

SOCIOLOGY 479: SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Winter 2018 – Term 2 (3 Credits)
Tuesday & Thursday, 5:00–6:30PM, UCLL 103
University of British Columbia

Instructor: Andrea Polonijo, PhD, MPH

Email: andrea.polonijo@ubc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6:30-7:00pm, UCLL 103

Course Description: What makes people healthy or unhealthy? The health of individuals is not only shaped by lifestyle choices or medical treatments, but also—in large part—by social conditions. This three-credit, fourth-year seminar course offers an introduction to the social determinants of health: the social advantages and disadvantages that people experience—based on their social position and social circumstances—that influence their health and well-being. This course is designed to provide you with an introduction to and appreciation of theoretical perspectives and empirical research on social determinants of health, including the:

- roles that various social determinants play in shaping health outcomes;
- distinctions and relationships between individuals and populations;
- multiple pathways that underlie health inequalities; and
- opportunities for policies/interventions to buffer the relationship between social position and health.

In addition, this course is intended to develop your critical thinking, writing, public presentation, and intellectual debating skills.

Course Format & Expectations: This seminar-based course consists of a combination of key readings, in-class activities, films, and interactive instructor- and student-led “mini-lectures” and discussions. You are expected to have completed the required readings BEFORE each class and be prepared to actively participate in class activities and discussion.

Required Course Readings: Course readings consist of academic articles published in leading international sociology, public health, and medical journals. All readings are available online via the UBC Library (see “Library Online Course Reserves” on Canvas).

Canvas: Registered students will have access to the UBC Canvas course for SOCI 479. If you have not already done so, go to canvas.ubc.ca to register for your account, which uses your UBC CWL login. The SOCI 479 course will appear on your Canvas dashboard, which contains all online course information (syllabus, readings, announcements, assignments, and grading rubrics).

All written assignments will be submitted via Canvas so be sure to familiarize yourself with the site. If you encounter any issues using Canvas, please contact Arts ISIT support staff in Buchanan A105, at arts.helpdesk@ubc.ca, or at 604-827-2787. Please do not contact the course instructor regarding Canvas issues unless the course Canvas site is malfunctioning and requires attention.

Prerequisite: One of SOCI 100, 101, or 102. This course relies on key sociological concepts introduced in introductory courses, so it is critical that you have successfully completed one of the prerequisite courses.

Evaluation

Participation	20%	Ongoing
Critical Commentary 1	10%	Week 3, 4, or 5 (Monday, 11:59pm)
Critical Commentary 2	10%	Week 6, 8, or 9 (Monday, 11:59pm)
Critical Commentary 3	10%	Week 10, 11, or 12 (Monday, 11:59pm)
Seminar Facilitation	20%	Week 3–12 (Thursday, 5:00pm)
Policy/Intervention Evaluation	30%	Week 13 (Thursday April 4, 11:59pm)

Participation (20%): Class participation will not be assessed by attendance, as it is expected that you will regularly attend class. This grade will reflect your participation in in-class activities and assignments, the quality of your contributions to class discussions and debates, and the degree to which you engage with the subject matter over the course of the term. A subset of in-class assignments will be collected to help inform your participation grade. In-class assignments will not be announced in advance cannot be made up.

Critical Commentaries (3 x 10%): You will select three weeks: (1) one of Weeks 3, 4, or 5, (2) one of Weeks 6, 8, or 9, and (3) one of Weeks 10, 11, or 12. For each selected week you will prepare a 3-page commentary that critically reflects on the four required readings for that particular week.

Your commentary should provide an indication of what you found particularly compelling or troublesome in the readings, and may include (but is not limited to):

- Critical reflections on the concepts covered by the readings, and how they relate to other concepts we have discussed throughout the course;
- Critical analyses of the methodological design used in empirical research articles and/or the degree to which these empirical articles reflect the theoretical ideas that inform them;
- Case examples or studies that you believe either support or challenge the conceptual ideas and/or empirical findings of the assigned readings;
- Critical questions that are raised by the readings and/or the identification of areas for future research;
- Anything else you think is interesting and relevant for discussion on this topic.

