



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

Sociology and Social Policy

SOSC 314

Sociology of Health and Illness

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 2 2015

Important dates

Trimester dates: 13 July to 15 November 2015

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2015

Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 2015

Last assessment item due: 16 October

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Lectures: Monday 1:10 pm–2:00pm Laby LT118
Friday 1:10 pm–2:00pm Hunter LT220

Tutorials: Tutorials will start in week 3 of the trimester. Please sign up in MyAllocator:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables/tutorial-sign-up>

Names and contact details

Dr Bronwyn Polaschek

Murphy Building, MY 1018

Tel: 04 463 6130

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Office Hour: By appointment

Communication of additional information

Additional information related to the course will be made available on Blackboard (in the 'Course Content' folder). You will automatically receive all Blackboard announcements as an email sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address. If you are not going to use this Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

Prescription

The course introduces students to sociological approaches to health, illness, medicine and health care. A diversity of topics will be covered including health inequalities, health policy, health professions, the organisation of health care delivery, ethnicity and health, gender and health, mental health and the social construction of medical knowledge.

Course content

13th July: Introduction

17th July: Theoretical Perspectives on Health and Illness

20th July: Class and Health

24th July: Gender and Health

27th July: Ethnicity and Health

31st July: The Social Construction of Medicine

3rd August: Durkheim and Public Health

7th August: Foucault, Health and Care

10th August: Medicalisation

14th August: Technologies of Health and Illness

17th August: Regulation of Health Practices (Kevin Dew)

21st August: Alternative Medicine and Demarcation Practices (Kevin Dew)

24th August (Monday) – Essay 1 due

7th September: Media Representations of Health and Illness

11th September: Health and Illness in Everyday Life

14th September: Conversation Analysis: Studying the Consultation (I) (Josh Barton)

18th September: Conversation Analysis: Studying the Consultation (II) (Josh Barton)

21st September: Rationing Health Care (Kevin Dew)

25th September: Pharmaceuticals (Kevin Dew)

28th September (Monday) – Essay 2 due

28th September: Mental Health

2nd October: Health Screening (Danielle Davies)

5th October: Disability (James Gluck)

9th October: Chronic Illness

12th October: The Sociology of Ageing

16th October: In-class test

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

This course aims to introduce you to sociological approaches to the study of health and illness. Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Discuss patterns of health inequalities in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
2. Be familiar with a range sociological theories related to health and illness.
3. Critically reflect on the place and role of medicine and public health in contemporary society and everyday life.
4. Discuss the relationship between social organisation and health outcomes.

Teaching format

Lectures and tutorials.

While attendance at lectures and tutorials is not compulsory, students are expected to regularly attend them, and will be advantaged if they do so. Enrolment for tutorials will be through the Student Allocator system: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables>.

Mandatory course requirements

There are no mandatory course requirements.

Workload

The expectations are that students will work 10 hours per point, therefore a 20 point course equates to 200 hours over the trimester. This includes scheduled contact time, individual or group study, and work on assessment tasks.

Students are recommended to spend a minimum of 50 hours on each of the essay assignments (including reading, research, and writing) and 25 hours revision prior to the in-class test.

The remaining time should be spent reading the course materials and more widely in the subject of sociology of health and illness.

Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	3000-word essay	40	1, 2, 4	24 Aug
2	3000-word essay	40	2, 3	28 Sept
3	In-class test (50 minutes)	20	2, 3, 4	16 Oct

Essay 1

Weighting: 40%

Due Date: Monday, 24 August

Write a 3000-word essay on one of the following (the starting point of your essay will be lectures 1-5 and readings 1-5 in the Student Notes):

1. Take an aspect of health inequalities (for example gender, ethnicity, or class/socio-economic differences) and discuss how this can be understood sociologically. To do this you should draw on a theoretical tradition such as Marxism, feminism, Foucault, constructionism, colonialism etc.
2. Michael Marmot has argued that the relationship between class and health is the major unsolved public health problem in the industrialised world. Critically assess explanations for the relationship between social class and health outcomes.
3. Māori and Pacific children have higher hospitalisation rates for pneumonia than NZ Europeans and the pneumonia is more severe. Discuss how such an outcome could relate to discrimination or other social factors.
4. It has been argued that women are more likely to be 'patients' than men but women live longer. Discuss the explanations for this.

Essay 2

Weighting: 40%

Due Date: Monday, 28 September

For this assignment you are required to do one of the following:

Either: Produce a diary for a one-week period. In this diary you are to write on health and medical-related events, activities and representations that you encounter. These can include conversations, television programmes, advertising, purchases of health-related products and visits to health professionals. At the completion of the week you are to write a 3000-word essay relating your diary entries to a sociological understanding of health and illness. You can consider a wide range of concepts and approaches to this essay, for example, ritual, discourse, technologies, representation, everyday life, and/or medicalisation.

