

SYO4400 Medical Sociology Spring 2025

Location: Pugh Hall 0120

Time: MWF Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)

Course website: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/528732>

Instructor: Won-tak Joo (3344 Turlington Hall / wjoo@ufl.edu / 352-294-7135)

Office hours: M 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the field of medical sociology. You will 1) learn major sociological theories and analytical tools to understand health and disease, 2) explore historical and current health trends in the United States, and 3) discuss why these trends occur and how they may change in the future from the perspective of sociologists and social scientists.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no single textbook for this class. Instead, two or three required readings will be given each week. All the readings are freely available through Canvas.

COMMUNICATION

All inquiries concerning the course should be sent to wjoo@ufl.edu. Emails must include SYO4400 in the subject line. Please allow at least 24 hours during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM – 5 PM) to respond to your email inquiries.

GRADING POLICY

- **Weekly response (20%)**
 - Respond to three or four questions based on the weekly readings.
 - Format: one page, 12pt, single-spaced.
 - Due: Every *Saturday* by *midnight*.
- **In-class group activity (20%)**
 - The class will be divided into eight groups.
 - The role of the group leader is rotated every lecture among group members. Group leaders are responsible for (i) checking the attendance of group members, (ii) summarizing the group discussion, and (iii) submitting the summary to Canvas.
 - The 6 lowest scores will be dropped, allowing you to skip six activities without penalty. There will be no makeup opportunities for missing activities, so please use these opportunities wisely throughout the semester.
- **Interview (20%)**
 - Interview one of your family members about their experience of health issues.
 - Due: *March 30* by *midnight*.
- **Two writing essays (40%)**
 - Prompts will be given a week in advance.
 - Format: three pages, plus one extra page for references; 12pt, single-spaced.
 - Essay 1 due: *February 23* by *midnight*
 - Essay 2 due: *April 28* by *midnight*
- UF grading policies are at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	B+	87-89.99	C+	77-79.99	D+	67-69.99	E	0-60.99
A-	90-93.99	B	84-86.99	C	74-76.99	D	64-66.99		
		B-	80-83.99	C-	70-73.99	D-	61-63.99		

COURSE POLICIES

- Electronic devices are *required* for in-class activities.
- Attendance is expected at every lecture.
- For all planned absences, students must inform the instructor as early as possible prior to the class if they are in a situation that allows for an excused absence. For unplanned absences due to accidents or emergency situations, students should contact the instructor as soon as conditions permit.
- Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Detailed information can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.
- Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures, but the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are: (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

EVALUATION POLICY

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register at the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website

(<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit the website (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: Visit the website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the website (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).
- *University Police Department*: Visit the website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the website (<https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the website (<https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center* (<https://career.ufl.edu/>): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support* (<https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- *Teaching Center* (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/office/teaching-center/>): 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio* (<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Academic Complaints*: Office of the Ombuds; Visit the Complaint Portal webpage (<https://www.ombuds.ufl.edu/complaint-portal/>) for more information.
- *Enrollment Management Complaints* (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage (<https://em.ufl.edu/complaint>) for more information.

SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC	READING
Week 1 1/13-1/19	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blaxter, M. (2005). Lay concepts of health. In <i>The Sociology and Politics of Health</i> (pp. 198-201). Routledge. ▪ Olafsdottir, S. (2013). Social Construction and Health. In <i>Medical sociology on the move: New directions in theory</i> (pp. 41-59). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
Week 2 1/20-1/26	Stress Health behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoits, P. A. (2010). Stress and health: Major findings and policy implications. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 51(S), S41-S53. ▪ Cockerham, W. C. (2013). Bourdieu and an Update of Health Lifestyle Theory. In <i>Medical sociology on the move: New directions in theory</i> (pp. 127-154). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
Week 3 1/27-2/2	Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sampson, R. J. (2003). The neighborhood context of well-being. <i>Perspectives in biology and medicine</i>, 46(3), S53-S64. ▪ Truesdale, B. C., & Jencks, C. (2016). The health effects of income inequality: averages and disparities. <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i>, 37, 413-430.
Week 4 2/3-2/9	Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoits, P. A. (2011). Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 52(2), 145-161. ▪ Christakis, N. A., & Fowler, J. H. (2007). The spread of obesity in a large social network over 32 years. <i>New England journal of medicine</i>, 357(4), 370-379.
Week 5 2/10-2/16	Ecological fallacy Medicalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diez-Roux, A. V. (1998). Bringing context back into epidemiology: variables and fallacies in multilevel analysis. <i>American journal of public health</i>, 88(2), 216-222. ▪ Conrad, P. (2013). Medicalization: Changing Contours, Characteristics, and Contexts. In <i>Medical sociology on the move: New directions in theory</i> (pp. 195-214). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
Week 6 2/17-2/23	Medicalization of ADHD and fertility (2/23 Essay 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conrad, P., & Potter, D. (2000). From hyperactive children to ADHD adults: Observations on the expansion of medical categories. <i>Social problems</i>, 47(4), 559-582. ▪ Barker, K. K. (1998). A ship upon a stormy sea: The medicalization of pregnancy. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 47(8), 1067-1076.
Week 7	Medicalization of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Martin, L. J. (2010). Anticipating infertility:

2/24-3/2	infertility	<p>Egg freezing, genetic preservation, and risk. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 24(4), 526-545.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brown, E., & Patrick, M. (2018). Time, anticipation, and the life course: egg freezing as temporarily disentangling romance and reproduction. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 83(5), 959-982.
Week 8 3/3-3/9	Epidemiologic transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Omran, A. R. (2001). The epidemiologic transition: a theory of the epidemiology of population change. <i>Bulletin of the World Health Organization</i>, 79(2), 161-170. ▪ McKeown, R. E. (2009). The epidemiologic transition: changing patterns of mortality and population dynamics. <i>American journal of lifestyle medicine</i>, 3(1 suppl), 19S-26S.
Week 9 3/10-3/16	Opioid epidemics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case, A., & Deaton, A. (2015). Rising morbidity and mortality in midlife among white non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st century. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 112(49), 15078-15083. ▪ Pryma, J. (2022). Technologies of expertise: Opioids and pain management's credibility crisis. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 87(1), 17-49. ▪ Hansen, H., Parker, C., & Netherland, J. (2020). Race as a ghost variable in (white) opioid research. <i>Science, Technology, & Human Values</i>, 45(5), 848-876.
Week 10 3/17-3/23	(Spring break)	
Week 11 3/24-3/30	Fundamental cause theory (3/30 Interview)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phelan, J. C., & Link, B. G. (2013). Fundamental cause theory. In <i>Medical sociology on the move: New directions in theory</i> (pp. 105-125). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. ▪ Clouston, S. A., Rubin, M. S., Phelan, J. C., & Link, B. G. (2016). A social history of disease: contextualizing the rise and fall of social inequalities in cause-specific mortality. <i>Demography</i>, 53(5), 1631-1656.
Week 12 3/31-4/6	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case, A., & Deaton, A. (2021). Life expectancy in adulthood is falling for those without a BA degree, but as educational gaps have widened, racial gaps have narrowed. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 118(11), e2024777118. ▪ Glied, S., & Lleras-Muney, A. (2008). Technological innovation and inequality in health. <i>Demography</i>, 45, 741-761.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mirowsky, John, and Catherine E. Ross. "Education, health, and the default American lifestyle." <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i> 56.3 (2015): 297-306.
Week 13 4/7-4/13	Race and ethnicity (4/11 no class)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Massey, D. S. (2004). Segregation and stratification: a biosocial perspective. <i>Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race</i>, 1(1), 7-25. ▪ Umberson, D. (2017). Black deaths matter: Race, relationship loss, and effects on survivors. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 58(4), 405-420.
Week 14 4/14-4/20	Maternal mortality 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pryma, J. (2017). "Even my sister says I'm acting like a crazy to get a check": Race, gender, and moral boundary-work in women's claims of disabling chronic pain. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 181, 66-73. ▪ Declercq, E., & Zephyrin, L. (2020). Maternal mortality in the United States: a primer. <i>Commonwealth Fund</i>, 10. ▪ Hailu, E. M., Maddali, S. R., Snowden, J. M., Carmichael, S. L., & Mujahid, M. S. (2022). Structural racism and adverse maternal health outcomes: a systematic review. <i>Health & Place</i>, 78, 102923.
Week 15 4/21-4/23	Maternal mortality 2 (4/28 Essay 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rosenthal, L., & Lobel, M. (2011). Explaining racial disparities in adverse birth outcomes: Unique sources of stress for Black American women. <i>Social science & medicine</i>, 72(6), 977-983. ▪ Altman, M. R., Oseguera, T., McLemore, M. R., Kantrowitz-Gordon, I., Franck, L. S., & Lyndon, A. (2019). Information and power: Women of color's experiences interacting with health care providers in pregnancy and birth. <i>Social science & medicine</i>, 238, 112491.