Mondays, 6:45-8:25pm
Room 509 Silver
Professor Tod Mijanovich
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(South end of 2nd floor, through the door just beyond the Wagner Works Café)
Office hours: Mondays, 4-6pm (but let me know you’re coming) or by appointment
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COURSE SYLLABUS

This introductory course in the Health Policy and Management Program is designed to familiarize students with some basic concepts and ideas concerning the distribution of health and illness in society, the organization of the health care system, and the relationship of one to the other. We shall discuss and debate definitions of health and illness, tools for their assessment, and the historical context for developments in public health and medicine. We shall also examine the characteristics of the health care system at the local, state and federal levels in the United States as well as in other wealthy nations with systems of universal coverage.

Students should come to class prepared to participate in the discussion of major themes related to urban health and society, the social geography and distribution of disease, and the policy environment that influences access to public health and health care services.

BOOKS AND READINGS

Three textbooks are required. They are available at NYU’s Professional bookstore. Specified chapters or articles from these texts are required each week. The articles in the book edited by Conrad provide a sociological view and critique of health and health care delivery. The chapters in the book edited by Kovner describe the organization of the health care delivery system in the United States. The articles and chapters incorporated in the reader edited by Lee and Estes provide insight into health politics and policy. Together, these three books provide students with a strong foundation for future studies and health care careers.
Additional required readings will be posted on Blackboard. I may also revise the syllabus somewhat during the semester, in response to the ongoing class discussion. I’ll announce and post any changes well in advance.

REQUIRED BOOKS AND OTHER REQUIRED READINGS


Other required readings will be made available on Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

I encourage students to browse recent issues of well-respected journals such as *American Journal of Public Health*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and *Health Affairs*. The list of relevant web sites at the end of the Kovner book (Appendix C) may also be helpful.

CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

A. INTRODUCTION

I. Health, Disease and Community – January 25
   - Discussion of course readings and class requirements.
   - Definitions of health and illness. What does it mean to speak of the “social production of disease?”
   - How are health status and health care related?
   - How does individual health relate to community health?

   *The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*

   *The Nation's Health*
   2. Bruce Link and Jo Phelan, “McKeown and the Idea that Social Conditions Are Fundamental Causes of Disease,” pgs. 73-78.

B. DISTRIBUTION OF HEALTH AND DISEASE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEMS
II. Introduction to Epidemiological Measures and Methods – February 1

- Descriptive vs. analytic methods.
- Social factors and disease
- How do we measure and assess health status?

Health Care Delivery in the United States

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives
2. Phil Brown. “Popular Epidemiology: Community Response to Toxic Waste-Induced Disease,” pgs. 70-78.

Blackboard

The Nation’s Health

III. The Uneven Distribution of Disease – February 8

- How do such factors as age, gender, race, poverty, occupation and lifestyle relate to morbidity and mortality?
- Are these relationships consistent across nations?

Reminder: First Blackboard assignment due

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The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

The Nation’s Health

February 15, President’s Day, no class
IV. Public Health, Medicine and Resource Allocation – February 22

- Achievements in public health
- Public health versus medicine
- Ethics of resource allocation
- Public Health Infrastructure

*The Nation’s Health*


*Health Care Delivery in the United States*

5. Laura C. Leviton and Scott D. Rhodes, “Public Health: Policy, Practice, and Perceptions,” pgs. 84-124

*The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*


Blackboard


C. HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATION, FINANCING AND WORKFORCE ISSUES

V. A Comparative and Historical Overview of the U.S. Health Care System – March 1

- History, trends, and characteristics
- What are the social, medical, and technological factors that have led to the health care system as we know it today?
- How does the US system compare to that of other developed nations? Developing nations?
- What is the role of government in the U.S. healthcare system? How does this differ from other countries?

Reminder: Paper 1 Due

*Health Care Delivery in the United States*

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

Blackboard

VI. Organization of the health care delivery system: hospitals, ambulatory care, and resource allocation issues - March 8
- How are hospitals organized and governed?
- How has role of the hospitals changed over time?
- How are ambulatory services organized and provided?
- How and why has the delivery of ambulatory care changed in recent years?