These commentaries are not meant to be summaries: you should assume the reader is familiar with the readings.

Critical commentaries will be graded on the depth of the reflection and quality of the prose (e.g., spelling and grammatical errors). All commentaries must follow the formatting requirements specified in the 'course policies' section at the end of this syllabus.

As your commentaries will be used to spark class discussion and debate, they must be submitted via Canvas no later than 11:59pm on the Monday of your chosen weeks. Late commentaries will not be accepted.

Seminar Facilitation (20%): In week 2, we will create small groups of two to four students (final group size will depend on class enrollment—we require nine groups in total). Each group will be responsible for (1) delivering a presentation on two of the required weekly readings for the course, and (2) facilitating a discussion and debate of issues that relate to those readings. The expectation is that the group will have critically evaluated the readings and will have selected one or several themes to highlight and focus on in order to generate meaningful class discussion and participation. Your group will have 70 minutes to facilitate the seminar; at least 35 minutes should be devoted to facilitating active participation among your peers. Your group is encouraged to bring in

supplementary materials including newspaper articles, video clips, policy documents, or health communication materials to expand on the weekly readings, encourage class discussion, and consider the broader implications of the readings.

Group seminar facilitation will be assessed based on the quality of the presentation and discussion, including: content, organization/style, critical engagement, creativity, presentation, and preparedness. A detailed grading rubric is posted alongside the assignment details on Canvas.

Policy/Intervention Evaluation (30%): You will complete this assignment in teams of three. Identify one disease for which social inequalities in health have been documented (e.g., heart disease, cervical cancer, diabetes, HIV, depression, etc.) in at least two populations (e.g., by socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, race or ethnicity, immigration status, place, etc.) within a specific country that is of interest to you. Then, critically evaluate a relevant social and/or health policy or intervention that has been implemented in your chosen country that is aimed at preventing the disease you have chosen in relation to your two populations of interest.

Specifically:

1. Describe the evidence base (i.e., the existing research) that links your chosen disease to your two populations of interest and identify an existing social/health policy/intervention that aims to weaken this link.
2. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the chosen policy/intervention in relation to the theories and concepts we have discussed throughout the course.
3. Propose an alternative policy-level intervention that may help reduce disease inequalities for each of your chosen populations (including the theoretical/conceptual rationale for why your proposed policy should have a positive impact on the health of your populations).

The policy/intervention evaluation should be 10 pages (excluding references) and must follow the formatting requirements specified in the 'course policies' section at the end of this syllabus. Papers should include a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed references published within the past 10 years (in addition to any references used that appear in this syllabus).

Your policy/intervention evaluation is due by 11:59pm on Thursday, April 4. Late policy/intervention evaluation papers will have 10 percentage points deducted off the final mark of the paper per calendar day. A detailed grading rubric is posted alongside the assignment details on Canvas.

Tentative Class Schedule & Required Readings

Week 1: Introduction to The Social Determinants of Health

Thursday, January 3

1. Review the course syllabus.

Week 2: Thinking about Disease, Health, and Social Conditions

Tuesday, January 8

1. Bezrushka, S. (2001). Societal hierarchy and the health Olympics. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 164(12), 1701-1703.
- *In Class Documentary: Unnatural Causes – In Sickness and in Wealth (56 min)*

Thursday, January 10

2. Evans, R. G., & Stoddart, G. L. (1990). Producing health, consuming health care. *Social Science & Medicine*, 31, 1347-1363.
3. Kawachi, I., Subramanian, S. V., and Almeida-Filho N. (2002). A glossary for health inequalities. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 56, 647-652.

Week 3: Fundamental Causes, Resources, and Health

Tuesday, January 15

1. Phelan, J. C., Link, B. G., & Tehranifar, P. (2010). Social conditions as fundamental causes of health inequalities: Theory, evidence, and policy implications. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51(S), S28-S40.
2. Freese, J., & Lutfey, K. (2011). Fundamental causality: Challenges of an animating concept for medical sociology. In B. A. Pescosolido, J. K. Martin, J. McLeod, & A. Rogers (Eds.), *The Handbook of the Sociology of Health, Illness, and Healing* (pp. 67-81).

