

Mental Health and Illness Syllabus

Course Information

SOC 4371.0W1
Mental Health and Illness
Summer 2016

Professor Contact Information

Professor: Zachary R. Simoni, PhD

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Office Hours: Unfortunately, I do not offer office hours because I am currently not residing in the state of Texas, however I am willing to organize short phone calls with students if they so choose. Please contact me by email to schedule a meeting.

Course Description

The study of mental health and illness cannot be properly conducted without understanding the influence of social structure. Thus, sociological concepts will be explored to better understand the classifications, causes, epidemiology, and the history of mental disorders in American society. While we will discuss several psychological and biological components of mental health, this course will primarily rely on sociological theories, methods, and perspectives to examine mental health and illness within a social context.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

1. Gain a factual knowledge of the sociology of mental health including important terms and concepts.
2. Learn fundamental theories, principles and perspectives in the sociological study of mental health.
3. Develop critical thinking skills vital to the study of society and mental health.

These objectives will be assessed through quizzes, exams, papers and a discussion board.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Cockerham, William. 2013. *Sociology of Mental Disorder* / Edition 9. NJ: Taylor & Francis.

Course Requirements:

The course Blackboard site is organized by week. For each week, students will be guided through the reading requirements, weekly objectives, discussion board, and the quiz. Discussion boards will be offered each week from either an online reading or other form of media. Below are outlines of, and directions for, each component of each week (discussion board, and quiz), papers and exams.

Quizzes: There are 11 time-limited quizzes. Each quiz consists of multiple choice and short answer (1-2 sentences) questions for a total of 15 pts. Students will be encouraged to complete all 11 quizzes, but only the top 8 quizzes will be included in the final point tally (the three lowest grades will be dropped). The purpose of the quizzes is to test your conceptual and factual knowledge about the materials that we have covered in each chapter.

Directions: Within each week, there will be a link to a quiz. The quizzes will be available at the beginning of each week (look at the course calendar as chapters may not correspond to each numerical week). Students are allowed to take the quiz at any point during the week however, students will only be allowed to take the quiz once and will have 20 minutes to complete each quiz. You will be required to use the Respondus LockDown Browser (instructions for LockDown Browser can be found under course information). At the end of the week, students will be able to view their final score on the multiple choice questions only. Once the short answer questions have been graded, students will be able to view the instructor's comments and the final quiz score.

Discussions: There are a total of 11 discussion boards that students will have the opportunity to participate in. Each discussion is worth 15 pts. Students will be encouraged to complete all 11, but only the top 8 will be included in the final point tally (the three lowest grades will be dropped). The purpose of the discussion board is to generate critical conversation within in our online course community. Some discussion topics will come from the text, the supplemental media and others will be created at my discretion. Each week will have threads concerning different topics for that particular week. I visit the discussion board on a daily basis and provide feedback, play devil's advocate on occasion and create new threads if I believe a current thread has become stale.

Directions: Within each week, there will be a link to a discussion board topic and supplemental material (e.g. short reading, Ted Talk, radio podcast). The supplemental material will vary but I try to keep them below an hour. Students are required to post at least a 150-word post to the assigned discussion question. In order to earn full points for that week, students will also be required to respond to TWO or MORE students' discussion posts, as well as, the assigned discussion threads. Each post should be well thought out and written at a college level. Utilize the course material (text book) to support your discussion. All discussions will be open 1-week before they are due, but will close on Sunday at 11:59 pm of the week they were assigned.

Participate in discussions often and EARLY. If all students wait till the last day/hour/minute to participate in a discussion, then the discussion board will not work well. Please live up to your responsibility and participate EARLY! To encourage early posting, the first 10 posters in the week will earn one extra credit point for that week.

Exams: There will be four (4) exams during the semester and will cover 3 to 4 chapters each. Each exam consists of multiple choice and essay questions (MC=2pt, ES-10pts). The purpose of the section exam is to test your conceptual and factual knowledge about the material covered in the course.

Directions: You will be able to take each exam one time and you will be required to use the Respondus LockDown Browser (instructions on LockDown Browser can be found under course information). You will have 1 and a half hours to complete each exam. The exams will only be open during the week on the course calendar. Students will be able to take the exam at their own discretion throughout the week the exam is assigned. They must be completed by Sunday 11:59pm of the week they are assigned.

