



**SOCIOLOGY 515.01W**  
**Medical Sociology**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2015**

**Instructor:** Yvonne Villanueva-Russell (Associate Professor)

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<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
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**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

- 1] Abraham, Laurie Kaye. 1994. Mama Might Be Better Off Dead. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN-13: 978-0226001395
- 2] Eight reserve readings (these articles have been posted on eCollege by your professor)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine research and theory on the changing concepts of health, illness and medical practice as well as place these understandings in socio-historical and comparative context. Topics will include: social epidemiology, the social construction of health/illness, the experience of illness, health professions, alternative medicine and the health care system. Emphasis on how social factors such as gender, race, social class and sexual preference affect both illness and health care.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to **synthesize** evidence from peer-reviewed journal articles in written work.
- 2) Student will demonstrate **comprehension** of sociological concepts and issues within the field of medical sociology through written work.
- 3) Students will show the ability to critically **evaluate** concepts in the field of medical sociology through the book review assignment.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Instructional/Methods/Activities Assessments

#### 1, Weekly Written Papers: 4 papers @ 30 points each- due on FRIDAYS

This course element is designed to measure Learning Outcomes 1 & 2: 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to **synthesize** evidence from peer-reviewed journal articles in written work. 2) Student will demonstrate **comprehension** of sociological concepts and issues within the field of medical sociology.

#### A. Assignment description

Each week we will read two current peer-reviewed articles in the field of medical sociology. You will be assigned a paper with a single prompt to write about for the week. Your job is to synthesize the data, evidence and findings provided in both of our articles to succinctly answer the question posed. Student will NOT need to provide a summary of each article, but will need to merge, compare and categorize findings in an organized and combined fashion towards a single question prompt. Papers will be 2-3 pages in length

#### B. Assessment:

Grades on papers will be assigned using the following rubric:

Criteria	Possible Points
Did student synthesize findings from the article rather than list them?	10
Did student's answer accurately reflect the most important arguments in the articles?	10
Did student sufficiently answer the question posed?	5
Did student demonstrate good grammar, citing, organization?	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 points</b>

#### C. Notes

- 1) Papers must be submitted before 11:59PM on Fridays. Late papers will receive a 10% deduction in points. Papers will not be accepted beyond 1 class day after the original due date.
- 2) Papers should be uploaded as .doc or .rtf attachments to the dropbox on eCollege. Mac files, Google docs and links to a dropbox will not be accepted.  
\*written assignments cannot be re-done or re-graded.
- 3) Students are expected to integrate as many relevant sociological concepts and theories as possible, making sure to define them before using them in their essays
- 4) Students must cite in-text using APA, ASA or another style they are familiar with
- 5) Any written work in this class is subject to turnitin review . Turnitin.com is a website that checks for plagiarism and generates an originality report that notes which parts of a paper appear unattributed to other student papers, internet sources or articles and books. Please make sure that you cite wherever appropriate. If you need help or advice on how to do this, please contact your professor. See document sharing for guidelines on how to cite. **Students who plagiarize will receive a zero on the assignment in question.**

## 2. Discussion Boards: 4 @ 25 points each. Due on WEDNESDAYS

This course element is designed to measure Student Learning Outcome #3: Students will show the ability to critically **evaluate** concepts in the field of medical sociology through the book review assignment.

### A. Assignment description:

Because we will not interact face-to-face in the traditional classroom format, we will try to simulate this experience by using ecollege discussion boards. Each week you will be assigned a number of readings. After completing this, students will need to post comments to a question posted by the professor. It is expected that students will thoughtfully reflect on the discussion that ensues, and reply back to comments posted by other

**\*\*\*Discussion board assignments CANNOT be made up.**

**\*\*\*Additional discussion boards CANNOT be used as extra credit.**

### B. Assessment

Criteria	Possible Points
Did student post more than once, and on more than on one day at one sitting?	2
Did student make a genuine attempt to engage in ongoing conversation within a single thread?	2
Did student contribute and add something original & valuable to the discussion	5
Did student demonstrate comprehension of the assigned readings and/or address the prompt provided?	5
Did student integrate sociological concepts and theories where appropriate?	5
Did student write from an academic perspective rather than personal opinion?	3
Was the student collegial and professional in interactions with fellow students?	2
Proper grammar and citations used throughout	1
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>25 points</b>

### C. Notes

It is expected that students will thoughtfully reflect on the discussion that ensues, and reply back to comments posted by other students. Here are some ground rules for our discussion boards:

- 1) **There are no minimums or maximums on how much or how little you post on the discussion boards. The goal is to achieve quantity & quality. I am striving for us to have a *genuine conversation* on the boards this semester.** You may post a new question, start a new thread, or simply respond to other students. For this to happen, we need a couple of guidelines: post or reply, and then ***follow-up***. You will not achieve full points by just logging on in the last hour of the last day and posting a couple of random comments on others' posts. Ideally, you'll post something, check back in a few hours and check-in again over the course of several days to interact, reply, respond and comment on what others have said on a single thread. **You don't always have to post a new**

**topic or start a new thread.** You should aim to contribute meaningfully and engage in actual reciprocal interaction, extending a thread to its maximum.

