

## SOC 4372 HN1 Health and Illness

Fall 2013                      Tuesday/Thursday 1 – 2:15 p.m.                      Classroom: GC 1.208B  
Dr. Richard Scotch      Email: [scotch@utdallas.edu](mailto:scotch@utdallas.edu)                      Phone: 972-883-2922  
Office: GR3.510              Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 2:15 – 3 p.m. and by appointment  
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Medicine is a social science, as much as it is a biological science. Who gets sick, what they do about it, and what kind of treatment they receive are the result of an interplay of behavioral, cultural, and social forces, as well biomedical factors. In this course we will examine how behavioral, social, and cultural factors affect health and illness. We will also address a number of ethics issues in health care decision making. This class will involve lectures by the instructor, presentations on the readings by students, seminar discussion, and occasional guest lectures and media presentations.

In this course, students will learn about 1) patterns and trends in health and illness behavior; 2) social and demographic factors associated with health and illness, including socio-economic status (or class), race/ethnicity, and culture; 3) the nature of American health professions, and how health professionals interact with their patients.

Course requirements will include 11-13 short quizzes covering material from the class lectures and discussion as well as the assigned readings (4% each, totaling 40% of the course grade – ten highest quiz grades will count); take home essays on the Abraham and Fadiman books as well as two reflective essays on personal experiences with the health care system (10% each, totaling 40% of the course grade); and a take-home final essay examination (20% of the 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 course grade.

Primary course readings will be assigned from the three texts listed below:

Laurie Abraham, *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead: The Failure of Health Care in Urban America*, The University of Chicago Press, 1993.  
ISBN: 9780226001395

Peter Conrad and Valerie Leiter, *The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives* 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Worth Publishers, 2013.  
ISBN: 9781429255271

Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors and the Clash of Two Cultures*, Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, Either 1998 or 2012 edition is OK. ISBN: 9780374533403

### Course Outline (Schedule is subject to revisions announced in class.)

August 27- 29                      Introduction to the Course; The Social Nature of Disease  
C&L: pp. 10-23

September 3 – 5                      Health and SES  
C&L: pp. 28-44, 58-69

September 10 – 15	Poverty, Race, and Health Care Abraham: all
September 17 – 19	Social Support and Illness C&L: pp. 78-117
September 24 – 26	Gender & Health C&L: pp. 45-57
October 1 – 3	Defining Illness C&L: pp. 123-176
October 8 – 10	Illness Behavior C&L: pp. 177-208
October 15 – 17	Culture and Health Care Fadiman: all
October 22 – 24	Doctors and Patients C&L: pp. 380-443
October 29 – 31	The Medical Profession in Historical Perspective C&L: pp. 213-269
November 5 – 7	Non-Medical Providers of Health Care C&L: pp. 270-298
November 12 – 14	Medicalization C&L: pp. 322-354, 495-518
November 19 – 21	The Business of Health Care C&L: pp. 355-379
December 3 – 10	The Future of American Health Care C&L: pp. 580-615

## **Grading**

The grading scale to be used in this class 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. Incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved no later than eight (8) weeks from the first day of the Spring 2011 semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by this deadline, the incomplete grade will be changed automatically to an F.

## **Related Policies**

Information on university policies related to this class may be found at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.