Thursday, January 17 (*Group 1 Seminar Facilitation*)

3. Polonijo, A. N., & Carpiano, R. M. (2013). Social inequalities in adolescent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination: A test of fundamental cause theory. *Social Science & Medicine*, 82, 115-125.
4. Willson, A. E. (2009). 'Fundamental causes' of health inequalities: A comparative analysis of Canada and the United States. *International Sociology*, 24, 93-113.

Week 4: Health Lifestyles and Collective Behaviors

Tuesday, January 22

1. Frohlich, K. L., & Potvin, L. (1999). Collective lifestyles as the target for health promotion. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 90, S11-S14.
2. Cockerham, W. C. (2005). Health lifestyle theory and the convergence of agency and structure. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 46, 51-67.

Thursday, January 24 (*Group 2 Seminar Facilitation*)

3. Stead, M., McDermott, L., MacKintosh, A. M., & Adamson, A. (2011). Why healthy eating is bad for young people's health: Identity, belonging and food. *Social Science & Medicine*, 72, 1121-1139.
4. Burdette, A. M., Needham, B. L., Taylor, M. G., & Hill, T. D. (2017). Health lifestyles in adolescence and self-rated health into adulthood. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 58, 520-536.

Week 5: Sex, Gender, and Health

Tuesday, January 29

1. Krieger, N. (2003). Genders, sexes, and health: what are the connections—and why does it matter? *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 32, 652-657.
2. Courtenay, W. (2000). Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: A theory of gender and health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 50, 1385-1401.

Thursday, January 31 (*Group 3 Seminar Facilitation*)

3. Shoveller, J., Knight, R., Johnson, J., Oliffe, J., & Goldenberg, S. (2010). 'Not the swab!' Young men's experiences with STI Testing. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 32, 57-73.
4. Werner, A., & Malterud, K. (2003). It is hard work behaving as a credible patient: Encounters between women with chronic pain and their doctors. *Social Science & Medicine*, 57, 1409-1419.

Week 6: Sexual Orientation, Stigma, and Health

Tuesday, February 5

1. Link, B.G. & Phelan, J. C. (2001). Conceptualizing stigma. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 363-385.
2. Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence". *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 674-697.

Thursday, February 7 (Group 4 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Saewyc, E. M., Poon, C. S., Homma, Y., & Skay, C. L. (2008). Stigma management? The links between enacted stigma and teen pregnancy trends among gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in British Columbia. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 17(3), 123-139.
4. Ryan, C., Huebner, D., Diaz, R. M., & Sanchez, J. (2009). Family rejection as a predictor of negative health outcomes in white and Latino lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults. *Pediatrics*, 123, 346-352

Week 7: Group Work / Introduction to Place and Health

Tuesday, February 12

- Policy/intervention evaluation group work period: in this class you will have the opportunity to meet with your group, finalize your research topic, and ask the professor questions. No readings have been assigned this week to allow you time to review the research on your selected topic.

Thursday, February 14

- *In Class Documentary: Unnatural Causes – Place Matters (31 min)*

****READING BREAK FEBRUARY 18–22****

Week 8: Place and Health, Continued

Tuesday, February 26

1. Robert, S. A. (1999). Socioeconomic position and health: The independent contribution of community socioeconomic context. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 25, 489-516.
2. Walker, R. E., Keane, C.R., & Burke, J.G. (2010). Disparities and access to healthy food in the United States: A review of food deserts literature. *Health & Place*, 16, 876-884.

Thursday, February 28 (Group 5 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Frohlich, K. L., Potvin, L., Chabot, P., & Corin, E. (2002). A theoretical and empirical analysis of context: Neighbourhoods, smoking and youth. *Social Science & Medicine*, 54, 1401-1417.
4. Fast, D., Shoveller, J., Shannon, K., & Kerr, T. (2010). Safety and danger in downtown Vancouver: Understandings of place among young people entrenched in an urban drug scene. *Health & Place*, 16, 51-60.

