

SOC 4369.HN1 Public Health and Society

Spring 2013 Tuesday/Thursday 2:30 – 3:45 p.m. Classroom: GC 1.208B
Dr. Richard Scotch Email: scotch@utdallas.edu Phone: 972-883-2922
Office: GR3.510 Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1-2:15 p.m. and by appointment
TA: Jennifer Bridges TA Email: <jennifer.bridges@utdallas.edu> TA Office Hours: by apt.

While people's health is the result of their individual background, behavior, and experiences, it is also profoundly shaped by the social, economic, and cultural environments in which they live as well as the physical and biological risks to which they are exposed. In this course we will examine how social, environmental, and population factors affect health and illness; the development of public health and epidemiology as a response to health threats, and how health care institutions, policy, and financing shape people's exposure to risk, access to care, and the treatments they receive. This class will involve lectures by the instructor, presentations on the readings by students, seminar discussion, and occasional guest lectures and media presentations.

Students will learn about 1) the sociological perspective on public health; 2) the creation and history of the American public health system, and its responses to public health challenges; 3) factors shaping global health, and in particular public health infrastructure issues in developing countries and recent efforts to address those issues; and 4) key public policies that shape access, cost and quality within the American health care system; and 5) comparative systems for providing and financing health care in nations around the world.

Course requirements include 1) weekly quizzes covering material from the assigned readings and class presentations (30% of the final course grade); 2) biweekly take home essays (approximately 2-3 pages each) on the required readings (30% of the final course grade), 3) a health profile portfolio dealing with a particular nation, state, or locality's health care issues and infrastructure, due on April 2 (20% of the final course grade); and 4) a policy brief on a specific public health issue or controversy, due on May 7 (20% of the final course grade). While there is no formal grade for class participation, regular attendance and participation in class discussion (or lack thereof) will be taken into account in determining the final course grade. Information on the essays, profile, and group presentation will be distributed in class.

Primary course readings will be assigned from the texts listed below and from material available on the Internet and through McDermott Library's electronic reserves:

John M. Barry, *The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History*, Penguin, 2004, ISBN 0-14-303649-1 (17.00)

Kevin McCracken & David R. Phillips, *Global Health: An Introduction to Current and Future Health Trends*, Routledge, 2012 ISBN 978-0-415-55757-3 (48.95)

T.R. Reid, *The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health Care* Penguin, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-1594202346 (16.00)

The grading scale to be used will be: A+ 97-100, A 93-96, A- 90-92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72, D+ 67-69, D 63-66, D- 60-62, F 59 or less. Students are responsible for understanding and following all university rules for academic honesty as stated in the university catalog; any possible violations will lead to immediate referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary proceedings.

COURSE OUTLINE

The timetable for discussion of course readings is subject to revisions announced in class and through email.

January 15 – 17	The Sociology of Public Health	No assigned readings
January 22 – 24	Public Health in the United States I	Barry: Parts I - III
January 29 - 31	Public Health in the United States II	Barry: Parts IV – VI
February 5 – 7	Public Health in the United States III	Barry: Parts VII, VIII
February 12 - 14	Public Health in the United States IV	Barry: Parts IX, X
February 19 – 21	Global Health Issues I	McCracken & Phillips: 1, 2, 3
February 26 – 28	Global Health Issues II	McCracken & Phillips: 4, 5
March 5 – 7	Global Health Issues III	McCracken & Phillips: 6, 7
March 12 – 14	SPRING BREAK	
March 19 – 21	Global Health Issues IV	McCracken & Phillips: 8, 9
March 26 – 28	Global Health Issues V	McCracken & Phillips: 10, 11
APRIL 2	HEALTH PORTFOLIO DUE	
April 2 - 4	Health Policy: Access, Cost, & Quality	KFF Uninsured/Costs Primers
April 9 – 11	Health Policy: Medicare & Medicaid	KFF Medicaid/Medicare Primers
April 16 – 18	Health Policy: the Affordable Care Act	kff.org Health Reform materials
April 23 – 25	Comparative Health Systems I	Reid: 1-9
April 30 – May 2	Comparative Health Systems II	Reid: 10-13
MAY 7	POLICY BRIEFING PAPER DUE	