



Course Syllabus – Minority and Immigrant Health

Course	SOC 6370
Course Title	<u>Minority and Immigrant Health</u>
Professor	Soyoung Kwon, PhD
Term	Fall 2025
Meetings	FN 2.210 M 4:00PM-6:45PM

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Soyoung Kwon, PhD
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<i>Office Location</i>	GR 3.130
<i>Office Hours</i>	M 1:00 – 3:00 (or Email me to set up an appointment)
<i>Other Information</i>	Check your email frequently, as this is how I will communicate changes to our class schedule or important course information.

Course Description

Soon our nation will be a majority of minorities. The trends which drive this ethnic demographic transition include: an aging white population, declining white birth rate, dwindling white immigration, immigration of non-whites (particularly Hispanics and Asians) and the higher birth rate of minority groups. As the US becomes increasingly diverse, the health profile of the nation will be determined by the health profile of the minorities. Yet, despite great strides in the health status of Americans in the twentieth century, the health profile of the country's racial and ethnic minority groups lags behind. This graduate-level course provides an in-depth exploration of health disparities affecting minority and immigrant populations in the United States. Through an interdisciplinary lens, the course examines the social, structural, cultural, and political determinants that shape health outcomes across diverse racial, ethnic, and immigrant groups.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze key theoretical frameworks that explain racial, ethnic, and immigrant health disparities.
2. Evaluate empirical research on health inequities and apply it to contemporary public health challenges.
3. Identify and assess the role of structural and systemic factors—including racism, immigration policy, and socioeconomic conditions—in shaping health outcomes.
4. Critically reflect on the interplay between individual experiences (e.g., discrimination, cultural identity) and broader social determinants of health.
5. Synthesize interdisciplinary scholarship to develop an original research question related to minority or immigrant health.
6. Communicate complex ideas effectively through scholarly writing, oral presentation, and peer discussion.
7. Apply critical thinking skills to propose evidence-based solutions aimed at reducing health disparities in diverse populations.

Course Requirements

Component	Percentage
Weekly attendance/participation	10*5pts=50pts
Leading discussion	2*35pts=70pts
Weekly response papers	10 x 10pts=100pts
Peer review	30pts
Final research paper (module 1, 2 & 3)	10pts, 20pts, 70pts
Oral presentation	40pts

1. **ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Please complete the assigned readings before each class session. As this is an advanced seminar, active engagement is essential. While participation can take many forms, the success of this course depends on your thoughtful involvement with the material and with your peers. You are expected to attend every class and come prepared to contribute to discussions. Class participation, reading responses, and group-led discussions are all designed to enrich our collective learning experience. Simply attending class will not earn full participation credit—your engagement in discussions and course activities will also be assessed.
2. **DISCUSSION FACILITATOR:** Be prepared to lead a class discussion based on the assigned readings. As the facilitator, please come prepared to address the following:
 - 1) What insight does the reading offer into the key questions for this part of the course?
 - 2) What are the main arguments or takeaways from the reading?
 - 3) What did you find most interesting or thought-provoking?
 - 4) Identify at least two questions or critiques you have about the reading.
 - 5) For the discussion questions you'd like to pose to the class, be ready to share and guide that conversation.

Students will be asked to lead the class discussion on the topic. Groups will be formed during the first week of the course, with group class facilitations scheduled on a weekly basis. The presentation should introduce the class topic, required readings, and other materials, but also go beyond simply summarizing. This can be achieved through thoughtful discussion, posing questions, linking the readings to other readings we have examined, and making connections to current events.

3. **WEEKLY READING RESPONSE (DUE AT NOON ON MONDAYS):** Reflections should be 500-750 words in length and are written in response to the readings. Each reflection paper should respond to the assigned peer-reviewed readings and demonstrate critical engagement with the course material. Your goal is not to summarize, but to think analytically about the readings and their broader implications.

Reading response paper should contain three parts:

- (1) Your summary (brief!) of the most important point(s) of the week's core readings. This should include a discussion of the links between the readings (or lack thereof). 1 page.
- (2) One question of clarification, interpretation, relevance etc. you would like us to address in class. You may ask abstract theoretical questions, raise conceptual issues, issues concerning textual analysis/interpretation, or even methodological questions for the empirical pieces assigned. ½ page.

(3) For the question you ask, make sure you explain why that question is important. What is at stake? Try to find an answer to your question, but keep in mind that you do not have to have answers to everything in advance. It is my hope that the seminar discussion will serve that purpose—finding answers to questions. 3 pages.

