



Sociology  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

**SOC6022H – Sociology of Health**

Fall 2022

**Instructor:** Nicholas D Spence  
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**Office hours:** 725 Spadina, #334; 6-7PM  
**Seminar time:** Wednesdays, 4PM-6PM  
**Seminar location:** 725 Spadina, #240  
**Website:** q.utoronto.ca

**Course Description**

This course is an overview of the sociology of health. Using a seminar format, we will critically explore key theoretical, methodological, and empirical work in the area across a variety of topics, including socioeconomic status, gender, social context/environment, stress, mental health, medicalization and illness, race/ethnicity, including Indigenous Peoples, healthy behaviors, and genetics. After successful completion of this course, you will be able to identify the central themes in the sociology of health, explain the importance of this area of focus, critically appraise a cross-section of related research, and apply knowledge to frame and understand historical and current health issues, using a sociological lens, with an appreciation for the contributions of other related fields.

**Course Requirements**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Due date</b>
Lead seminar	20%	Signup first week of class
Readings assessment checklist/brief questionnaire	15%	Weekly
Participation	15%	Weekly
Major paper proposal	5%	October 19
Major paper	45%	December 14

Guidelines for each component will be posted on the class website and discussed in class.

## **Late Policies**

Late work will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day, unless you have a legitimate, documented reason beyond your control.

## **Academic Integrity Clause**

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Students are expected to cite sources in all written work and presentations. See this link for tips for how to use sources well:

(<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>).

According to Section B.I.1.(e) of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters it is an offence "*to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.*"

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>) and *Code of Student Conduct* (<http://www.vicereprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm>) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

## **Accessibility Services**

It is the University of Toronto's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council "Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities" at <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppnov012004.pdf>.

In working toward this goal, the University will strive to provide support for, and facilitate the

accommodation of individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities, participate in the full range of activities that the University offers, and achieve their full potential as members of the University community. We take seriously our obligation to make this course as welcoming and accessible as feasible for students with diverse needs. We also understand that disabilities can change over time and will do our best to accommodate you.

Students seeking support must have an intake interview with a disability advisor to discuss their individual needs. In many instances it is easier to arrange certain accommodations with more advance notice, so we strongly encourage you to act as quickly as possible. To schedule a registration appointment with a disability advisor, please visit Accessibility Services at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>, call at 416-978-8060, or email at: [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca). The office is located at 455 Spadina Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 400.

Additional student resources for distressed or emergency situations can be located at [distressedstudent.utoronto.ca](http://distressedstudent.utoronto.ca); Health & Wellness Centre, 416-978-8030, <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>, or Student Crisis Response, 416-946-7111.

### **Equity and Diversity**

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

Additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto is available at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca>.

### **Course Schedule and Reading List**

\*The reading list is tentative

\*\*Supplementary/suggested (not required) readings will be posted online

#### **Week 1 (September 14): Introduction to Sociology of Health**

Introductions and overview of the course.

#### **Week 2 (September 21): The sociological approach to health**

Cockerham, William. 2013. "Sociological Theory in Medical Sociology in the Early Twenty-First Century." *Social Theory and Health* 11:241-55.

Link, Bruce G. (2003). "The Production of Understanding." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44(4):457-469.

Link, Bruce G. (2008). "Epidemiological Sociology and the Social Shaping of Population Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 49:367-384.

Timmermans, Stefan and Steven Haas. (2008). "Towards a Sociology of Disease." *Sociology of Health and Illness* 30(5):659-676.

### **Week 3 (September 28): Socioeconomic status**

Adler, Nancy E. et al. 1994. "Socioeconomic Status and Health: The Challenge of the Gradient." *American Psychologist* 49:15-24.

Deaton, Angus. 2013. Chapter 4: Health in the Modern World pp 126-164 *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*: Princeton University Press.

Mackenbach, Johan P. 2012. "The Persistence of Health Inequalities in Modern Welfare States: The Explanation of a Paradox." *Social Science and Medicine* 75:761-769.

Pickett, Kate E. and Richard G Wilkinson. 2015. "Income Inequality and Health: A Causal Review." *Social Science & Medicine*:316-26. (11)

### **Week 4 (October 5): Gender**

Bird, Chloe E. & Patricia P. Rieker. (1999). "Gender matters: An integrated model for understanding men's and women's health." *Social Science and Medicine* 48(6):745-755.

Courtenay, Will H. (2000). "Constructions of Masculinity and their Influence on Men's Well-being: A Theory of Gender and Health." *Social Science & Medicine* 50(10):1385- 1401.

Rieker, P. P., & Bird, C. E. (2005). "Rethinking gender differences in health: Why we need to integrate social and biological perspectives." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*. 60B. 40-47.

Rosenfield, Sarah and David Mouzon. 2013. "Gender and Mental Health." Pp. 277-296 in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, edited by C. S. Aneshensel, J. C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman. New York: Springer.

### **October 12: Reading week, no class**

### **Week 5 (October 19): Neighborhoods and social contexts**

Aneshensel, Carol. 2009. "Neighborhood as a Social Context of the Stress Process." Pp. 35-50 in William R. Avison, Carol S. Aneshensel, Scott Schieman, and Blair Wheaton (eds.),

Advances in the Conceptualization of the Stress Process. New York: Springer.

Macintyre, Sally and Anne Ellaway. (2003). "Neighborhoods and Health: An Overview." Pp. 20– 42 in *Neighborhoods and Health*, edited by Ichiro Kawachi and Lisa F. Berkman. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Spence, Nicholas D. "Does Social Context Matter? Income Inequality, Racialized Identity, and Health Among Canada's Aboriginal Peoples Using a Multilevel Approach." (2016). *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* Mar;3(1):21-34.

