Course Subject and Objectives:

This course entertains two broad questions within which numerous models, theories, and empirical studies are employed. First, what is the nature and burden of mental illnesses and the benefits of mental health? Second, what are the causes of mental illnesses and mental health? This course employs a bio–psycho–social causal model of health. It therefore examines mental health and illness in terms of their proximal (biological), medial (psychological), and the distal (sociological) causes. This course is intended to train students to be theoretically–driven, interdisciplinary scholars of ‘public’ mental health.

Requirements:

(1) Two in class reviews (40% of grade). You will see I have assigned the graduate students to specific topics to review and based on your interests and or disciplines. I have chosen the first topic but you get to choose from any of the remaining weeks after October 10th your chapter or article you will review. Think of this assignment as a formal presentation (yes, you can and should prepare slides to provide as handouts and other aids for your presentation) and an opportunity to create thorough notes of important empirical articles to be used later (e.g., by Sociology students taking prelims). My evaluation will be based on the thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and the clarity with which you present and explain the concepts, studies or perspectives in the chapters I have assigned or, as may be the case, an article I have assigned. In addition to my evaluation, I will ask our two advanced undergraduate students in our seminar to evaluate your review in terms of the degree to which your presentation helped them to better understand that chapter or article.

(2) Paper (60% of grade). The objective of the research paper is to allow you to investigate a topic for your own rationale. I’m assuming you are enrolled in this graduate seminar because you already have a specific interest in some area having to do with mental illness or mental health. Use this seminar to write a paper that expands upon the interests that brought you to this seminar. I do not want you to recycle papers done for previous seminars UNLESS you change that paper substantially (you must alert me to the fact that you plan to work from another paper already graded in another course if that is your plan).

Final Papers due (email only in emergency) are due no later than 5pm on December 12th.


Schedule

Sept. 5-12: Mental Illness: Where are we today and how did we get here?


Sept. 17-19: Mental Illness and Psychiatric Epidemiology: Progress and Pitfalls

(1) Ch. 2 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

(2) Ch. 3 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

(3) Ch. 5 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

Sept. 24-26: The Dual Continua Model

(1) Ch. 4 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*


Oct. 1-3, and 10th: Sociological Approaches to Mental Illness

(1) Ch. 7 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*
   a. Craig review pp. 127-143.

   a. Chantele review pp. 399-408.

(3) Ch. 20 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*
   a. Emily review pp. 409-418.
   b. Joni review pp. 419-430.
Oct. 15-17: The Sociological Stress Processes and Mental Illness
(1) Ch. 9 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*
(3) Ch. 10 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

Oct. 22-24: Stressors and Social Psychological Processes

Oct. 29-31: Social Stratification and Mental Health and Well-Being

Nov. 5-7: The Paradox of Race and Mental Health

Nov. 12 and 19: Gender and Mental Health
*Note*: There is no class on Nov. 14 as I agreed to speak at the honors college special event at Mississippi State.

(2) Ch. 15 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

Nov. 26-Dec. 3  Marriage and Work

(1) Ch. 11 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*

(2) Ch. 16 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems.*


Dec. 5-10: Social Connection, Social Integration and Mental Health