4. RESEARCH PAPER: The length of these proposals will vary depending on their purpose, but you should aim for about 20 double-spaced pages. To help you get an early start on this paper, *please discuss your paper ideas with me before submitting the prospectus.*

MODULE #1 PURPOSE STATEMENT & ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (PROSPECTUS)

- Write a brief purpose statement (up to 700 words, double-spaced) that includes:
 - 1–2 sentences describing your interest in the topic
 - A clear research question (1-2 sentences)
 - A description of your intended approach or focus
- Compile an annotated bibliography of 10 peer-reviewed journal articles. For each article, provide:
 - Full citation (e.g., APA, ASA, AMA style)
 - Author’s original abstract
 - A 3–5 sentence evaluation of how the article informs your project (e.g., methods, findings, theory, policy relevance)

Note: Do not include articles without abstracts.

MODULE #2 DRAFT

Option 1: Empirical Research Paper

- Use original or publicly available data (e.g., ICPSR)
- Must be distinct from other ongoing projects
- Structure your paper like a publishable journal article
 - Introduction
 - Literature Review
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
 - References

Option 2: Analytic Review of the Literature

- Use library-based research to critique and synthesize a body of literature
- Focus on analysis—not just summary—of key debates and gaps
- Suggested structure:
 - Introduction and guiding question
 - Thematic sections (theory, evidence, controversies)
 - Critical synthesis and conclusion
 - Appendix: optional summary table of reviewed studies

Example: Idler & Benyamini (1997), Journal of Health and Social Behavior

Option 3: Case Study Analysis

- This option allows you to select a real-world case (drawn from media coverage or public reports) that highlights a structural or systemic health issue (e.g., environmental racism,

denial of care, public health neglect). You will analyze the case using course theories and scholarly literature.

- Suggested structure:
 - Introduction: Briefly describe the case (Who? What happened? When? Where?); State the guiding research question
 - Case Background: Provide context from media sources or public documents (cite and summarize key facts)
 - Theoretical Framework: Choose one or more course-related theories (e.g., Minority Stress Theory, Weathering, Structural Racism); Explain and justify your choice
 - Analysis: Apply theory to the case: What structural forces are at play?; Connect to relevant empirical literature
 - Implications: Discuss what the case reveals about broader issues in health equity
 - Conclusion: Reflect on lessons learned or future directions for policy or research
 - References

MODULE #3 FINAL MANUSCRIPT

- Submit your polished final paper (approx. 15–20 pages, double-spaced)
 - Incorporate feedback from earlier components and peer review
 - Be sure to follow proper citation and formatting guidelines
5. PEER REVIEW: The goal of peer review is to help each other improve the clarity, organization, and scholarly strength of your research papers through constructive feedback. You will review two classmates' draft papers and provide written feedback guided by the criteria below.
- You will be assigned two peer drafts to review.
 - Each review should be approximately 500–750 words (about 1–1.5 pages, single-spaced).
 - Submit your reviews to both the classmate and the instructor via Blackboard.
6. PRESENTATION: Each student will give a conference-style oral presentation of their research. Presentations will be conducted co-currently. Each student will give an oral presentation of their final paper in the format of a conference presentation. The presentation itself will be restricted to 15 minutes, with no exceptions. You will engage in 10 minutes of Q & A with your seminar participants.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Part 1: Foundations of Minority Health: Theories, Concepts, and Evidence

Week 1, Aug. 25, Patterns of Health Disparities in the United States

Williams, David R. and Michelle Sternthall. 2010. "Understanding Racial-Ethnic Disparities in Health: Sociological Contributions." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 51: S15 S27.

Benz, Jennifer K., Oscar Espinosa, Valerie Welsh, and Angela Fontes. 2011. "Awareness of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Has Improved Only Modestly Over a Decade." *Health Affairs*

Vega, William A. and Ruben G. Rumbaut. 1991. "Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health." *Annual Review of Sociology* 17:351-383.

Vega, William A. and Hortensia Amaro. 1994. "Latino Outlook: Good Health, Uncertain Prognosis." *Annual Review of Public Health* 15:39-67.

Week 2, Sept. 1: No class (Labor Day Holiday)

Week 3, Sept. 8. Conceptual and Methodological Issues: *Conceptualizing Race and Ethnicity in Health and Healthcare Research*

Cooper, Richard. 1984. "A Note on the Biological Concept of Race and Its Application in Epidemiologic Research." *American Heart Journal* 108(3):715-723.