- 2) This discussion will take place within a set timeframe. After the deadline, your professor may post some summary comments of the discussion, highlighting the themes and questions that have emerged. Discussion boards cannot be made up. If you miss out, there is no way to makeup these points.
- 3) Students should feel free to honestly post and defend their opinions, but should be tolerant of other students who express views that are contrary to their own. Discussion boards are places where *dialogue* occurs. They are not a debate that is to be “won” or places where “conversion” takes place. Feel free to explore differences in view points, but do not allow these conflicts to escalate into personal attacks. Please do *not* play devil’s advocate or pretend to take a stance that is not genuine or authentically held.
- 4) Full, complete sentences are required. Do not use jargon, abbreviations, or acronyms. So, no “LOL,” “SMH,” “IMHO” or “BTW,” please.
- 5) **IMPORTANT:** Demonstrate your “sociological imagination” by integrating relevant theories and concepts to help explain, support and defend the arguments you plan to make. **You will usually need to draw upon the articles for support. Be sure to CITE appropriately.**
- 6) Spell-check your posts. You may want to draft your response in Microsoft Word, spell-check it, then cut and paste it into the discussion board on eCollege. You will not be able to go back and edit your post once it has been submitted to eCollege.
- 7) Here are the essentials for our discussion boards this semester:

<b>Cardinal Rules- OBEY!!!</b>	<b>Try NOT to:</b>	<b>Try to:</b>
Wikipedia cannot be used as a credible source of information	Do not rely on personal experiences as your “proof”	Take a firm stance & defend it
The Bible cannot be used as an academic source of information	Do not rely on overly-psychological or psychoanalytical explanations	Pose a question to take the discussion deeper
Do NOT call people “crazy”	Do not give us more to read- summarize and provide a link to a website for those who are curious, instead	Engage in reciprocal interaction with other students within a single thread
Do NOT attribute behavior to the whims of individuals in which patterns cannot be deciphered	Do not post overly-long or overly-complex responses	Give us something new to think about
Do NOT simply say “I agree” with someone’s post (send them a private email,	Do not wait until the last day to post. Do no post only on one day at one sitting.	Cite whenever appropriate

instead)		
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**3. Book Review: 1 @ 50 points. Due on THURSDAY, August 13th]**

This course element is designed to measure Student Learning Outcomes 2 & 3: 2) Students will demonstrate **comprehension** of sociological concepts and issues within the field of medical sociology through written work. 3) Students will show the ability to critically **evaluate** concepts in the field of medical sociology through the book review assignment.

**A. Paper description**

During the last week of our course, students will be assigned a novel to read. Student will then complete the book review assignment and submit by 11:59PM on Thursday.

\*\*The book review will ask the student to 1) summarize the plot of the book, 2) relate the major events of the book to themes in our course, and 3) critically assess the book's merits.

\*\*Book reviews should be 3-5 pages in length

**B. Assessment**

Criteria	Possible Points
Did student provide a succinct overview that highlighted major events in plot (NOT a paraphrase of every chapter)	10
Did student relate plot of book to concrete and specific topics discussed in our course?	25
Did student display critical thinking skills in assessment of book?	10
Did student utilize good grammar, citing and organizational skills?	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>50 points</b>

**C. Notes**

- 1) No late assignments will be accepted
- 2) Only .doc or .rtf attachments will be accepted. Mac files, google docs and/or links to a dropbox file will not be accepted.
- 3) Students must cite in-text using APA, ASA or another style they are familiar with
- 4) Any written work in this class is subject to turnitin review . Turnitin.com is a website that checks for plagiarism and generates an originality report that notes which parts of a paper appear unattributed to other student papers, internet sources or articles and books. Please make sure that you cite wherever appropriate. If you need help or advice on how to do this, please contact your professor. See document sharing for guidelines on how to cite. **Students who plagiarize will receive a zero on the assignment in question.**

## Grading Procedures:

A total of 270 points are attainable in this course. The breakdown of points is as follows:

<b>Papers [4 @ 30 points each]</b>	<b>= 120 points</b>
<b>Discussion Boards [4@25 points each]</b>	<b>= 100 points</b>
<b>Book Review [1 @ 50 points]</b>	<b>= 50 points</b>
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>270 points</b>

Final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 90-100%	or	
B = 80-89%	or	
C = 70-79%	or	
D = 60-69%	or	
F = 59% or below	or	

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This is primarily a face to face course, but will utilize eCollege for course handouts, instruction assignments, powerpoint lectures and study guides. In order to access ecollege, student will need the following:

Ability to open Adobe Acrobat files (.pdf), PowerPoint files (.ppt) and Word files (.doc)

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you [perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course](#). To launch a browser test, login to eCollege, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

For those of you who are not familiar with eCollege, I suggest you take the tutorial offered online. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the folks in Technology Services.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

**Ecollege technical concerns:** Please contact the ecollege HelpDesk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by sending an email directly to [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org). You may also reach the HelpDesk by calling 1-866-656-5511, or through online chat by clicking on the "Live Support" tab within your ecollege course.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Interaction with Instructor Statement:

I expect each of you to be active and thoughtful participants within our classroom and learning community. You are to expect the same of me. This includes completing our readings related to course topics, individual written assignments, and completion of exams.

Email [[Yvonne.VRussell@tamuc.edu](mailto:Yvonne.VRussell@tamuc.edu)] is the best way to reach me, as I check it daily. You can expect to receive a reply to any inquiry within 24 hours (M-F). It is advisable to include the course number and your full name in any electronic correspondence with me.

In case of emergency, you may leave word for me through the Sociology & Criminal Justice department, who can forward your message to me: 903-886-5332.

**Check your MyLeo email account regularly for announcements about our class—I will not send emails to other non-university accounts!!!**

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### I. Course Specific Procedures:

#### Grades of Incomplete:

I do not assign grades of incomplete in this course. All coursework must be submitted electronically by Thursday, August 13th. Your grade will be assigned based on the points you have earned from all completed work at that time. It is your responsibility to finish assignments prior to their due dates, or to make alternate arrangements for their completion. Do not assume I can or will extend due dates or course requirements for your individual needs or preferences.

I do not drop students from my courses. If you feel Sociology 515 is not the course for you, please take the necessary steps to remove yourself from the class. **[Student can drop by submitting a “drop request” through MyLeo.]** Simply not attending in hopes that I will remedy the situation for you will not happen. You are responsible for the consequences stemming from either coming to class, or not coming to class.

#### Academic Honesty:

Cheating is defined as the unauthorized use of texts or other aids in completing tests or assignments. Cheating is also defined as the use of materials in any assignment employed from any source without direct attribution (plagiarism). Please be conscientious and careful about giving credit and not taking someone else’s work as your own. If in doubt, cite. If you are unfamiliar with how to cite, please see me and I will help you learn this valuable skill. A student who is guilty of cheating shall suffer serious penalties will receive a zero on the assignment in question. Blatant cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head, who may wish to take further action independent of your professor’s punishment.

### II. University Specific Procedures:

#### A. Special Needs:

##### ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library  
Room 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

**[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)**

Your professor will make every effort to accommodate your learning and testing needs as they are made known to me, as well. If you are an international student, or if English is not your primary language, you will be allowed to use a paperback dictionary during examinations.

**B. Statement on Student Behavior**

As stated in the student handbook: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information.)

**C. Statement on Nondiscrimination**

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR**

Readings and written assignments are scheduled tentatively at this time. They may be changed but advanced notice will be given in class. You are expected to read the assigned material prior to its discussion in class.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment(s)</b>
WEEK ONE July 13-17	Social Factors on Health and Illness: Gender, Class, Race & Place	1) "Living in the Moment" – posted on eCollege 2) "Diagnostic Diversity"- posted on eCollege	By 11:59PM on Wednesday: Discussion Board over "Living in the Moment" By 11:59PM on Friday: submit paper covering both articles to dropbox on eCollege
WEEK TWO July 20-24	Legitimate Illness Experience	1) "Taboo and the Different Death" – posted on eCollege 2) "Why Must I Wait?"- posted on eCollege	By 11:59PM on Wednesday: Discussion Board over "Taboo and the Different Death" By 11:59PM on Friday: submit paper covering both articles to dropbox on eCollege
WEEK THREE July 27-31	Compliance: Why Don't People Make Healthy Choices?	1) "Doubt, Defiance & Identity" – posted on eCollege 2) "Heat Protection Behavior" – posted on eCollege	By 11:59PM on Wednesday: Discussion Board over "Doubt, Defiance & Identity" By 11:59PM on Friday: submit paper covering both articles to dropbox on eCollege
WEEK FOUR August 3-7	State of the Field: Is Health a Choice or a Form of Social Control?	1) "Healthy Anorexia" – posted on eCollege 2) "Framing Choice"- posted on eCollege	By 11:59PM on Wednesday: Discussion Board over "Healthy Anorexia" By 11:59PM on Friday: submit paper covering both articles to dropbox on eCollege
WEEK FIVE August 10-13	Health & Illness in Urban America	<u>Mama Might Be Better Off Dead</u>	NO discussion board! By 11:59pm on THURSDAY, August 13th submit book review to dropbox on eCollege