Reminder: Second Blackboard assignment due

Health Care Delivery in the United States

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

March 15, Spring Break, no class

VII. Commercialization of U.S. Medicine: Focus on Pharmaceuticals – March 22
- What are the factors that have spurred the growth in the pharmaceutical industry?
- How has public policy responded to the growth in pharmaceuticals and new technologies?
- What conflicts of interest have emerged with the commercialization of U.S. Medicine?

Health Care Delivery in the United States

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

The Nation’s Health
Blackboard


VIII. Financing, Cost Containment and Managed Care – March 29

- Methods and mechanisms for financing health care
- Efforts at cost containment
- Strengths and weaknesses of managed care
- Alternative mechanisms for financing healthcare.

*Health Care Delivery in the United States*


*The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*


*The Nation’s Health*


IX. Health Care Personnel: Physicians, Nurses, and Allied Professionals – April 5

- Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of doctors and other health care occupations
- Physicians as a dominant profession
- Licensure and medical monopoly
- Role of medical education
- Historical and emerging roles for doctors, nurses, and other providers

Reminder: Third Blackboard assignment due

*Health Care Delivery in the United States*


*The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*

2. Peter Conrad and Joseph W. Schneider. “Professionalization, Monopoly and the Structure of
Medical Practice,” pgs. 194-199.

D. HEALTH CARE DEMANDS, NEEDS AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

X. The Role of the Patient – April 12
• Issues of patient compliance.
• The relationship of patients, physicians, and the health care system.
• Information and consumer issues.

Health Care Delivery in the United States

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

Blackboard

XI. Issues of access and equity – April 19
• Barriers to care.
• The crisis in health insurance and the problem of the uninsured.
• Comparisons with other nations in regard to access and insurance coverage

Health Care Delivery in the United States

The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives

The Nation’s Health
XII. Impact of Changing Health Care Needs on the Health Care System – April 28

- The need for long-term care and alternative modes of delivery
- Chronic illness, aging and HIV and AIDS

*Health Care Delivery in the United States*

*The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*

*The Nation’s Health*
6. Introductions to Part VII and to Chapter 11, pgs. 545-552

XIII. Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance – May 3

- How do we measure and monitor the quality of health care services?
- How do we assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of care?
- What are the ethical issues in the quality of health care delivery?

Reminder: Fourth and final blackboard assignment due

*Health Care Delivery in the United States*

*The Nation’s Health*
3. Introduction to Chapter 9, pgs. 439-444.

May 12: Paper 2 Due
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to attending and participating in classes, students must submit two papers and three exercises/essays in response to specific questions. These requirements are described below and the actual assignments are posted on Blackboard.

Course grades will be calculated as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Final Grade</th>
<th>Date(s) Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper I</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>March 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper II</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>May 12</td>
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<td>Exercises/Essays</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>3 of: Feb 8, Mar 8, Apr 5, May 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Paper I** – Students must prepare a memo of no more than 3 pages concerning trends in contraceptive use provided by the National Center for Health Statistics. The assignment will allow students to demonstrate their ability to understand, interpret, and discuss quantitative data. Class readings will also be useful in preparing this memo.

**Paper II** - This paper will require a thoughtful, critical, and well-organized discussion of a provocative concept in Community Health and Medical Care. Rather than a research paper, this paper will provide students the opportunity to reflect upon the course materials. The paper should be 5-7 pages in length and students should present a carefully organized discussion, with well-backed opinions and ideas. Material should be footnoted to reflect synthesis of key course readings. References to course materials are required.

**Exercises/Essays** – Each student must answer three of the four questions (posted under “assignments” on Blackboard); the response should be in the form of a brief, one-page essay. These essays should be based on class readings, relevant data and ideas from popular media, journals or websites, and/or your own experiences. You should take the time to create a thoughtful and well-written response. You are also asked to respond to at least one other student’s essay on three of the four questions.

**Class Participation** - Classroom discussion and debate are essential to this course. Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss the assigned readings. Students are encouraged to approach the material in a thoughtful and critical manner.