



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA  
Department of Sociology  
Sociology 2490 Section A01 CRN 13740  
**Sociology of Health and Illness**  
Fall 2011, 3 credit hours

---

*"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 -*

**Professor:** Dr. Christopher J. Fries, PhD  
**Time & Place:** Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays: 11:30am - 12:20pm, 403 Tier Building  
**Websites & Email:** <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/sociology/facstaff/fries.html>  
CJ\_Fries@umanitoba.ca  
<http://angel.cc.umanitoba.ca>  
**Office:** 317 Isbister Building  
**Office Hours:** Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays: 12:30pm - 1:20pm or by appointment  
(Note that on test and film days there are no scheduled office hours.)  
**Telephone:** 474-7871 (with voice mail)

---

## 1. Nature and Scope of the Course



This course aims to unravel the mysteries of health by looking beyond health as the mere absence of disease in order to explore the structural and personal factors that affect it. In a sociological perspective health is understood as a social construction. That is, our pursuit of health and the manner in which we understand this concept are influenced by social factors. Viewing health as a social construct, we will learn about the importance of healthy societies for health people. The purpose of this 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 sociological imaginations which will help them to think about health and illness sociologically; examining and understanding their own pursuit of health and wellness.
- ✓ Students will learn to think of health, medicine, and the body as socially constructed.
- ✓ Students will become familiar with the range of themes and topics that health sociologists study.
- ✓ Students will learn to understand events in health, medicine, and health care from a sociological perspective.
- ✓ Students will develop their ability to communicate their sociologically-based analysis in writing.

### 3. Required Texts

- ✓ Segall A. and Fries C.J. (2011). *Pursuing Health and Wellness: Healthy Societies, Healthy People*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- ✓ In addition to the required textbook, supplementary readings have been selected from various sources (i.e., published journal articles and chapters). Links to these readings are available through Angel 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 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. Professor 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:** Questions and discussion are as much a part of the class as are the lectures. Please feel free to participate.

♣**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 keep up with your homework!

♣**Attendance and Missed Tests / Assignments:** 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 (documented illness, etc.) an extension may be granted, provided you receive the professor'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.

♣**Professor 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, tests and assignments 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 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. Many of the organizational questions students ask are answered on it. Further copies are downloadable through Angel.

♣**Angel:** An abundance of course and supplementary material is made available to you through Angel. For example, here you will find lecture notes containing basic terms and concepts that form the basis of my course slides and film study guides. Please check the course website regularly for newly posted material: <http://angel.cc.umanitoba.ca>

## 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 your professor.

## 7. 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 professor discretion, necessary arrangements can be made to ensure studies are not jeopardized. The professor 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 Information Services and Technology or the professor. To view a missed film, you will need a form which is available from 123 Fletcher Argue and which requires the professor's signature. Requests require two working days to process. It is your job to bring the form to the professor for signing.
- ☞ **Disruptions:** Disruptions due to excessive talking or early departures from the classroom are distracting. 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 professor at the beginning of class and sit near the exit.
- ☞ **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** I won't text or chat when you are talking to me. Please extend me the same courtesy. Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off prior to the class. If, for any reason, you need to leave your cell phone on, you should obtain permission from the professor.
- ☞ **Copyright / Intellectual Property:** The lectures and displays (and all material) delivered or provided in this course including any visual or audio recording thereof, are subject to copyright owned by Christopher J. Fries. It is prohibited to record or copy any means, in any format, openly or surreptitiously, in whole or in part, in the absence of express written permission from Christopher J. Fries any of the lectures, materials provided or published in any form during or from this course.
- ☞ **Voluntary Withdrawal:** Last day for voluntary withdrawal from the course without academic penalty is **November 16, 2011**.
- ☞ **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 5.2.9) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (Section 8.1) found online under UManitoba Catalog 2011-2012>General Academic Regulations>Section 8. Academic Integrity. Please don't cheat! When in doubt about any practice, ask your professor.

♣**Student Counselling and Career Centre:** The Student Counselling and Career Centre is staffed by professional counsellors whose primary goal is to facilitate the personal, social, academic, and vocational development of university students. Located at: 474 University Centre. Phone: 474-8592.

