**(SAMPLE) SYLLABUS**

**Sociology of Health, Medicine and Illness**

**SPRING 2015**

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| SYA 4930 | 001 | 1 | Soc of Health, Med & Illness | 3 | Credits 01-05 | 05-01 | **Boca** | T R | 04:00PM | 05:20PM | SP1 | GS | 116 |

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This special topics course is an introduction to the sociology of health, illness and health care. The course will survey the three major branches of this subfield of sociology: the study of how social – including political and economic -- forces affect health and illness; the study of how social factors shape the experiences of those living with illness as well as of those who provide health care; the study of the social factors that shape health care systems across different societies and, in turn, how those heath care system affect levels and kinds of disease and illness. These topics are the core topics of one of the key areas in contemporary sociology, medical sociology. Medical sociology has been one of the largest sections of the American Sociological Association for several decades.

This course can serve as part of the sociology major and minor. It is also open to non-majors. It will be particularly useful to those who are contemplating careers in the health care system.

**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

Dr. Lynn Appleton

Culture & Society Building (CU) #257

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-6:30 and by appointment.

Office phone: 561-297-0261

Note: I prefer that you contact me by email on all course-related matters

Email address: [appleton@fau.edu](mailto:appleton@fau.edu)

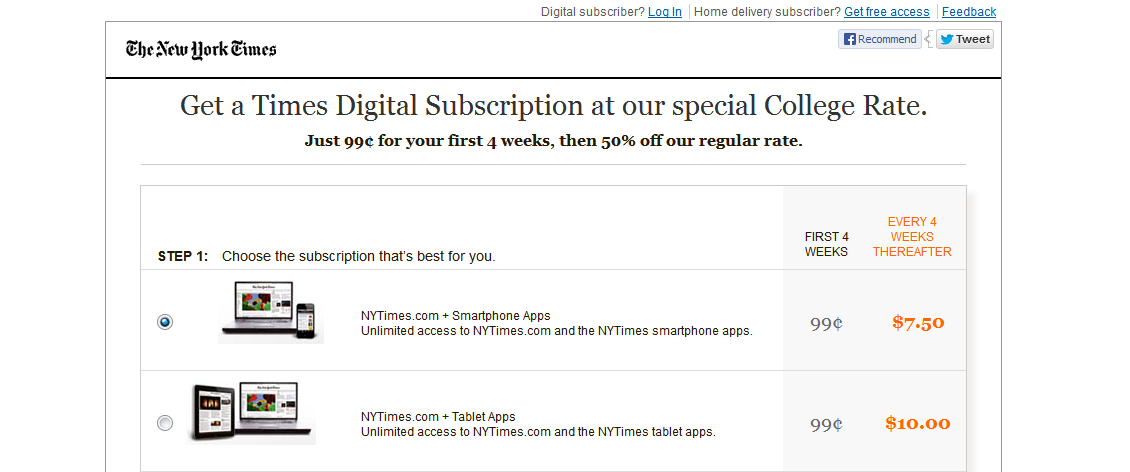
Email me immediately if you are having problems accessing an assignment.

Required text:

Rose Weitz, The Sociology of Health, Illness, and Health Care: A Critical Approach (Sixth Edition). Wadsworth, 2013. (Consider purchasing an electronic copy of the book, as it’s much cheaper).

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Note: You will frequently need to read articles in the New York Times. You have two options. (1) I strongly suggest that you take out an on-line subscription to the Times: for the term, it would cost about $12 plus tax (four weeks at 99 cents, 12 weeks at 3\*$7.50 with a monthly student rate of $7.50). Check out the options at <http://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/Multiproduct/lp3004.html> and be sure to look at the special rates for students after the introductory offer expires. (2) However, if you do not want to spend that money, there is another option. It puts more responsibility on you. You can do the New York Times assignments through a combination of accessing the newspaper’s website AND accessing the university’s electronic resources. When I give an assignment that requires access to either the comments on or background material to an article, you can go directly to the Times website. You will get free access to ten articles a month. When I give an assignment that requires you to read ONLY an article, you can (a) make note of the publication date, title, etc. and (b) log on to the university’s electronic database via EXPROXY and (c) read the article, which will not have any pictures, comments, or background material. This requires that you keep track of the number of times that you access the Times’ website; you can only access it ten times per month for free. So, this option can save you some money but does require that you take more responsibility for managing your access. It’s the classic tradeoff: your money or your time and attention. And, yes, it is more stressful: it illustrates one of the topics that we will explore in this class.



