

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

SOC 2490-01: Sociology of Medicine
Fall 2020 Course Syllabus
3 credit hours

Time	MWF 10-10:50am
Location	MCG 260
Instructor	Ajlina Karamehic-Muratovic, PhD
Office	Morrissey Hall, room 1903
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Office hours	MW 1-2pm VIRTUAL only and by appointment

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the health field from a socio-cultural perspective. The course will examine social factors that influence health and illness, and the role they play in today's society. Students will also learn how and why social structure influences the distribution of health and illness and how the American health care system works. Topics to be covered include introduction to medical sociology, professional socialization, the American health care system, cross cultural meaning of health and illness, doctor-patient interaction, health promotion, alternative medical care, and health care technology. No background in medicine or in sociology is required – the course will benefit both sociology majors and students interested in health-related fields.

Objectives

1. Develop a better understanding of the meaning of health and illness
2. Understand the role of sociological processes in health, illness and medicine
3. Become familiar with recent research in medical sociology
4. Understand the relationship between demographic factors and health and illness
5. Develop an understanding of health disparities and why they exist
6. Understand the American health care system

Required Text

*Weiss, G. L & Copelton, L. E. (2021). *The Sociology of Health, Healing, and Illness*, 10th edition. Routledge.

*9th edition will do too

Additional readings assigned for certain class periods will be posted on Blackboard and students will be able to print or save them on own computer.

Guidelines

1. **Mandatory Statement on Face Masks (Fall 2020)**- The University's *Interim Policy on Face Masks* governs all students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors in all University-owned, leased, or operated facilities. All persons physically present in any such University facility associated with this course shall comply fully with this policy at all times. Masks must be worn before entry to

all such University facilities (as well as outdoors on all University property when six feet of distance is unpredictable or cannot be maintained).

Saint Louis University is committed to maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment. Individuals who are unable to wear a face mask due to medical reasons should contact the Office of Disability Services or Human Resources to initiate the accommodation process identified in the University's [ADA Policy](#). Inquires or concerns may also be directed to the [Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity](#). Notification to instructors of SLU-approved ADA accommodations should be made in writing prior to the first class session in any term (or as soon thereafter as possible).

As the instructor of this course, I shall comply fully with SLU's policy and all related ADA regulations.

Students who attempt to enter a classroom without wearing masks will be asked by the instructor to wear masks prior to entry. Students who remove their masks at any time during a class session will be asked by the instructor to resume wearing their masks.

Note: Accordingly, no consumption of any food will be allowed in class.

Students who do not comply with a request by a SLU instructor to wear a mask in accordance with the University's *Interim Policy on Face Masks* may be subject to disciplinary actions per the rules, regulations, and policies of Saint Louis University, including but not limited to the *Student Handbook*. Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including any of the following:

- dismissal from the course(s)
- removal from campus housing (if applicable)
- dismissal from the University
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To immediately protect the health and well-being of all students, instructors, and staff, instructors reserve the right to cancel or terminate any class session at which any student fails to comply with faculty or staff request to wear a mask in accordance with University policy.

Students are strongly encouraged to identify to their instructor any student or instructor not in compliance. Non-compliance may be anonymously reported via the SLU Integrity Hotline at 1-877-525-5669 (or confidentially via the Integrity Hotline's website at <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/slu>).

2. Attendance policy – Because class attendance is an integral part of this course, each student will be allowed **3** unexcused class absences, no questions asked. Assignment/s due on these days are still due as stated in the syllabus and will not be accepted late. Beyond these unexcused, no questions asked absences, every other absence *must* be excused by official and/or written documentation; otherwise **4** points will be taken off from the total points earned towards your class grade for each unexcused absence. There will be absolutely no exceptions. Please also see below (3. Attendance)

Legitimate conflicts and excuses require written documentation, and are limited to death or near-death instances in the immediate family, a student's illness that requires immediate doctor's care, a University sponsored event (not club sports) and regularly scheduled obligations. Excuses that

will NOT be considered include personal travel arrangements, non-University sponsored events, a conflicting appointment, a previous illness that interfered with your study time or an illness that does not prevent you from coming to an exam. Unexcused exam absences will be counted as zero in the calculation of your final grade.

3. Attendance - The health and well-being of SLU's students, staff, and faculty are critical concerns. Accordingly, the following University policy statements on in-person class attendance are designed to preserve and advance the collective health and well-being of our institutional constituencies.

1. Students who exhibit any [potential COVID symptoms](#) (those that cannot be attributed to some other medical condition the students are known to have, such as allergies, asthma, etc.) shall absent themselves from any in-person class attendance or in-person participation in any class-related activity until they have been evaluated by a qualified medical official. Students should contact the [University Student Health Center](#) for immediate assistance.
2. Students who exhibit any [potential COVID symptoms](#) (those that cannot be attributed to some other medical condition the students are known to have, such as allergies, asthma, etc.) but who feel well enough to a) attend the course synchronously in an online class session or b) participate in asynchronous online class activities, are expected to do so. Those who do not feel well enough to do so should absent themselves accordingly.
3. Students (whether exhibiting any of potential COVID symptoms or not, and regardless of how they feel) who are under either an isolation or quarantine directive issued by a qualified health official must absent themselves from all in-person course activity per the stipulations of the isolation or quarantine directive. They are expected to participate in synchronous or asynchronous online class activities as they feel able to do so, or absent themselves accordingly.
4. Students are responsible for notifying each instructor of an absence as far in advance as possible; when advance notification is not possible, students are responsible for notifying each instructor as soon after the absence as possible.
5. As a temporary amendment to the current [University Attendance Policy](#), all absences due to illness or an isolation/quarantine directive issued by a qualified health official shall be considered "Authorized" absences (effective August 2020 through May 2021).

