

SOC 532: Perspectives on Mental Health
Fall Semester 2018

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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.

Text: Teresa L. Scheid and Eric R. Wright, Editors. 2016. *A Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems*, 3rd Ed., New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schedule

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

- (1) Chs. 1 and 8 from E. Fuller Torrey, 2008. *The Insanity Offense*.
- (2) Whitaker, Robert (2005). Anatomy of an Epidemic: Psychiatric Drugs and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness in America. *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry*, 7(1), 23-35.
- (3) Rosenhan, D. L. (1973). On being sane in insane places. *Science*, 179(4070), 250-258.
- (4) "Americanization of Mental Illness" by Ethan Watters at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psyche-t.html>

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*.
- (2) Keyes, Corey L. M., Satvinder S. Dhingra, and Eduardo J. Simoes. 2010. "Change in Level of Positive Mental Health as a Predictor of Future Risk of Mental Illness." *American Journal of Public Health*. 100:2366-2371.
- (3) Fledderus, Martine, Ernst T. Bohlmeijer, Filip Smit, and Gerben J. Westerhof. 2010. "Mental Health Promotion as a New Goal in Public Mental Health Care: A Randomized Controlled Trial of an Intervention Enhancing Psychological Flexibility" *American Journal of Public Health* 100:2372-2378.

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.
- (2) Ch. 19 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems*.
 - 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*.
 - (2) Turner, R. Jay, Blair Wheaton, and Donald A. Lloyd. 1995. "The Epidemiology of Social Stress." *American Sociological Review* 64:104-125.
 - (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
- (1) Turner, R. Jay and William R. Avison. 1992. "Innovations in the Measurement of Life Stress: Crisis Theory and the Significance of Event Resolution." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 33:36-50.
 - (2) Crum, A. J., Salovy, P., & Achor, S. (2013). "Rethinking Stress: The Role of Mindsets in Determining the Stress Response." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 104(4):716-733.
 - (3) Keyes, Corey L. M. and Carol D. Ryff. 2000. "Subjective Change and Mental Health: A Self-Concept Theory." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63(3): 264-279.
- Oct. 29-31: Social Stratification and Mental Health and Well-Being
- (1) Sapolsky, Robert M. 2005. "The Influence of Social Hierarchy on Primate Health." *Science* 308:648-652.
 - (2) Wilkinson, R. 2006. Chapter 4. "Health and Inequality." From "The Impact of Inequality: How To Make Sick Societies Healthier."
 - (3) Ch. 12 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems*.
- Nov. 5-7: The Paradox of Race and Mental Health
- (1) Ch. 14 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems*.
 - (2) James S. Jackson, Katherine M. Knight, and Jane A. Rafferty. 2010. "Race and Unhealthy Behaviors: Chronic Stress, the HPA Axis, and Physical and Mental Health Disparities Over the Life Course." *American Journal of Public Health* 100:933-939.
 - (3) Keyes, Corey L. M. 2009. "The Black-White Paradox in Health: Flourishing in the Face of Inequality" *Journal of Personality* 77:1677-1706.
- 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.

- (1) Ch. 13 in *The Handbook for the Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and Systems*.
- (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*.
- (3) Thoits, Peggy A. 1983. "Multiple Identities and Psychological Well-Being: A Reformulation and Test of the Social Isolation Hypothesis." *American Sociological Review* 48(2):174-187.
- (4) Simon, Robin W. 1997. "The Meanings Individuals Attach to Role Identities and Their Implications for Mental Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 38:256-274.

Dec. 5-10:

Social Connection, Social Integration and Mental Health

- (1) Carstensen, Laura L., James J. Gross, and H. H. Fung 1997. "The Social Context of Emotional Experience." Pp. 325-352 in *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, edited by K. Warner Schaie and M. Powell Lawton. New York: Springer.
- (2) Ellison, Christopher G. 1995. "Race, Religious Involvement and Depressive Symptomatology in a Southeastern U. S. Community." *Social Science and Medicine* 40:1561-1572.
- (3) Thoits, Peggy A. and L. N. Hewitt. 2001. "Volunteer Work and Well-Being." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 42:115-131.
- (4) Hawkley, L. C. and J. T. Cacioppo. 2010. "Loneliness Matters: A Theoretical and Empirical Review of Consequences and Mechanisms." *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* 40:218-227