**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL(S)**

You will be required to view documentaries or feature films. All of these are available on-line. You may need to rent some of them. No individual item’s cost for pay-per-view will be more than about $5.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

* explain the three basic sociological perspectives on health, health care and illness
* explain the relationship between disease and illness
* identify the social forces that shape the distribution of disease in a society
* identify the social forces that shape illness in a society
* describe and explain how/why patterns of death and disease are different in different kinds of societies
* explain how inequality within and between societies is connected to patterns of death and disease
* identify the social factors that have shaped the predominance of chronic disease and illness in societies like American society
* describe and explain the relationship between social stress and disease, with particular emphasis on systems of social inequality
* describe and explain the relationship between social stress and illness, with particular emphasis on systems of social inequality
* explain the origins and consequences of the social construction of mental illness and physical illness
* explain the different theoretical approaches in sociology to the connection between mental and physical illness and disease
* apply sociological theories of professionalization to explain how health care professions develop/ed their professional authority
* identify and explain the points of friction between health care professions
* apply sociological theory to identify the bases of professional authority in health care
* distinguish between constructionist and objectivist approaches to the definition of health and disease
* identify the major factors used in sociological theories about cross-national variation in health care systems
* explain how sociologists analyze institutions, using health care as an example
* describe and explain the relationship between the health care institution and other major institutions in contemporary societies, including points of friction and complementarity
* explain the difference between critical (“sociology of medicine”) and technical (“sociology in medicine”) forms of sociological analysis

**Announcements**

You are responsible for reading all announcements sent to you (on your FAU email account) and then posted (on Blackboard) by the instructor. Check the announcements each time you log in to be sure you have read all of them since your last session.

**Grading Policy**

Your grade will be calculated in the following way.

Attendance and conscientious participation: **10% of your grade**. Those who come to class and focus on the class tend to do better in the course than those who don’t. I want you to do well, so I will provide every encouragement to you to attend regularly and pay attention thoughtfully. I will take attendance at the beginning of the first and second parts of class. Please be in class when I do so. You can sign in late twice, but that’s the limit. After that, you won’t be permitted to sign in and you’ll lost those attendance points. Your late arrival disrupts the class and distracts your fellow students; therefore, please plan to be on time.

Conscientious participation does not require that you are constantly raising your hand. I expect some participation from everyone, but some of your participation can be in the group discussion that will be a regular part of the class. (So, the person who is not participating in his or her group is likely to lose participation points.) Some of your participation will be gauged by your in-class writing/commentary. Some participation will be evaluated by the quality of your notes, which will be periodically requested and collected.

Conscientious participation does require that your attention is focused on what is going on in the class. (So, the person who is texting or checking cell phone messages in class is likely to lose participation points. The person who is reading material from another class while sitting in our class is likely to lose participation points. The person who is asleep will definitely lose participation points!)

Your attendance and participation score can only help your grade. If you don’t show up or show up and are disconnected from what’s going on in the class, you’ll do poorly on this dimension of evaluation. In that case, your entire grade will rest on your test scores.

Tests: five tests, each counting for **18% of your grade.** The tests will have multiple choice/short answer and essay components. Multiple choice/short answer tests will be taken in class. Essays will be written out of class and you will have several days (preceding and following the actual test date) during which you can set aside the necessary time to complete them. For the essay section, I will give you four or five questions to which you need to prepare answers. When you are ready to take write the essay, you will log on to the testing software in Blackboard. It will randomly select two or three questions from the set of questions that I provided to you. You will have an hour (or less) to write out your answers to **one** of these questions. (Of course, you can prepare your answers in advance and then just paste them into the testing software’s answer box.) You are expected to have prepared (at least in outline form) your responses to the essay questions that were provided to you. Information about grading and access to grading rubrics will be provided during the first week of class.

