SOC 389: Race, Culture, and Health (Sections 8 and 10)

Spring 2022
Instructor: Apoorva Ghosh, Provost’s Postdoctoral Fellow in Sociology
Class location: Callaway C101
Class times: Tu/Thu 1:00-2:15, 4:00-4:15
Office Hours: By appointment.
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This course uses a sociological perspective to develop an intersectional and cross-cultural understanding of health, illness, treatments, and therapies. The intent is to deepen your understanding of the scientific and sociocultural foundations of conventional and unconventional healing systems. We’ll also understand the various approaches to preventing illness, healing, and maintenance of well-being. We’ll study how the alternative approaches to health care complement the biomedical model resulting in the cross-cultural avenues of diagnosis, treatment, and acceptance of health care. You will become familiar with:

- the evolution of medical practices in various racial and ethnic populations;
- the underlying concepts, ideas, principles, and therapeutic practices surrounding these cultural healing systems; and
- the impact that ethnic beliefs and culture have on health promotion, the prevention of health problems, and the treatment of disease.

We’ll explore how the cultural values of various racial and ethnic populations impact the extant understanding of health & illness and the utilization of health care services.

Learning outcomes

After completing the course, you should be able to:

- explain how historical factors, behaviors, and belief systems within particular racial/ethnic cultures influence a person’s views on health, disease, treatments, and health care.
☐ describe and explain major ethno-cultural concepts and principles governing several healing approaches or alternative healing systems.
☐ define and explain common terms related to the various alternative healing systems discussed in this class.
☐ list and explain some of the emotional, spiritual, psychological, physical, geographical, and behavioral factors influencing health, the manifestation of illnesses, and the therapeutic techniques used in various cultural healing systems.
☐ explain various approaches practitioners use to diagnose and treat illnesses within their particular medical system.

Course material:

Lectures, readings listed in the lesson plan, handouts (e.g., lecture slides), and other supplementary material (such as, videos) given time-to-time constitute course material.

Class participation

Class participation, or simply participation, will be assessed based on your responses to participation activities during course meetings. You will be graded on participation every week. On the first week of the course, you’ll take a syllabus quiz as one of the participation activities.

Participation points will be assessed for every course meeting. You will get points out of 10 every week for participation. Cumulatively, these points will carry 30 percent of your course grade.

Participation activities

On lecture weeks, participation activities will involve real-time responses to exercises given in class. Typically, there will be four to six exercises per week. Every exercise will count toward participation grade.

We’ll have seminars on health disparities in specific racial/ethnic populations on several weeks of the course. These seminars will also require prior reading and be carried out through active discussions in the class. On seminar weeks, your participation will be graded based on your overall contribution to discussions in class and any assigned activity during class.

Assignments

Weekly writing tasks (essays and Canvas discussions) will carry 60 percent your course grade.
Lecture weeks

A 2-page essay will be due on the Saturday at 11:59 pm of most of the lecture weeks. You’ll find the details of these assignments on Canvas. Essays should be written in 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double- or single-spaced, and with 1-inch margins on all sides. For citing your sources, you should use an MLA referencing style and may use an extra page for references. Essays should be submitted as MS-Word documents. Please follow these formatting guidelines. Submissions violating them may not be assessed for grading.

Seminar weeks

For seminar weeks, your assignment will be to do a peer group discussion on Canvas prior to the week based on the readings for the week. You will write an initial post based on a given prompt, react to your peer’s post (reaction post), and respond to any question asked by your peer (response post). Your initial post must demonstrate your understanding of the assigned readings and how well you've situated them while responding to the prompt.

Group leading for special topic seminars

This will carry 10 percent of your course grade. You will sign up for seminar leadership in class on one of the last lecture weeks. We’ll conduct these seminars by splitting the class into small groups and each seminar leader will lead a group with their discussion question. Seminar leaders must email me their discussion question based on the seminar readings for my review by the preceding Saturday of their seminar class. Each seminar leader will summarize the discussions and conclusions of the group to the class.

