor. To view a missed film, you will need a form which is available from 123 Fletcher Argue and which requires the instructor's signature. It is your job to bring the form to the instructor for signing.

☛ **Disruptions:** Disruptions due to excessive talking or early departures from the classroom are especially distracting to large classes. Please be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of others in the class. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class.

☛ **Voluntary Withdrawal:** Last day for voluntary withdrawal from the course without academic penalty is **November 14th, 2007**.

☛ **Academic Integrity:** Acts of academic dishonesty or plagiarism are serious offenses and are subject to academic discipline. Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Personation at Examinations' (Section 4.2.8) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (Section 7.1) found in the Undergraduate Calendar. (For Graduate level courses see (Sections 7.1 and 7.2) in the Graduate Calendar.) The Faculty of Arts reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

☛ **Special Learning Needs:** Students with special learning needs (who for legitimate reasons require extra time to write a test, or who require aids or other supports) should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the term in order to arrange suitable accommodation. Disability Services is located at: 155 University Centre, Phone: 204 474-6213, TTY: 204 474-9790, Fax: 261-7732, Email: [disability\\_services@umanitoba.ca](mailto:disability_services@umanitoba.ca)

☛ **Safewalk:** The Safewalk Program was created by utilizing the theory that there is safety in numbers.

It is available on both the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses. The Student Patrols, under the supervision of the Security Services, walk/escort individuals to any destination within the campus boundaries. The Safewalk service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, all year round. A Safewalk escort can be initiated by calling 474-9312 or an individual may want to approach the Student Patrol when seeing them on campus to request an escort.

## 8. Course Requirements

**There is no final exam in this course!**

→**Tests:** Seventy-five percent of your grade will be based upon three in class tests covering readings, lectures, films, film study guides, and class discussions. Additional specific information will be provided in class regarding the format and the material to be covered on each of these tests. **Purpose:** To encourage you keep up with lecture and reading material (so please come to class prepared) and to provide you with ongoing feedback as to your performance in class.

→**Health Diary Assignment:** Twenty-five percent of your final grade will be based upon a Health Diary Project. Each student will be required to keep a daily health record which you design for the period of one week and then, using the conceptual framework provided in this course, interpret and summarize the information in an eight (8) page written report. A separate handout will be provided later in the course describing the Health Diary Project in detail. **Purpose:** To provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your sociological imagination, thinking about your health and health care sociologically, and to communicate your sociologically-based analysis of the factors influencing your health in writing.

## 9. Composition of Final Grade

Requirement	Mark	Date Due
Term Test 1	25%	October 15, 2007
Term Test 2	25%	November 9, 2007
Health Diary Form	5%	November 14, 2007
Health Diary Project	20%	November 26, 2007
Term Test 3	25%	December 5, 2007

## 10. Letter Grade Assignment

The following percentage / letter / GPA / descriptive scale will be used:

95 - 100	A+	Exceptional	(4.5)	66 - 69	C+	Satisfactory	(2.5)
85 - 94	A	Excellent	(4.0)	60 - 65	C	Adequate	(2.0)
80 - 84	B+	Very Good	(3.5)	50 - 59	D	Marginal	(1.0)
70 - 79	B	Good	(3.0)	0 - 49	F	Failure	(0.0)



## 11. Proposed Course Topics and Readings

**NOTE:** - This proposed outline is subject to change. Changes announced in class will take precedence over the written schedule.

- Additional readings may be assigned for topics. (I will provide you with plenty of advanced warning.)

- The course is divided into three parts and students will be examined on each part:

### **PART ONE – UNDERSTANDING HEALTH SOCIOLOGICALLY: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES**

- Part One will systematically address various conceptual and methodological problems involved in studying individual and population health.

#### **An Introduction to Health Sociology:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 1 - “An Introduction to Health Sociology”, pp. 2-20.
- ☛ Coburn, D. & Eakin, J. (1998). “The Sociology of Health in Canada”, in Coburn, D’Arcy, and Torrance, (eds.), *Health and Canadian Society*, pp. 619-634.

#### **Understanding the Social Dimensions of Health:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 2 - “Defining Health”, pp. 21-51.
- ☛ Cockerham, W. C. (2001). “Medical Sociology and Sociological Theory”, in Cockerham (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Medical Sociology*, pp. 3-22.
- ☛ Segall, A. (1997). “Sick Role Concepts and Health Behavior”, in Gochman (ed.), *Handbook of Health Behavior Research*, pp. 289-301.
- ☛ Shilling, C. (2003). “The Body in Sociology”, in Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, pp. 17-36.

#### **The Challenges of Measuring Health:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 3 - “Measuring Health”, pp. 52-71.
- ☛ Millar, J. and Hull, C. (1997) “Measuring Human Wellness”, *Social Indicators Research*, (40), pp. 147-158.

**TEST # 1 October 15, 2007**

### **PART TWO – EXPLORING THE FACTORS THAT SHAPE HEALTH STATUS**

- Part Two will provide a comprehensive, critical examination of the structural and personal factors that shape health status.

#### **General Determinants of Health:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 4 - “General Determinants of Health”, pp. 74-93.

#### **Sources of Inequality and Health Disparities: Social Class Factors and Gender & Minority Status:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 7 - “Social Structure and Health”, pp. 159-182.
- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 8 - “Social Support and Health”, pp. 183-207.

#### **Health Beliefs: Accounting for Health and Illness:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 5 - "Health Beliefs: Accounting for Health", pp. 94-123.

### **Solving the Puzzle of Health Behaviour and Lifestyles:**

- ☛ Williams, S., (1995). "Theorizing Class, Health, and Lifestyles: Can Bourdieu Help Us?", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 17(pp. 577-604).
- ☛ Cockerham, W.C. (2005). "Health Lifestyle Theory and the Convergence of Agency and Structure". *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, (46), pp. 51-67.

## **TEST # 2 November 9, 2007**

### **PART THREE - PURSUING GOOD HEALTH**

- Part Three will expand the discussion to include the consumption of formal and informal health care and conclude by highlighting key aspects of the current debate regarding health care reform and the types of critical issues that need to be addressed to effectively promote health.

#### **Formal Care and Population Health Promotion:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 9 - "Formal Care and Health", pp. 208-233.
- ☛ Armstrong, D. (1995). "The Rise of Surveillance Medicine", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 17 pp. 393-404.

#### **Informal Care: Exposing the Hidden Side of Health Care**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 6 - "Personal Health Behaviours: Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle", pp. 127-158.

#### **Medical Pluralism: Beyond Biomedicine?:**

- ☛ Siahpush, M., (1999). "A Critical Review of the Sociology of Alternative Medicine", *Health*, 4, pp. 159-178.
- ☛ Fries, C.J. and Menzies, K.S. (2000). "Gullible Fools or Desperate Pragmatists? A Profile of People Who Use Rejected Alternative Health Care Providers", *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 91 pp. 21-219.

#### **Achieving Healthy Futures:**

- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 10 - "Creating a Health Care System", pp. 236-269.
- ☛ Segall and Chappell - Chapter 11 - "Health as a Personal and Societal Value", pp. 270-289.
- ☛ McGregor, S., (2001). "Neo-Liberalism and Health Care", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 25 pp. 82-89.
- ☛ Evans, R.G. and Stoddart, G.L. (1990). "Producing health, consuming health care", *Social Science and Medicine*, 31(12), pp. 1347-1363.

## **TEST # 3 December 5, 2007**