### **Week 6 (October 26): Stress**

Aneshensel, Carol S., Carolyn M. Rutter, and Peter A. Lachenbruch. (1991). "Social Structure, Stress, and Mental Health: Competing Conceptual and Analytic Models." *American Sociological Review* 56:166-78.

Meyer, Ilan H. (1995). "Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*.36(1). Pp 38-56.

Pearlin, Leonard I. 1989. "The Sociological Study of Stress." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 30:241–56.

Pearlin, Leonard I. and Marilyn M. Skaff. 1996. "Stress and the Life Course: A Paradigmatic Alliance." *The Gerontologist* 36:239–247.

Thoits, Peggy. (2010). "Stress and Health: Major Findings and Policy Implications." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 51. Pp 41-54

### **Week 7 (November 2): Mental Health**

Brown, Tony N., Katharine M. Donato, Mary Therese Laske, and Ebony M. Duncan. 2013. "Race, Nativity, Ethnicity, and Cultural Influences in the Sociology of Mental Health." Pp. 255-276 in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, edited by C. S. Aneshensel, J. C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman. New York: Springer.

Horwitz, Allan V. 2013. "The Sociology Study of Mental Illness: A Critique and Synthesis of Four Perspectives." Pp. 95-114 in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, edited by C. S. Aneshensel, J. C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman. New York: Springer.

Wheaton, Blair. (2001). "The role of sociology in the study of mental health...and the role of mental health in the study of sociology". *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 42(3):221-234.

### **Week 8 (November 9): Race, ethnicity, immigration**

De Maio, Fernando. 2010. "Immigration as Pathogenic: A Systematic Review of the Health of Immigrants to Canada." *International Journal for Equity in Health* 9(27):1-20.

Public Health Agency of Canada. 2020. "Social Determinants and Inequities in Health for Black Canadians: A Snapshot." Pp.1-14. Catalogue No. Hp35-139/2020E-PDF. Government of Canada.

Homan, P., Brown, T. H., & King, B. 2021. "Structural Intersectionality as a New Direction for Health Disparities Research." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 62:350-70.

Williams, David R & Michelle Sternthal. (2010). "Understanding Racial-ethnic Disparities in Health: Sociological Contributions." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. Vol. 51 Pp 15-28.

### **Week 9 (November 16): Indigenous Health**

Gracey, Michael & Malcolm King. 2009. "Indigenous Health Part 1: Determinants and Disease Patterns." *Lancet* 374:65-75.

Hyett, Sarah, Stacey Marjerrison, and Chelsea Gabel. 2018. "Improving Health Research Among Indigenous Peoples in Canada." *CMAJ* May 22;190:E616-21. Doi:10.1503/cmaj.171538

Jull, Janet, Alexandra King, Malcolm King, Ian D. Graham, Melody E. Morton Ninomiya, Kristen Jacklin, Penny Moody-Corbett, Julia E. Moore. 2020. "Promoting Engagement Inspired by the CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People (2007-2010)." *International Indigenous Policy Journal* 11(2). doi:<https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2020.11.2.10635>

King, Malcolm, Alexandra Smith, and Michael Gracey. 2009. "Indigenous Health Part 2: The Underlying Causes of the Health Gap." *Lancet* 374:76-85.

Spence, Nicholas D, Vivian Chau, Maryam S. Farvid, Jerry P. White, Paranthaman Rasalingam, Lawrence Loh. 2020. "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Informing Policy Decision-Making for a Vulnerable Population." *International Indigenous Policy Journal* 11(3). doi:<https://10.18584/iipj.year.volume.issue/paper#10859>

### **Week 10 (November 23): Medicalization and Illness**

Brown, Phil. (1995). "Naming and Framing: The Social Construction of Diagnosis and Illness." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*: 34-52.

Conrad, Peter. (2005). "The Shifting Engines of Medicalization." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46:3-14.

Halfmann, Drew. 2019. "Political Institutions and the Comparative Medicalization of Abortion." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 60:138-52.

Molloy, Harvey and Latika Vasil. 2002. "The Social Construction of Asperger Syndrome: The Pathologising of Difference?" *Disability and Society* 6:659-669.

Monaghan, Lee F. (2005). "A Critical Take on the Obesity Debate." *Social Theory & Health*. 3:302–314

### **Week 11 (November 30): Healthy behaviors**

Boardman, Jason D., Jarron M. Saint Onge, Richard G. Rogers, and Justin T. Denney. (2005). "Race differentials in Obesity: The Impact of Place." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 46(3):229-43.

Cockerham, William C. (2005). "Health lifestyle theory: the convergence of agency and structure." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 46:51-67.

Noriea, Ashley H., Feenalie N. Patel., Debra A. Werner, Monica E. Peek. 2018. "A Narrative Review of Physician Perspectives Regarding the Social and Environmental Determinants of Obesity." *Current Diabetes Reports* 18(24):1-12.

Katainen, A. 2010. "Social Class Differences in the Accounts of Smoking – Striving for Distinction?" *Sociology of Health and Illness* 32:1087-1101.

### **Week 12 (December 7): Sociology and genetics**

Landecker, Hannah & Aaron Panofsky. 2013 "From Social Structure to Gene Regulation, and Back: A Critical Introduction to Environmental Epigenetics for Sociology" *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:333–57

Mills, Melinda & Felix C. Troup. 2020. "Sociology, Genetics, and the Coming of Age of Sociogenomics." *Annual Review of Sociology* 46:533-81.

Perry, Brea L. 2015. "The Sociology of, in, and with Genetics: The Role of Medical Sociology in the Era of "-Omics"." *Genetics, Health and Society* 16:xi-xxiii

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