- Exam I: chapters 1, 2 and 3 (100pts)
- Exam II: chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 (100pts)
- Exam III: chapters 9, 10 and 12 (100pts)
- Exam IV: chapters 12, 13, 14 and 15 (100pts)

Papers: There are 2 book reports due throughout the term. The first report is a midterm due at the end of week 5 and the second is a final report due at the end of the course. Each paper should be 4 to 5 pages in length, double-spaced. In light of concerns about plagiarism, Turnitin plagiarism checker will verify each assignment's authenticity. Please submit using MS word files only. At week 5 and 11 a module will be opened allowing students to submit their papers. Directions for the papers are below.

Directions

You are to complete two book reports from the list below. Considering you have several weeks to complete the report, late reports will not be accepted. An A paper will provide an overview of the book's main thesis, and most importantly, a critical analysis of the book's main thesis/ideas. Grades will be based on organization, clarity, insightfulness and integration with course material. I would recommend reading reviews on Amazon in order to introduce yourself with the book and its contents. Feel free to contact me via email if you would like further guidance. Most of them are available from the campus library or would be available through inter library loan. Also, many of the titles should be available as Ebooks. Here is a brief rubric of what I expect:

- *Provide an overview of the book's main thesis.* This should not entail a tedious narrative about the book's contents but rather an in-depth examination of the main ideas and concepts discussed by the author. Feel free to devote space to a particular aspect/idea you find most interesting. If possible, tie in course material to the discussion of the book's main thesis as well. Please do not use long quotations from the book.
- *Critical analysis of book's main thesis.* Once you have addressed the main ideas and concepts of the book, provide a critical analysis of these ideas. Try to answer these questions: do you agree with the author's points or general perspective/outlook? Provide a well-reasoned argument as to why you agree or disagree with the author's main thesis. Do you think the author's argument is still relevant to our current times and do you think the author's main points will continue to affect our society in the future? What changes need to be addressed in order to alleviate or mitigate a presumed social problem outlined by the author?

List of Book Titles

1. Torrey, E. F. (1997). *Out of the shadows: Confronting America's mental illness crisis*. New York: John Wiley.
2. Karp, D. A. (2009). *Is it me or my meds? Living with antidepressants*. Harvard University Press.
3. Wahl, O. F. (1997). *Media madness: Public images of mental illness*. Rutgers University Press.
4. Horwitz, A. V. (2002). *Creating mental illness*. University of Chicago Press.
5. Karp, D. A. (1997). *Speaking of sadness: Depression, disconnection, and the meanings of illness*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
6. Kaysen, S. (2013). *Girl, interrupted*. Vintage.
7. Goffman, E. (1968). *Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Aldine Transaction.
8. Estroff, S. E. (1985). *Making it crazy: An ethnography of psychiatric clients in an American community*. Univ of California Press.

Grading Policy

Points:

Quizzes	8 graded x 15pts each	= 120pts
Discussion	8 graded x 15pts each	= 120pts
Exams	4 exams x 100 each	= 400pts
Papers	2 papers x 50 each	= 100pts
Total		740pts

LETTER GRADES:

>90% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
<60% = F

Course & Instructor Policies

Communications:

All official email correspondence will be sent ONLY to the zrs160030@utdallas.edu address. All students are responsible for ensuring that the correct e-mail address is listed in Blackboard by the beginning of Week 1. It is your responsibility to make sure a valid email UTD address is provided. Failure on your part to do so can result in you missing important information that could affect your grade.

Drop/Add:

According to UTD policy, June 2, 2016 is the last day to drop a class without a "W."

Accommodation of Religious Beliefs:

Religious beliefs shall be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements. Please notify me in advance if there is a conflict.

Reasonable Accommodations:

It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 3.200. They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.

Make-up Policy:

Because of the online nature of this course, only in extreme cases will make-ups be provided. REMEMBER, not all quizzes and discussions are used to calculate final grades.

Academic Honest Policy:

Faculty expect all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not

limited to, acts of abetting, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Candidates are expected to honor the Academic Code of Conduct as detailed UT Dallas Student Catalog 2015-2016. Please consult this resource for additional information regarding the specific procedures to be undertaken when a student violates the UT Student Code of Conduct - UTDSP5003.

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Let me make it clear: if you cheat or plagiarize you will fail the course and your name will be forwarded to the University Compliance Office. Please don't do it.

Etiquette:

Respect fellow students and myself. Topics in this class may become sensitive and someone (including myself) may say something with which you disagree. Critical discussion is encouraged, but respect differences of theoretical perspective.

Reservation:

I reserve the right to make changes in this syllabus to better serve the class's needs. Any changes will be announced in advance.

Comet Creed

"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.