Each of the elements of your grade will be averaged (with the weights as given above) to yield an overall percentage for the course. (Note: I round up, so an 89.52 rounds up to a 90.) The grading scale is the following:

A 94 – 100%

A- 90-93%

B+ 87-89%

B 83-86%

B- 80-82%

C+ 75-79%

C 70-74%

D 60-70%

F 59% and below

If you need accommodation as a consequence of a disability, you shouldregister with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) – in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880; in Davie, MOD I (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 117 (561-799-8585); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 128 (772-873-3305) – and follow all OSD procedures. OSD will work with me to ensure that you have the necessary accommodations. <http://www.osd.fau.edu/>

**Policy on Late Work**

If you have a documentable reason for failing to be in class for a test (i.e., you were in a car accident, etc.), you must contact me and ask for an extension. “I had to work” and “I had to take a test in another class” and “it was my birthday” are not legitimate reasons to ask for an extension.

Essays must be completed on time except under exceptional circumstances: a family emergency, an illness, etc. In the case of such exceptional circumstances, students should make every effort to contact me by email (appleton@fau.edu) **prior** to the assignment’s due date to inform me of the emergency or to request an extension. If you do not have access to email, telephone me at my office and follow up with an email as soon as possible. You may be required to provide documentation of any claims of such circumstances. Extensions are given for a limited period of time and, if work is not completed by the extension’s deadline, it earns a failing grade.

**Policy on Incompletes**

If circumstances beyond your control make it impossible for you to complete required work by the end of the term, I will consider giving you an incomplete *if* you have completed more than 50% of the tests in the course with an average grade of ‘C’ or better. Only a small set of circumstances will be considered as the basis for a request for an incomplete: for example, severe illness or some equally grave and on-going family crisis. Incompletes must be completed soon after the course ends.

In many cases, students who are unable to do the work of the course should consider whether they should withdraw from the class. All students can withdraw from classes and receive a grade of W as specified by the university (see <http://www.fau.edu/registrar/policy.php> for more information). After that point, withdrawals are granted only under a limited range of circumstances: information about medical/emergency withdrawal can be found through the office of the Dean of Students at <http://www.fau.edu/dean/exceptionalwithdrawal.php>.

**Academic Integrity policy**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility.  Any student in this class who is found to have committed a breach of this code of academic integrity will receive an appropriately severe penalty.

The FAU Code of Academic Integrity prohibits dishonesty and requires a faculty member, student, or staff member to notify an instructor when there is reason to believe dishonesty has occurred in a course/program requirement. The instructor must pursue any reasonable allegation, taking action where appropriate. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

(A) Cheating

1. The unauthorized use of notes, books, electronic devices, or other study aids while taking an examination or working on an assignment.

2. Providing unauthorized assistance to or receiving assistance from another student during an examination or while working on an assignment.

3. Having someone take an exam or complete an assignment in one’s place.

4. Securing an exam, receiving an unauthorized copy of an exam, or sharing a copy of an exam.

(B) Plagiarism

1. The presentation of words from any other source or another person as one’s own without proper quotation and citation.

2. Putting someone else’s ideas or facts into your own words (paraphrasing) without proper citation.

3. Turning in someone else’s work as one’s own, including the buying and selling of term papers or assignments.

(C) Other Forms of Dishonesty

1. Falsifying or inventing information, data, or citations.

2. Failing to comply with examination regulations or failing to obey the instructions of an examination proctor.

3. Submitting the same paper or assignment, or part thereof, in more than one class without the written consent of both instructors.

4. Any other form of academic cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty

 For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>.

Students should be aware that **all** work submitted in this course may be submitted to the University’s plagiarism detection software. This software compares all submissions to a huge database of other writing and detects overlaps.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD)**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) – in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880; in Davie, MOD I (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 117 (561-799-8585); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 128 (772-873-3305) – and follow all OSD procedures. <http://www.osd.fau.edu/>

**University Center for Excellence in Writing (UCEW)**

The University Center for Excellence in Writing is a valuable resource for any student interested in improving writing skills. The Center provides one-on-one consultation with trained consultants to enhance writing skills and address problem areas. As I grade written work throughout the semester, I will recommend seeking consultation from the UCEW to any student who might benefit from its services. The Center has walk-in locations on all campuses; see [www.fau.edu/UCEW/WC](http://www.fau.edu/UCEW/WC) for further information and for all center locations. The Center also provides on-line consultations through telephone or Skype; contact the Center for more information and to schedule a consultation.