Or: Using a camera, take photos of medications, supplements and health-related paraphernalia in your household (without intruding on anyone's privacy). Also, construct a map of your household identifying where the photos were taken. At the completion of the photo-taking and map drawing you are to write a 3000-word essay relating the photos and map to sociological understandings of health and illness. You can consider a wide range of concepts and approaches to this essay, for example, ritual, discourse, technologies, representation, everyday life, and/or medicalisation.

For this exercise you may need to obtain consent from householders. Information sheets and consent forms will be made available on Blackboard if this is the case.

Or: Select a health issue and consider the ways in which this issue can be understood sociologically and/or what policy responses can be made in relation to this issue.

Note: If you choose this latter option you are strongly advised to discuss this with Bronwyn Polaschek first.

Marking Criteria

The marking criteria for Essays 1 and 2 will be posted on Blackboard once the course commences. A full bibliography is expected for both assignments.

In-class test (50 minutes)

Weighting: 20%

Date: Friday, 16 October

A guidance statement on the test and marking criteria will be handed out and made available on Blackboard at least two weeks before the date of the test.

Submission and return of work

Assignments must be placed in the assignment box on level 9, Murphy Building, to the side of the lifts. The Assignment Box is cleared at 4pm on the due date, all work is date-stamped, its receipt recorded, and then handed on to the appropriate markers. Every effort will be made to return marked assignments within two-weeks of the due date. Marked assignments not collected in lectures or tutorials can be collected at the Murphy 9th floor reception desk, between **2.00 and 4.00 pm only** from Monday to Friday

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Extensions of three days or less (such as over a weekend) will be granted automatically to students who request it with an email prior to the scheduled deadline.

Longer extensions need to be negotiated with the course coordinator (Bronwyn Polaschek) and may require supporting evidence.

Penalties

Late submissions for student assignments in all Sociology and Social Policy undergraduate courses are subject to a penalty. The exact deduction will be calculated on the basis of one half mark per day late for each 10 marks, i.e. 1 mark will be deducted each day for an assignment worth 20% of the total course mark.

Set texts

Each student should buy the prepared book of Student Notes from VicBooks since ready access to and familiarity with its contents will be required throughout the course. Students can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz.

Recommended reading

There are a number of excellent journals you can consult including:

Sociology of Health and Illness

International Journal of Health Services

Social Science and Medicine

Critical Public Health

Health
Health Sociology Review
Health Policy

Additionally I recommend using article databases that Victoria University has access to such as Jstor (<http://www.jstor.org/>) or Web of Knowledge/Science (<http://apps.webofknowledge.com/>). These databases provide excellent access to a wide range of readings in all fields and familiarising yourself with them will greatly assist you both in the completion of this course as well as any further study that you undertake. They can be accessed through the 'Online resources' link on the library's webpage.

The following readings provide an overview of New Zealand material:

Bryder, L. (ed.) (1991) *In a healthy country: essays on the social history of medicine in New Zealand*. Bridget Williams Books, Wellington.

Dew, K. & Kirkman, A. (2002) *Sociology of health in New Zealand*. Oxford University Press: Melbourne.

Dew, K. & Davis, P. (eds.) (2005) *Health and society in Aotearoa New Zealand (2nd edition)*. Oxford University Press: Melbourne.

Laugesen, M. & Gauld, R. (2012) *Democratic governance and health: hospitals, politics and health policy in New Zealand*. Otago University Press: Dunedin.

The following are more general readings in sociology of health and medical sociology:

Barry, A. & Yuill, C. (2012) *Understanding the sociology of health*. Sage: London.

Blaxter, M. (2010) *Health*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Cockerham, W.(ed) (2010) *The new Blackwell companion to medical sociology*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

De Maio, F. (2010) *Health and social theory*. Palgrave: Basingstoke.

Dew, K. (2012) *The cult and science of public health: A Sociological Investigation*. Berghahn, New York.

Germov, J. (ed.). (2005) *Second opinion (3rd edition)*. Oxford University Press: Melbourne.

Nettleton, S. (1995). *The sociology of health and illness*. Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.

Petersen, A. & Wilkinson, I. (2008) *Health, risk and vulnerability*. London: Routledge.

White, K. (2009) *An introduction to the sociology of health and illness*. Sage: London.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected in the first week of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

In response to student feedback the essay topics have been written to give students more guidance and also to allow for more flexibility for students with a particular interest in a topic area to follow that up.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

School Contact Information

Head of School: Prof Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, MY1019

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