Week 9: Race, Racism, and Health

Tuesday, March 5

1. Gravlee, C. C. (2009). How race becomes biology: Embodiment of social inequality. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 139, 47-57.
2. Williams, D. R., & Mohammed, S. A. (2013). Racism and health I: Pathways and scientific evidence. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57, 1152-1173.

Thursday, March 7 (Group 6 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Veenstra, G. (2011). Mismatched racial identities, colourism, and health in Toronto and Vancouver. *Social Science & Medicine* 73, 1152-1162.

4. Umberson, D. (2017). Black deaths matter: Race, relationships, loss, and effects on survivors. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 58, 405-420.

Week 10: Ethnicity, Migration, and Health

Tuesday, March 12

1. Richmond, C. A. M., & Ross, N. A. (2009). The determinants of First Nation and Inuit health: A critical population health approach. *Health & Place*, 15, 403-411.
2. De Maio, F. G. (2010). Immigration as pathogenic: A systematic review of the health of immigrants to Canada. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 9(27), 1-20.

Thursday, March 14 (Group 7 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Dean, J. A., & Wilson, K. (2010). "My health has improved because I always have everything I need here...": A qualitative exploration of health improvement and decline among immigrants. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70(8), 1219-1228.
4. Wilson, K., & Cardwell, N. (2012). Urban Aboriginal health: Examining inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations in Canada. *The Canadian Geographer*, 56(1), 98-116.

Week 11: Social Ties, Social Networks, and Health

Tuesday, March 19

1. Umberson, D., & Montez, J. K. (2010). Social relationships and health: A flashpoint for health policy. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51, S54-S66.
2. Moore, S., & Kawachi, I. (2017). Twenty years of social capital and health research: A glossary. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 71, 513-517.

Thursday, March 21 (Group 8 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Hawkins, R. L., & Maurer, K. (2010). Bonding, bridging, and linking: How social capital operated in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(6): 1777-1793.
4. Reczek, C., Gebhardt-Kram, L., Kissling, A., & Umberson, D. (2018). Healthcare Work in Marriage: How Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Spouses Encourage and Coerce Medical Care. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 59(4), 554-568.

Week 12: Intersectionality and Health

Tuesday, March 26

1. Hankivsky, O., & Christoffersen, A. (2008). Intersectionality and the determinants of health: A Canadian perspective. *Critical Public Health*, 18(3), 271-283.
2. Bowleg, L. (2012). The problem with the phrase *Women and Minorities*: Intersectionality—an important theoretical framework for public health. *American Journal of Public Health* 102,1267-1273.

Thursday, March 28 (Group 9 Seminar Facilitation)

3. Veenstra, G. (2011). Race, gender, class, and sexual orientation: Intersecting axes of inequality and self-rated health in Canada. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 10(3).
4. Collins, P.Y., von Unger, H., & Armbrister, A. (2008). Church ladies, good girls, and locas: Stigma and the intersection of gender, ethnicity, mental illness, and sexuality in relation to HIV risk. *Social Science & Medicine*, 67, 389-397.

Week 13: Policy/Intervention Evaluation Peer Review

Tuesday, April 2

Bring two hard copies of your final policy/intervention evaluation paper to class for peer-review.

Course Policies

Email: As my physical ability to type is limited this term, please consult the syllabus, Canvas, and your peers before emailing me with questions. If you have a question that requires a detailed response, please see me during office hours rather than sending me an email. If an email is necessary, please put "SOC1 479" in the subject line. I check email Monday – Friday between 8:30am and 4:30pm and aim to respond within 2 business days.

Technology Usage: Please turn off your phone before entering class. Audio/video recording and photography are not permitted in class. You may use a laptop/tablet in class, for note-taking or course-related activities. Using technology for non-course-related activities (e.g., instant messaging, e-mail, social networking) will negatively impact on your participation grade. You will be asked to leave the class if your technology usage is a distraction to your peers.