Dressler, William W., Kathryn S. Oths, and Clarence C. Gravlee. 2005. "Race and Ethnicity in Public Health Research: Models to Explain Health Disparities." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34:231-252.

Hayes-Bautista, David E. and Jorge Chapa. 1987. "Latino Terminology: Conceptual Bases for Standardized Terminology." *American Journal of Public Health* 77(1):61-68.

Jones, C. P., Truman, B. I., Elam-Evans, L. D., Jones, C. A., Jones, C. Y., Jiles, R., Rumisha, S. F., & Perry, G. S. (2008). Using "socially assigned race" to probe white advantages in health status. *Ethnicity & disease*, 18(4), 496–504.

LaVeist, Thomas A. 1994. "Beyond Dummy Variables and Sample Selection: What Health Service Researchers Ought to Know About Race as a Variable." *HSR: Health Services Research* 29(1):1-16.

Muntaner, Carles, F. Javier Nieto, and Patricia O'Campo. 1996. "The Bell Curve: On Race, Social Class, and Epidemiologic Research." *American Journal of Epidemiology* 144(6):531-536.

Week 4, Sept. 15 Theoretical Frameworks

Jones, C. P. (2000). Levels of racism: a theoretic framework and a gardener's tale. *American journal of public health*, 90(8), 1212.

Forde, A. T., Crookes, D. M., Suglia, S. F., & Demmer, R. T. (2019). The weathering hypothesis as an explanation for racial disparities in health: a systematic review. *Annals of epidemiology*, 33, 1-18.

Hargrove, T. W., & Brown, T. H. (2015). A life course approach to inequality: Examining racial/ethnic differences in the relationship between early life socioeconomic conditions and adult health among men. *Ethnicity & Disease*, 25(3), 313.

Frost, D. M., & Meyer, I. H. (2023). Minority stress theory: Application, critique, and continued relevance. *Current opinion in psychology*, 51, 101579.

Viruell-Fuentes, E. A., Miranda, P. Y., & Abdulrahim, S. (2012). More than culture: structural racism, intersectionality theory, and immigrant health. *Social science & medicine*, 75(12), 2099-2106.

Williams, D. R., & Collins, C. (2001). Racial residential segregation: a fundamental cause of racial disparities in health. *Public health reports*.

Part 2: Etiology of Health Disparities

Week 5, Sept. 22 SES

Angel, Ronald J., Michelle Frisco, Jacqueline L. Angel, and David A. Chiriboga. 2003. "Financial Strain and Health among Elderly Mexican-Origin Individuals." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44:536-551.

Hayward, Mark D., Toni P. Miles, Eileen M. Crimmins, and Yu Yang. 2000. "The Significance of Socioeconomic Status in Explaining the Racial Gap in Chronic Health Conditions." *American Sociological Review* 65:910-930.

Jackson, Pamela Braboy and Quincy Thomas Stewart. 2003. "A Research Agenda for the Black Middle Class: Work Stress, Survival Strategies, and Mental Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44:442-455.

Klag, Michael J., Paul K. Whelton, Josef Coresh, Clarence E. Grim, and Lewis H. Kuller. 1991. "The Association of Skin Color with Blood Pressure in U.S. Blacks with Low Socioeconomic Status." *JAMA* 265:599-602.

Williams, D. R., & Collins, C. (1995). US Socioeconomic and Racial Differences in Health: Patterns and Explanations. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 21, 349–386.

Week 6, Sept. 29 Immigration and Legal Status

Asad, A. L., & Clair, M. (2018). Racialized legal status as a social determinant of health. *Social science & medicine*, 199, 19-28.

Castañeda, H., Holmes, S. M., Madrigal, D. S., Young, M. E., Beyeler, N., & Quesada, J. (2015). Immigration as a social determinant of health. *Annual review of public health*, 36, 375–392.

Torres, J. M., & Young, M. D. (2016). A life-course perspective on legal status stratification and health. *SSM - population health*, 2, 141–148.

Yoshikawa, H., Godfrey, E. B., & Rivera, A. C. (2008). Access to institutional resources as a measure of social exclusion: Relations with family process and cognitive development in the context of immigration. *New directions for child and adolescent development*, 2008(121), 63-86.

Week 7, Oct. 6 Research Proposal with bibliography: Due 5:00 pm on Oct. 7 (TBD: 1:1 research conference meeting)

Week 8, Oct. 13, Psychosocial pathways

Geronimus, Arline, Margaret Hicken, Danya Keene and John Bound. 2006. "Weathering' and Age Patterns of Allostatic Load Scores among Blacks and Whites in the United States." *American Journal of Public Health* 96(5):826-33.

