

SOCIOLOGY 207.10: Health Justice
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY, FALL 2022
Dr. Riley Olstead

Contact Info:

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays 2:15 PM -3:30 PM

Thursdays 12:45 PM -2:00 PM

Class Times:

Tuesdays 3:45 PM – 5 PM

Thursdays 2:15 PM -3:30 PM

Classroom: MUL 3026

In this class, students will approach the study of human health from an intersectional, critical sociological perspective that emphasizes the links between social, political, economic and environmental justice. After establishing a clear understanding of the dominant biomedical approach, the class will in its first step, engage with a social determinants of health approach as a framework for learning about and exploring links between our biologic systems and the profound injustices of our political and economic systems. Yet this is not where we will rest. As our second step, we will push even further to learn about decolonizing health. In this, we will consider the necessity—not just of addressing ‘the social and political inequalities’ of our systems, or actualizing ‘health justice’ as such— but of an ontological shift in which we come to regard our biological selves as fundamental expressions of vital earth systems. Students should note that while the curriculum relies heavily on Indigenous histories, knowledge, epistemologies and ontologies, at present this course is taught by a settler.

University and Classroom Policies

Plagiarism: Familiarize yourself with the university plagiarism policies and punishments. You are responsible for understanding them and abiding by them. The StFX library has links, tutorials, and definitions at this site: <http://sites.stfx.ca/library/plagiarism>. The StFX calendar outlines the procedures concerning and penalties for committing plagiarism.

StFX Equity Policy: Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space—both face-to-face and online—that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. These values and practices are in accord with the StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy which can be found at <http://www.mystfx.ca/campus/stu-serv/equity/>. Please feel free to talk to me about your questions or concerns about equity in our classroom or in the StFX community

in general. If I cannot answer your questions or help you address your concerns, I encourage you to talk to the Chair/Coordinator of the Department/Program or the Human Rights and Equity Advisor.

Electronics: Although electronic technologies have the potential to enhance learning in certain contexts, recent studies suggest that the use of personal computers and other electronic devices can be detrimental to students' learning. See:

<https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/technology-and-student-distraction>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/laptop-use-lowers-student-grades-experiment-shows-1.1401860>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/04/28/why-students-using-laptops-learn-less-in-class-even-when-they-really-are-taking-notes/>.

For this reason, phones and computers should be turned off and away while class is being held. Some students genuinely require supportive technologies, for instance, a computer to take notes (where handwriting notes is not an option)—in such instances, students should let me know.

Course grades and lecture policy: I do not use PowerPoint in class and do not post/provide my lectures to students. Students who miss classes are responsible to get missed lecture notes from another student in the class. I also, do not discuss or provide grades over email.

Students Services

Please refer to the STFX Academic Calendar for a full description of student services and supports. Students can drop a course online, using Banner. Please refer to the calendar of events in order to ensure you process your course drop before the deadline.

Required Reading: Texts available at Curious Cat Café on Main Street

1. Marya, R. and Raj Patel. (2020) *Inflamed: Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux: New York, NY.
2. Duran, E. (2006). *Healing the soul wound: Counseling with American Indians and other native peoples*. Teachers College Press.
3. Online links have been made available throughout this outline.

Evaluation:

- A. Weekly Reflections: 60% Due each week as indicated in the syllabus
- B. Final Exam: 40%

Long Description of Assignments:

- A. **6 Weekly Reflections: (Worth /10 each): Due each week as indicated throughout the syllabus.**

Under no circumstances will late submissions be accepted for reflections.

Suggested length: Approx. 2 typed double-spaced pages per week

In accordance with the schedule set out in the syllabus below, students are required to submit a reflection which considers the theme examined during the week, indicated. Resources or information external to the course should not be the primary focus.

Here's how to approach a reflection:

Using all the resources examined during the select week—the readings assigned, lecture material, guest speaker, class discussion, audio/video etc..., respond to the following:

1. Carefully explain the main message from the week.
2. Do you feel you understand the issue clearly? If so, comment on whether this issue is new to you, or if some aspect of it is new? If you do not fully understand the issue, what aspect is unclear? Please be careful to respond to this question in a deep way—casual or seemingly superficial reflections will not garner positive results. More specifically, simply saying you don't understand something is not useful here if you have not demonstrated effort in working with an idea or topic.
3. Include any further questions, frustrations, thoughts or comments you have about the topic.