Absences: While you are expected to regularly attend class, perfect attendance is not always possible or desirable. If you are sick and contagious, please stay home. I do not require an email or doctor's note if you miss class, however if you are experiencing extenuating circumstances that require you to miss multiple classes please contact Arts Advising.

Academic Concession: If you encounter medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your regular attendance and academic performance in this course, please contact the Faculty of Arts Academic Advising Office (Buchanan D111, Phone 604-822-4028) to request an academic concession. I will not incorporate leniency for late assignments without a letter from the Arts Advising Office. For more details about academic concession see:

<http://students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/academic-performance/help-academic-concession/>

Accommodation: UBC accommodates students with disabilities who are registered with the Centre for Accessibility as well as students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance and submitting assignments. Please let me know in the first week of class if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other commitments cannot assume they will be accommodated and should discuss their commitments with me before the drop date.

Early Alert: I will do my best to reach out and offer support if I am concerned about your academic performance or wellbeing during the term. I also encourage you to speak with me if you need assistance. In addition, I may identify my concerns using Early Alert. This program allows academic, financial, or mental health concerns to be identified sooner and responded to in a more coordinated way. Early alert requests are treated confidentially. For more information, please visit www.earlyalert.ubc.ca.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is a serious matter and will not be tolerated in this course. Turnitin will be used in cases where the submission of unoriginal work is suspected. Please review the UBC Calendar "Academic Regulations" for University policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. I recommend that you read the following UBC on-line resource "Plagiarism Avoided" in order to ensure that you avoid plagiarism in your work: <http://legacy.arts.ubc.ca/arts-students/plagiarism-avoided.html>.

Assignment Formatting: All written assignments must follow these guidelines:

- Typed using Times New Roman 12 point font
 - Double-spaced
 - 1.0 inch margins on all sides
 - Have a header on the top of each page containing:
 - your name(s) AND student ID
 - the course number (SOC1 479) AND date
 - the page number AND total number of pages
 - Include a title on the first page of each assignment (e.g. "Critical Commentary 2: Race, Racism & Health")
 - Properly cite all references using either the American Psychological Association (APA) or American Sociological Association (ASA) format
 - Do not exceed the page limits allowed for the assignment.
- Points will be deducted if any of these requirements are not followed.

Quality of Written Work: All written work will be evaluated and scored for grammar, style, and clarity so it is crucial that you proofread your assignments. Offensive (e.g., racist, sexist, homophobic) language is not acceptable. The UBC Writing Centre is an excellent resource for students who wish to improve their writing and proofreading skills:

<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/tutoring-studying/improve-your-writing/>.

Grading: Your grades in this course will be based solely upon your work in this course and not what you have achieved in any prior courses. As this is a 400-level course, the requirements and expectations are greater than in lower level courses. If you receive a grade on an assignment that is lower than what you are striving for, please (1) wait at least 48 hours until after I have returned your assignment to you and (2) see me during office hours so that we can discuss strategies for improvement on future assignments. Please note that I will not discuss grades via email.

UBC courses are graded on a percentage basis. Corresponding letter grades are assigned automatically by the Registrar's Office. Please note the Faculty of Arts grading guidelines:

- **"A" (80 - 100 percent):** "exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking, good organization, capacity to analyze and synthesize, superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations, evidence of extensive knowledge base."
- **"B" grade (68 - 79 percent):** "competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of relevant issues, evidence of familiarity with the literature."
- **"C" (55 - 67 percent) or "D" (50 - 54 percent):** "adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter, ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material, acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking in style and vigour."
- **"F" (0 - 49 percent):** "inadequate performance: little or no evidence of the subject matter, weakness in critical and analytic skills, limited or irrelevant use of the literature."

Feedback: I aim to make this class interactive and informative. In addition to a course evaluation at the end of term, you will be given the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback and suggestions for me to improve the class after the first few weeks of the course. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional suggestions for improvement at any other point during the term. Finally, to demonstrate that you have read the course syllabus (and for your first participation grade) please find a news article, published within the last year, that relates to health and email me a link to the article with the subject line "SOC1 479 Health News" by 4:59pm on Tuesday, January 8.