Jackson, James S., Katherine M. Knight, and Jane A. Rafferty. 2010. "Race and Unhealthy Behaviors: Chronic Stress, the HPA Axis, and Physical and Mental Health Disparities over the Life Course." *American Journal of Public Health* 100:933-939.

James, Sherman A., Keenan, N. L., Strogatz, D. S., Browning, S. R., & Garret, J. M. 1992. "Socioeconomic Status, John Henryism, and Blood Pressure in Black Adults: The Pitt County Study." *American Journal of Epidemiology* 135(1): 59-67.

Klonoff, Elizabeth A. and Hope Landrine. 2000. "Is Skin Color a Marker for Racial Discrimination? Explaining the Skin Color-Hypertension Relationship." *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 23(4):329-338.

Recommended

Clark, R., Anderson, N. B., Clark, V. R., & Williams, D. R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for African Americans. A biopsychosocial model. *The American psychologist*, 54(10), 805–816.

Mossakowski, Krysia N. 2003. "Coping with Perceived Discrimination: Does Ethnic Identity Protect Mental Health?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44:318-331.

Week 9, Oct. 20 Environmental Determinants: Racial segregation and the excess risk exposure hypothesis

Bullard, Robert D. 1983. "Solid Waste Sites and the Black Houston Community." *Sociological Inquiry* 53(2-3):273-288

LaVeist, Thomas A. 1993. "Segregation, Poverty, and Empowerment: Health Consequences for African Americans." *The Milbank Quarterly* 71(1):4164.

LeClere, Felicia B., Richard G. Rogers, and Kimberley Peters. 1998. "Neighborhood Social Context and Racial Differences in Women's Heart Disease Mortality." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 39:91-107.

LaVeist, Thomas A. and John M. Wallace, Jr. 2000. "Health Risk and Inequitable Distribution of Liquor Stores in African American Neighborhoods." *Social Science & Medicine* 51:613-617.

Lillie-Blanton, M., & Laveist, T. (1996). Race/ethnicity, the social environment, and health. *Social science & medicine* (1982), 43(1), 83–91.

Pearl, Michelle, Paula Braveman, and Barbara Abrams. 2001. "The Relationship of Neighborhood Socioeconomic Characteristics to Birthweight Among Five Ethnic Groups in California." *American Journal of Public Health* 91(11):18080-1814.

Williams, David R. and Chiquita Collins. 2001. "Racial Residential Segregation: A Fundamental Cause of Racial Disparities in Health." *Public Health Reports* 116(5):404-416.

Lee, Min-Ah and Kenneth F. Ferraro. 2007. "Neighborhood Residential Segregation and Physical Health among Hispanic Americans: Good, Bad, or Benign?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 48:131-148.

Week 10 Oct. 27 The Effects of Culture

Franzini, Luisa, John C. Ribble, and Arlene M. Keddie. 2001. "Understanding the Hispanic Paradox." *Ethnicity & Disease* 11(3):496-518.

Turra, Cassio M. and Noreen Goldman. 2007. "Socioeconomic Differences in Mortality among U.S. Adults: Insights into the Hispanic Paradox." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 62B:S184–S192.

Lara, M., Gamboa, C., Kahramanian, M. I., Morales, L. S., & Bautista, D. E. (2005). Acculturation and Latino health in the United States: a review of the literature and its sociopolitical context. *Annual review of public health, 26*, 367–397.

Singh, G. K., & Yu, S. M. (1996). Adverse pregnancy outcomes: differences between US-and foreign-born women in major US racial and ethnic groups. *American Journal of Public Health, 86*(6), 837-843.

Salant, T., & Lauderdale, D. S. (2003). Measuring culture: a critical review of acculturation and health in Asian immigrant populations. *Social science & medicine, 57*(1), 71-90.

Kim, J. H., Lu, Q., & Stanton, A. L. (2021). Overcoming constraints of the model minority stereotype to advance Asian American health. *American Psychologist, 76*(4), 611.

Week 11 Nov. 3: Draft of the paper due 5:00 PM on Nov. 4

Part 3 Health Care

Week 12 Nov. 10. Patient Factors in Healthcare Disparities

Masland, Mary C., Soo H. Kang, & Yifei Ma. 2011. “Association between Limited English Proficiency and Understanding Prescription Labels among Five Ethnic Groups in California.” *Ethnicity & Health 16*:125-144.

