Syllabus
SOC 7853
Graduate Sociological Seminar on
Gender and Health

Fall 2003 (3 credits)
Wednesday 5:30pm – 8:30pm
137 Clement Hall

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Office hours: Mondays 1-5pm, and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines sociological understandings of gender, health, and illness in the United States. We will study health status, health behaviors, reproductive health, health professions, care-giving, aging and mortality with special attention to women and men of different class, racial and ethnic groups.

General Course Outline:

I. Sociological Perspectives on Gender and Health
II. Demographic Perspectives on Morbidity & Mortality
III. The Women’s Health Movement in the United States
   a. Antecedents and Outcomes
   b. Case Studies in Women’s and Men’s Health Issues
IV. Gender and Medicine
   a. Gender Stratification in Medical Professions
   b. Gender and Patient Encounters
V. Gender and Health Processes
   a. Gender, Work and Health
   b. Gender Roles, Care-giving and the Family
   c. Health Behaviors, Lifestyle and Social Control
VI. Gender and the Health Care System
   a. Institutionalization and Long-Term Care
   b. Health Insurance
   c. Access to Care
VII. Special Topics
   a. Aging
   b. Mental Health
   c. Disability
Requirements and Grading:

Your attendance and class participation are required elements of this course. To fully participate in class, you will need to complete the assigned reading and come to class prepared to discuss the material in a thoughtful and respectful way. Students who miss more than two class meetings or are consistently late and/or leave early can find their final course grade lowered up to one whole letter grade. Students with excellent and enthusiastic class participation can find their final course grade raised up to one whole letter grade.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities. Please contact Student Disability Services (110 Wilder, Voice/TDD: 901-678-2880) for more information.

Students are expected to conform to the university’s policies on academic integrity. That means no cheating, copying or plagiarism. The assignments you submit to me should be your original work. You should provide full and clear acknowledgement of referenced sources in your work.

A. Reading Reviews: You will write three (3) reviews of assigned reading (e.g., journal articles, book chapters). Each review should be 3-5 pages in length (type-written, double-spaced, and with reasonable font size and margins). Responses are due about one every month: the first is due by September 17th; the second is due by October 15th; the third is due by November 19th. Each review will be worth a maximum of 10 points. The reading reviews are designed to encourage you to keep up with the reading during the term and to do some critical thinking prior to the class meetings. Note that full credit for a review may only be obtained if it is handed in before or on the day we discuss the reading you are reviewing. Late assignments will be severely down-graded. In each review students should, at a minimum:
   a. Briefly summarize of the thrust of the reading;
   b. Enumerate of strengths of the reading;
   c. Enumerate of the reading’s weaknesses;
   d. Summarize the overall value of the reading.
   (30 points, total)

B. Research Paper/Research Proposal: The research assignment is designed to encourage students to investigate a topic in detail. Students may choose to write either a research paper or a research proposal. The research assignment should be about 20 pages in length (type-written, double-spaced, and with reasonable font size and margins) and should include the following sections and elements:
   a. An Introduction, with a brief description of the current or proposed study;
   b. A discussion and summary of Previous Research;
   c. A description of the research Data;
   d. A description of the primary concepts and Measures;
   e. The Methods of analysis and interpretation;
   f. The Results (for the research paper) or Expected Findings based on previous research (for the research proposal) of the study;
   g. Discussion and Conclusions

Students should approach the assignment as an opportunity to advance their own (and the instructor’s) understanding of a particular topic. Appropriate topics may focus on men’s
health only, on women’s health only, on gender differences or gendered processes related to some aspect of health and illness. All topics must meet with my approval. Students who write a research proposal may use the assignment as a vehicle to write a thesis proposal, a fellowship application or a grant proposal, for example. Students writing the research paper may use the assignment as vehicle to write a thesis, dissertation chapter, conference paper or journal article. For either assignment, students must consider the ethical treatment of human subjects of research. We will discuss human subjects and the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) process as applicable.