Note: Spelling, grammar, word choice, *depth of contemplation* and tone matter are very important in my assessment of your submission. Do not simply provide superficial comments, for these will only result in a marginal score. Be thoughtful, careful and consider the topics and ideas rigorously. The goal of this assignment is to engage meaningfully, and richly with a complex, multifaceted health issue. Formal sourcing of resources is unnecessary-however students must be clear about where they are getting their support from. Students can do this by simply indicating the title of the resource, the theorist, or refer to a lecture, discussion etc..

B. Final Exam (40%) Date TBA by STFX on Sept. 29th

Schedule of Weekly Readings, Tests and Assignments

Week 1: Introductions Sep. 6th and 8th

Approaching Health Problems as Social Issues

Chapter 1: "Imagining health problems as social issues"

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2190/HS.39.3.a>

Week 2: Sep. 13th and 15th

The History of Public Health and Canadian Health Care

- Canadian Dimension article on birth of Canadian medicare:
<https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/the-birth-of-medicare>
- Schafer, A. "Waiting for Romanow: Canadian Values Under Fire". Available at:

https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/philosophy/ethics/media/Waiting_for_Romanow.pdf

Week 3: Sep. 20th and Sep. 22nd
The Immune system

- Introduction and “Chapter 1”, “Immune System” of *Inflamed*.

Week 4: Sep. 27th and Sep. 29th
Cancer

- Brym, R. “The social bases of cancer” :
<https://archive.org/details/sociologyaslifeo0000brym/page/n5/mode/2up>
- Film: *Pink Ribbon, Inc.* (1.37 hrs)

Reflection #1: Due Thursday Oct. 6th (Cancer)

Week 5: Oct. 4th and 6th
Circulatory Systems

- Chapter 2: *Inflamed*
- Salmon and the trees <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Un2yBgIAxYs> (Suzanne Simard 18.3 mins)

Hand in Reflection #1 Thursday Oct. 6th (Cancer)

Reflection #2: Due Thursday Oct. 13th (Circulatory Systems)

Week 6: Oct. 11th and 13th
Digestive Systems

- Chapter 3: *Inflamed*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukCFmh2UsYA> (44 mins The Nature of Things: It takes guts)

Hand in Reflection #2 Thursday Oct. 13th (Circulatory Systems)

Reflection #3 Due Thursday Oct. 20th (Digestive Systems)

Week 7: Oct. 18th and 20th
Respiratory Systems

- Chapter 4: *Inflamed*

Hand in Reflection #3 Thursday Oct. 20th (Digestive Systems)

Week 8: Oct. 25th and 27th
Trauma and the Soul Wound

- Chapters 1-5 of *Healing the Soul Wound*
- Bessel Van Der Kolk on Trauma, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_YApSkqsxM

Reflection #4 Due Thursday Nov. 3rd (Trauma and the Soul Wound)

Week 9: Nov. 1st and 3rd

Intergenerational Trauma and The Spirit of Addiction

- Chapters 6-10 of *Healing the Soul Wound*
- Dr. Resmaa Menakem, *On Being* Podcast

Hand in Reflection #4 Thursday Nov. 3rd (Trauma and the Soul Wound)

Reflection #5 Due Thursday Nov. 17th (Resmaa Menakem Podcast)

Week 10: Nov. 8th and 10th READING BREAK

Week 11: Nov. 15th and 17th

Reproductive Systems

- Chapter 5: *Inflamed*

Hand in Reflection #5 Thursday Nov. 17th (Resmaa Menakem Podcast)

Reflection #6 Due Thursday Nov. 24th (Nervous Systems)

Week 12: Nov. 22nd and 24th

Nervous Systems

- Chapter 8: *Inflamed*
- Film: *Fantastic Fungi* (1.20 min)

Hand in Reflection #6 Thursday Nov. 24th (Nervous Systems)

Week 13: Nov. 29th and Dec. 1st

Deep Medicine

- Last chapter : *Inflamed*

Week 14: Dec. 6th

Preparation for final exam (40%)