Cooper-Patrick, Lisa, Joseph J. Gallo, Junius J. Gonzales, Hong Thi Vu, Neil R. Powe, Christine Nelson, and Daniel E. Ford. 1999. “Race, Gender, and Partnership in the Patient-Physician Relationship.” *The Journal of American Medical Association 282*(6):583-589.

Mayberry, Robert M., Fatima Mili, and Elizabeth Ofili. 2000. “Racial and Ethnic Differences in Access to Medical Care.” *Medical Care Research and Review 57*(4, supplement): 108-145.

Fiscella, Kevin, Peter Franks, Mark P. Doescher, and Barry G. Saver. 2002. “Disparities in Health Care by Race, Ethnicity, and Language Among the Insured: Findings from a National Sample.” *Medical Care 40*(1):52-59.

Saha, Somnath, Miriam Komaromy, Thomas D. Koepsell, and Andrew B. Bindman. 1999. “Patient-Physician Racial Concordance and the Perceived Quality and Use of Health Care.” *Archive of Internal Medicine 159*(9):997-1004.

Week 13 Nov. 17. Healthcare Disparities: Healthcare Provider/Health System Factors

LaVeist, T. A., Nickerson, K. J., & Bowie, J. V. (2000). Attitudes about racism, medical mistrust, and satisfaction with care among African American and white cardiac patients. *Medical care research and review, 57*(1_suppl), 146-161.

Schulman, Kevin A., Jesse A. Berlin, William Harless, Jon F. Kerner, Shyrl Sistrunk, Bernard J. Gersh, Ross Dubé, Christopher K. Taleghani, Jennifer E. Burke, Sankey Williams, John M. Eisenberg, and José J. Escarce. 1999. “The Effect of Race and Sex on Physicians' Recommendations for Cardiac Catheterization.” *The New England Journal of Medicine 340*:618-626.

Todd, Knox H., Christi Deaton, Anne P. D'Adamo, and Leon Goe. 2000. “Ethnicity and Analgesic Practice.” *Annals of Emergency Medicine 35*(1):11-16.

van Ryn, Michelle and Jane Burke. 2000. "The Effect of Patient Race and Socioeconomic Status on Physicians' Perception of Patients Pain." *Social Science & Medicine* 50(6):813-828.

Chen, Jersey, Saif S. Rathore, Martha J. Radford, Yun Wang, and Harlan M. Krumholz. 2001. "Racial Differences in the Use of Cardiac Catheterization After Acute Myocardial Infarction." *The New England Journal of Medicine* 344:1443-1449.

Morrison, R. S., Wallenstein, S., Natale, D. K., Senzel, R. S., & Huang, L. L. (2000). "We don't carry that"—failure of pharmacies in predominantly nonwhite neighborhoods to stock opioid analgesics. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 342(14), 1023-1026.

Gaskin, D. J., Spencer, C. S., Richard, P., Anderson, G. F., Powe, N. R., & LaVeist, T. A. (2008). Do hospitals provide lower-quality care to minorities than to whites?. *Health Affairs*, 27(2), 518-527.

Health disparities solution

Minkler, M. (2010). Linking science and policy through community-based participatory research to study and address health disparities. *American journal of public health*, 100(S1), S81-S87.

Lurie, N., Fremont, A., Somers, S. A., Coltin, K., Gelzer, A., Johnson, R., ... & Zimmerman, D. (2008). The national health plan collaborative to reduce disparities and improve quality. *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, 34(5), 256-265.

Chin, M. H., Walters, A. E., Cook, S. C., & Huang, E. S. (2007). Interventions to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in health care. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 64(5_suppl), 7S-28S.

Betancourt, J. R., & Green, A. R. (2010). Commentary: Linking cultural competence training to improved health outcomes: perspectives from the field. *Academic Medicine*, 85(4), 583-585.

Week 14, Nov. 24. No class (Fall break & Thanksgiving holiday)

Week 15 Dec. 1. Final research paper presentation and peer review feedback

Final paper (ver. 1) Submission & Peer Review

Dec. 2 – Final Paper (Version 1) due by 5:00 PM

Submit to both the instructor and the assigned peer reviewer

Dec. 4 – Peer Review Feedback due by 5:00 PM

Peer reviewer submits written feedback to the author and instructor

Week 16 Dec. 8 Final Research Paper Due (5:00 pm on Dec. 10)

Submit an updated version incorporating peer and instructor feedback