Late submissions

Late submissions will NOT be accepted. This policy applies to all writing tasks, class participation exercises, and submission of discussion questions.

Electronic submissions

All works must be submitted electronically. Please don’t turn in any paper copies. We want to save trees as well as accept the indispensability of electronic devices in our work lives.
Academic integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of this course. This course follows the strictest standards for academic integrity and uses provisions for responding to instances of academic misconduct. For example, your writing assignments will be checked for originality using detection tools, such as Turnitin, and strict actions will be taken if the content is found plagiarized.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt according to Emory College Honor Code available here: http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html. Per the college policy, violating academic integrity may result in a failing grade in the course, which will appear on the student’s permanent transcript.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, collusion altering graded examinations (take-home or in-class) for additional credit, having another person writing or submitting the work for you, or facilitating academic dishonesty or as further specified in this policy or other campus regulations. Below are some of the definitions[1]:

**Cheating** is the unauthorized use of information in any academic exercise, or other attempt to obtain credit for work or a more positive academic evaluation of work through deception or dishonesty. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: copying from others during an examination; sharing answers for a take-home examination without permission; using notes without permission during an examination; using notes stored on an electronic device without permission during an examination; using an electronic device to obtain information during an exam without permission; taking an examination for another student; asking or allowing another person to take an examination for you; tampering with an examination after it has been corrected, then returning it for more credit than deserved; submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting the second instructor; preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book before an examination; falsifying laboratory, or other research, data or using another person’s data without proper attribution; allowing others to do the research and writing of an assigned paper (for example, using a commercial term paper service or downloading a paper from the internet); and working with another person on a project that is specified as an individual project.

**Collusion** is when any student knowingly or intentionally helps another student to perform any of the above acts of cheating or plagiarism. Students who collude are subject to discipline for academic dishonesty. No distinction is made between those who cheat or plagiarize and those who willingly facilitate cheating or plagiarism.

**Plagiarism** refers to the use of another’s ideas or words without proper attribution, or credit. This includes, but is not limited to: copying from the writings or works of others into one's academic assignment without attribution, or submitting such work as if it were one's own; using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment; or paraphrasing the ideas of another without proper attribution. Credit must be given: for every direct quotation; when a work is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part (even if only brief passages), in your own words; and for information which is not common knowledge. The requirement to give credit applies to published sources, information obtained from electronic searches and unpublished sources.
Academic Intellectual Property

According to Emory University's Intellectual Property Policy, all course materials have copyright and should not be reproduced or distributed online or otherwise.

LESSON PLAN: ASSIGNED READINGS

The readings for lecture days must be read before class.

LECTURE WEEKS

Week 1: Introduction to Race, Culture, and Health

January 11: Course Syllabus


Week 2: Systems of Healing and Cultural Competence in Health Care


Week 3: Health Decisions: Interactions between the Biomedical System of Care and the Patient Worldview


Week 4: The Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)


Week 5: How Religion Influences Health?


Week 6: Racially and Culturally Competent Communication in Healthcare


February 17: Center for the Study of Social Policy. Integrating the Promotores Model to Strengthen Community Partnerships (2019)

Week 7: COVID-19 and the Racial Health Disparities in the US (February 22 and 24)

TBD

SEMINAR WEEK

*Health Disparities in Specific Populations*

Week 8: Hispanic and Latinx Populations (March 1 and 3)


**Week 9: Spring Recess**

No class on March 8 and 10

**LECTURE WEEK**

**Week 10: The Culture of Health Beyond Race & Ethnicity (March 15 & 17)**


**SEMINAR WEEKS**

*Health Disparities in Specific Populations*

**Week 12: Native Americans and Alaskan Natives (March 22 & 24)**


**Week 13: Blacks and African Americans (March 29 & 31)**


**Week 14: Asian Americans (April 5 & 7)**


**Week 15: White/ European Mediterranean Populations (April 12 & 14)**


**LECTURE WEEK**

**Week 16: Conclusion: How to reduce healthcare disparities? (April 19 & 21)**
