SOC 586/686: Health and Inequality
Portland State University
Course Information Sheet
Winter 2013

Section(s): 001; Thu 2:00 – 4:50pm; Rm. CH 265
Professor: Dr. Ginny Garcia-Alexander
Office: CH 217S
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Email: ginny.garciaalexander@pdx.edu
Office Hours: MWR 1:00-2:00pm

Course Description and Objectives
This course provides an overview of current issues in health and inequality including the impact of social class and race on health; the social causes and consequences of health disparities; and current public policy debates about reducing disparities.

Required Readings

Textbooks:


Course Structure
Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to class. The class will begin with a brief introduction to the subject matter. Each student will be required to prepare weekly comment papers reflecting on one or more of the assigned readings, which will be due at the beginning of class. Papers should be 2-4 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced. Comment papers must incorporate supplementary readings related to the weekly topic. Students will use information from comment papers for weekly discussions.

Criteria for Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>(%) of Total</th>
<th>Grading Scheme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation/Discussion</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>A = 90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comment Papers</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>B = 80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (Abstract-5%, Draft-10%, Final Paper- 30%)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>C = 70-79</td>
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<td>D = 60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>F = 59 or below</td>
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Comment Papers
Students are required to write weekly comment papers that provide a brief overview and critique of the assigned readings. These should go beyond the scope of the readings and incorporate additional materials rather than simply summarize the assigned readings. Papers should be 2-4 pages in length and provide a critique/analysis of the subject matter. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, and must be turned in by the beginning of class.

Final/Research Paper
Each student must submit a 15-20 page research paper on a topic of their choice related to inequalities in health. Papers may be in the form of original empirical research or an in-depth review of the literature and should conform to the appropriate disciplinary guidelines (APA, ASA, MLA). Students should decide on their topics and turn in:

- **Abstract (5%)**: Thu, Jan 31
- **Draft (10%)**: Thu, Feb 28
- **Final Paper (30%)**: Mon, March 18 at 5pm

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend each class and participate in discussions.

Students with Disabilities
(DRC) coordinates support services, accommodations, and equipment for students with disabilities. DS works to ensure equal access to all University programs, services, and activities for students with disabilities. DS certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for the implementation of accommodations. The DRC Director also assists students in the informal resolution of complaints. More information is available on their website: [http://www.drc.pdx.edu](http://www.drc.pdx.edu)

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty
It is expected that the students will maintain the highest level of academic integrity while participating in this class. As per university guidelines, “Scholastic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act.

Any of the above mentioned violations will result in the appropriate disciplinary penalties as outlined by University Rules and Regulations including an "F" in the class, suspension, and/or expulsion.
Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 7): Introduction to Inequality
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *The Spirit Level*, Ch. 1-3

Week 2 (Jan 14): The Costs of Inequality
  ➢ Readings – Textbook, *The Spirit Level*, Ch. 4-7

Week 3 (Jan 21): The Costs of Inequality
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *The Spirit Level*, Ch. 8-11

Week 4 (Jan 28): Changing Society
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *The Spirit Level*, Ch. 12-16
  ➢ **Thu, Jan 31:** Abstracts due at beginning of class

Week 5 (Feb 4): Historical and Political Background: Health Disparities
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 1-5

Week 6 (Feb 11): Social Determinants of Health – Race and Ethnicity
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 6-8, 10-11

Week 7 (Feb 18): Understanding Disparities
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 12-16

Week 8 (Feb 25): Understanding Disparities
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 18-22
  ➢ **Thu, Feb 28:** Drafts due at beginning of class

Week 9 (Mar 4): Understanding Disparities
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 23-27

Week 10 (Mar 11): Disparities in Care
  ➢ Readings – Textbook: *Race, Ethnicity, and Health*, Ch. 29-32, 34, 36
  ➢ **Final Papers due Monday, March 18 at 5pm**