♣**Aboriginal Student Centre:** Providing student support in a manner consistent with the culture and values of Aboriginal Peoples for the purpose of increasing/enhancing the accessibility and retention of Aboriginal students. Located at: Aboriginal House, 45 Curry Place. Phone: 474-8850. Email: asc@umanitoba.ca

♣**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 professor 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

♣**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. Evaluation

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

✓**Tests:** Seventy percent of your grade will be based upon three in class tests covering readings, lectures, films, film study guides, and class discussions. The term tests will be written during regularly scheduled class time on the dates listed. Tests will be comprised of short answer and multiple choice questions. Each test covers material related to the three parts of the course. 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 Project:** Thirty percent of your final grade will be based upon a Health Diary Project. This project consists of three parts: First, you will design a health diary instrument (Ten percent). Second, you will be required to keep a daily health diary for the period of one week. Third, using the conceptual framework provided in this course, you will interpret and summarize the information in an eight (8) page written report (Twenty percent). **All required parts must be submitted to receive a final grade!** A separate handout describing the Health Diary Project in detail is available on Angel. **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
Health Diary Form	10%	October 19, 2011
Test 1	25%	October 21, 2011
Test 2	25%	November 16, 2011
Health Diary Project	20%	November 21, 2011
Test 3	20%	December 7, 2011

## 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. Tentative Course Topics and Readings

**NOTE:** This tentative outline is subject to change. Changes announced in class will take precedence over the tentative, written schedule. Additional readings may be assigned for topics. (I will provide you with plenty of advanced warning.)

### **PART ONE – UNDERSTANDING HEALTH AND WELLNESS SOCIOLOGICALLY:**

- Part One will systematically address various theoretical and methodological issues associated with studying individual and population health.

#### **Introducing Health Sociology**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 1

#### **Applying the Sociological Imagination to Health, Illness, and the Body**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 2

#### **Measuring the Dimensions of Health**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 3

✓Segall and Fries, 2011. Chapter 9 - "Self-Care Beliefs and Behaviour", in *Pursuing Health and Wellness: Healthy Societies, Healthy People*, pp. 249-258.

✓Twaddle, A.C. (1974). "The Concept of Health Status". *Social Science and Medicine*, 8: 29-38.

✓Verbrugge, L. (1980). "Health Diaries", *Medical Care*, 18: 73-95.

**TEST # 1 October 21, 2011**

## **PART TWO – EXPLORING THE FACTORS THAT SHAPE HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

- Part Two will provide a critical sociological analysis of structural and behavioural factors that influence health status.

### **Making People Healthy: General Determinants of Health and Wellness**

✓ Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 4

### **Addressing Sources of Inequality and Health Disparities: Social Class**

✓ Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 5

### **Addressing Sources of Inequality and Health Disparities: Gender**

✓ Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 6

### **Addressing Sources of Inequality and Health Disparities: Ethnicity and the Life Course**

✓ Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 7

### **Unraveling the Mystery of Health: An Intersectional Model**

✓ Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 8

**TEST # 2 November 16, 2011**

## **PART THREE - PURSUING HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

- Part Three will consider the various ways people understand and pursue health including at look at social support and informal care, the use of formal health care services, and alternatives to biomedical health care. We will conclude by highlighting key aspects of health care policy reform and the types of critical issues that need to be addressed to achieve a healthy Canadian population.

### **Discovering the Hidden Depths of Health Care: Lay Beliefs, Social Support, and Informal Care**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 9

### **Medicalizing Beings and Bodies: The Link between Population Health and Formal Care**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 10

### **Moving Beyond Biomedicine: Medical Pluralism**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 11

✓Fries, C.J. (2008). "A Family Physician Based Classification of Complementary and Alternative Medical Practices", *Canadian Family Physician*, 54: 1570-1578e.

### **Achieving Healthy Futures**

✓Segall and Fries (2011). Chapter 12

✓Evans, R.G. and Stoddart, G.L. (1990). "Producing Health, Consuming Health Care", *Social Science and Medicine*, 31: 347-1363.

**TEST # 3 December 7, 2011**