**Library Resources**

Students in this course may be required to make use of the university’s library services for some assignments. The library’s website is <http://www.fau.edu/library> . From this website, students may gain access to online articles and databases; these may be directly accessed from any computer on any FAU campus, but they may also be accessed from home or elsewhere by logging into Off Campus Connect (EZ Proxy). (You will need the number on your Owl Card in order to log in to Off Campus Connect.) The link to Off Campus Connect can be found on the library’s homepage. Students unskilled in use of the library’s resources may seek help from the Reference Department. From the library’s homepage, click on “Ask a Librarian”; from this site, you may initiate contact with a librarian through chat, text, email, phone, or in-person. From this “Ask a Librarian” page, you may also click on Reference Department where you will find an array of resources that will guide you in the effective use of library resources.

**The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)**

The University’s Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers resources that students may find helpful in improving their study skills and facilitating academic success. Their website is <http://www.fau.edu/ctl> . I strongly encourage students to visit this website and to make use of its many valuable resources, including especially “Tips for Success and Academic Resources” (<http://www.fau.edu/ctl/TipsForSuccessAndAcademicResourcesStudentResources.php>).

**CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND TEST DATES**

(Note: “OAS” means “Other, as assigned.” These assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Typically, they will be through links to material available electronically in the FAU library or articles in the popular press (e.g., New York Times). Some of the assignments will be documentaries.)

**Topic The sociological perspective: critical and constructionist** theory

Chapter one in Weitz: The sociology of health, illness and health care + OAS

6-Jan

8-Jan

**Topic Health, social structure, and culture**

Chapter two in Weitz: The social sources of modern illness + OAS

13-Jan

15-Jan

**Topic Health, illness and inequality in modern societies**

Chapter three in Weitz: The social distribution of illness in the United States + OAS

22-Jan

20-Jan

27-Jan Test #1: chapters 1-3. Essay due by Jan. 29.

**Topic Global inequalities: social forces shaping health and illness**

Chapter four in Weitz : Illness and death in the less developed nations + OAS

29-Jan

*2-Feb last day to withdraw from a class and still receive partial tuition adjustment*

3-Feb Global inequalities (continued)

5-Feb Test #2: inequality and illness/health. Essay due by 2/7.

**Topic The social construction of illness**

Chapter five in Weitz: The social meanings of illness + OAS

10-Feb

12-Feb

**Topic Disability and chronicity: social constructions, social consequences**

Chapter six in Weitz: The experience of disability, chronic pain and chronic illness + OAS

17-Feb

19-Feb

**Topic Mental illness and the modern/postmodern world**

Chapter 7 in Weitz: Sociology of mental illness + OAS

24-Feb

26-Feb Test #3: chapters 5 and 6. Essay due by 2/28.

27-Feb last day to withdraw from a class

SPRING BREAK

10-Mar Mental Illness (continued)

12-Mar

**Topic The structure of treatment: a sociological look at American health care**

Chapter 8 in Weitz: Health Care in the US + OAS

17-Mar

19-Mar Test #4. Essay due by 3/21.

**Topic Cross-national differences in health care: competing explanations**

Chapter 9 in Weitz: Health care around the globe + OAS

24-Mar

16-Mar

**Topic Causes and consequences of specialization: places for and tools of health care**

Chapter 10 in Weitz: Health care settings and technologies + OAS

31-Mar

2-Apr

**Topic The division of labor: competing explanations for the system of professions.**

Chapter 11 in Weitz: The profession of medicine + OAS

7-Apr

9-Apr

Chapter 12 in Weitz: Other mainstream and alternative health care providers + OAS

14-Apr

16-Apr

4/21 - 4/22: reading days

28-Apr Test #5: 4 p.m., in our classroom. Essay due by 4/29.