As a class we will spend several weeks focusing on refining your research papers/proposals. This will require several steps including writing a short prospectus on your topic (due October 1), selecting key readings for the class to aid your in-class presentation of your in-progress project for comments and discussion (beginning October 22nd). Also, you will write a draft (due November 19th) which you will share with me and two other students and thus receive three sets of comments on your work (see below). Your final paper is due in class Wednesday, December 3rd, 2003. (60 points)

C. Project participation: In addition to writing your own paper, you will also be responsible for reading and writing comments on two paper drafts (due to me and the students Monday, November 24th) written by your fellow students. I expect you to treat your role in this process seriously. Also, you are required to meet with me one-on-one during my office hours to discuss your own research assignment in detail. This will give me an opportunity to advise you on your topic. (10 points)

Total Grade:
A. Reading Reviews ........................................30 points
B. Paper .........................................................60 points
C. Project participation..................................10 points
TOTAL..............................................................100 points

Required Texts:


Selected readings available on reserve in the McWherter Library Reserve Room, on-line (e.g., on JSTOR or EBSCO via the Library’s electronic resources web page, [http://exlibris.memphis.edu/elecre.htm](http://exlibris.memphis.edu/elecre.htm)), and/or another home page, and as handouts.
Recommended Resources:

Journals:
Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)
Sociology of Health and Illness
Social Science and Medicine (SSM) [ILL or University of Mississippi, Oxford]
American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)
Health Affairs
Milbank Quarterly
Demography
American Journal of Sociology (AJS)
American Sociological Review (ASR)
Annual Review of Sociology
Social Forces
Gender and Society
Signs
Journals of Gerontology

Web Sites:
National Institutes of Health (NIH) http://www.nih.gov
Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) http://www.cdc.gov
National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS/CDC) http://www.cdc.gov/nchs
Agency for Health Quality Research http://www.ahrq.gov
World Health Organization http://www.who.int/en/
National Women’s Health Network http://www.womenshealthnetwork.org/
American Medical Women’s Association http://www.amwa-doc.org/
Society for Menstrual Cycle Research http://www.pop.psu.edu/smcr/

Published Resources:
**Assigned Reading:**

**September 3  Sociological Perspectives on Gender and Health**

Lorber pp. xi-xiii, 1-36, and 151-175 (review topics/titles in bibliography)
Moss pp. 1-35


**September 10  Sociological Perspectives on Gender and Health, continued**


**Recommended (Udry Gender Exchange in *ASR* [Reserve]):**

September 17  Demographic Perspectives on Morbidity & Mortality


*** FIRST READING REVIEW DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 17th ***

September 24  The Women’s Health Movement in the U.S.: Antecedents & Outcomes

Lorber pp. 137-149
Moss pp. 37-97


Recommended:

October 1  Gender and Medicine
Lorber pp. 37-52


Recommended:
Chin, Eliza, ed. 2002. This Side of Doctoring: Reflections from Women in Medicine.

October 8  Gender and Health Processes (Work, Care-giving and the Family)


***SECOND READING REVIEW DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15th ***
Note that reading reviews will be down-graded if they are late, are written solely on already-discussed reading, or are written solely on readings other than those required by the professor.
* Student Presentations and Discussions:

One week before you are scheduled to present, you select and assign readings for the class. This will help form the basis of a discussion on your paper/proposal topic. These readings should total no more than 30-35 pages in length. You may select scholarly material (e.g., journal articles and book chapters) as well as popular material (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, advertisements, informational pamphlets, web sites, and government reports). If you have specific questions about the appropriateness of your potential selections, please discuss them with me.

The class will spend about 40 minutes on each student’s topic. Each student should plan to spend the first 5-10 minutes of his/her time orally introducing her/his topic to the class. Student presenters should prepare a one-page handout for the class which will include an outline of the topic and a list of discussion questions.

Please note: Reading reviews will only be accepted on required reading assignments which I, not students, assign.
November 5  Case Studies in Men’s and Women’s Health Issues

A. Reproductive Health and Fertility Control
Moss pp. 219-248

B. Menstruation, Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS), & Menopause
Lorber pp. 71-91

B. A Men’s Health Movement?

Recommended:
November 12  AIDS/HIV
   Lorber pp.109-135 (AIDS/HIV)
   Moss pp. 123-160 (AIDS/HIV)


November 19  Disability
   Lorber pp. 53-69
   Moss pp. 183-193


Recommended:

*** PAPER DRAFTS (3 COPIES) ARE DUE NOVEMBER 19th ***

*** FINAL READING REVIEW DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 19th ***

Reading reviews will be down-graded if they are late, are written solely on already-discussed reading, or are written solely on readings other than those required by the professor.

*** COMMENTS ON DRAFTS DUE MONDAY NOVEMBER 24th ***

November 26  No class: Happy Thanksgiving!
   Reading on your own: Health Insurance and Access to Care

   Moss pp. 161-181, 249-272

December 3  Health and Systems of Care

Recommended:

*** FINAL PAPERS DUE DECEMBER 3rd ***