Other attendance issues

How should a student report an absence?

If you must miss class, please contact your instructor by e-mail to inform them of your absence. Notification should be provided at least one hour before class, if possible.

How can a student who is unable to be present in class participate in class remotely?

Students who are unable to physically attend class but are well enough to participate remotely are expected to do so. If you are a student registered to take the class in-person but need to participate in class remotely, notify your course instructor or teaching assistant by e-mail at least **8 hours** before class begins. This class is being live-streamed on Zoom; the Zoom link is available on the course home page in Blackboard.

Will students who miss class be able to make up missed work?

Students will be able to make up a maximum of **2** missed assignments through completion of alternative assignments.

What happens if the course instructor is ill or quarantined?

If your course instructor has to quarantine but is well enough to teach, students will be notified by the instructor via email, and class will meet remotely on Zoom at the regularly scheduled time. The Zoom link is available on the course web page in Blackboard. If your course instructor becomes ill and is unable to continue teaching, an alternative instructor will teach the course for as long as necessary.

How many classes can a student miss and still meet the course learning outcomes?

If you miss more than **10-12** in-person class periods, it may be necessary for you to drop the course. Please contact your instructor to discuss whether it is still possible for you to fulfill the learning outcomes of the course. If you are unable to fulfill the course learning objectives due to extensive absences, it may be necessary to request a course extension (incomplete grade) or a course withdrawal. Please consult your course instructor and Academic Advisor for assistance.

If you need request permission to drop this course retroactively after August 30, 2020 (the last day to drop a course without a W), you will need to submit both [Form #40 Petition for Revision of Academic Record](#) and [Form #44 Academic Records Revision: Drop/Withdrawal from Course\(s\)](#) for approval. Please contact your Academic Advisor if you need assistance completing these forms.

4. Distance Education Etiquette (for students registered as online)

Your actions in distance education contexts are just as important as in on-ground, face-to-face educational contexts – and sometimes require additional attention and commitment, as some distance education technologies might be less familiar to us. Accordingly, all students are expected to follow the guidelines below:

Synchronous Video Contexts (Zoom, etc.)

1. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking. Remember to “un-mute” yourself just prior to speaking. Identify yourself when you begin speaking.
2. Expect a few seconds of delay in getting a response from the instructor or another class member to a question; wait before repeating your question or assuming it was not heard.
3. If possible, position your camera such that your video feed does not capture too much of your surroundings or other activity/sound from your home/location. Be conscious of posters, art, or other surroundings that others might find offensive or inappropriate for an educational context.
4. Use the “Raise Hand” and “Chat” (or similar) features of your video-conferencing tool. This limits verbal interruptions and the confusion generated when multiple people try to speak at once.

5. Just as in an on-ground, face-to-face class, limit side conversations, multi-tasking (on your computer or otherwise), and use of your cellphone.
6. Temporarily turn off your video feed and mute your microphone when engaged in any non-class conversation or activity.
7. Respect and be attentive to the diversity of your classmates and instructor. Before communicating, consider your message in the context of the class' diversity in race, ethnicity, religion, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, age, social class, marital status, geography, etc. Consider the diversity you can see or know – as well as that you cannot.
8. Remember that video-based class sessions (including chat transcripts) may be recorded and retrieved for later viewing.

5. Makeup and late policy - If your assignment is not given at the beginning of class on the day it is due, it will be considered late and will not be accepted. No late assignments will be accepted and no make-up exams will be given as a principle, unless the absence (or late hand in) is excused by official and/or written documentation. Let me reiterate again that if you decide to use the 3 unexcused, no questions asked absences, you still must hand in your assignment on the day it is due. In other words, *unless* the absence/s is/are excused by written documentation and/or a later due date negotiated with the instructor *prior* to the assignment due date, the assignment is considered late and will not be accepted.

If you are going to miss an exam, you must inform the instructor a week before the deadline. If you, however, miss an exam because of illness, death of a family member, or other emergency, you must inform the instructor (977-3691) within 48 hours of the class meeting that you miss. You also need to submit official documentation explaining your absence. In the officially excused cases, procedures necessary to substitute for the materials that you miss will be discussed and agreed upon on an individual basis.

6. Academic Integrity Policy – *Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The full University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost's Office website at: https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf.

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites.

7. Title IX – Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member

about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, **that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX Coordinator and share the basic facts of your experience.** This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX Coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

Anna Kratky is the Title IX Coordinator at Saint Louis University (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK or make an anonymous report through SLU's Integrity Hotline by calling 1-877-525-5669 or online at <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/slu>. To view SLU's policies, and for resources, please visit the following web addresses: <https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php> and <https://www.slu.edu/general-counsel>.

IMPORTANT UPDATE: SLU's Title IX Policy (formerly called the Sexual Misconduct Policy) has been significantly revised to adhere to a new federal law governing Title IX that was released on May 6, 2020. Please take a moment to review the new policy and information at the following web address: <https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php>. Please contact the Anna Kratky, the Title IX Coordinator, with any questions or concerns.

8. Student Success Center - In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, a one-stop shop, which assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

9. Basic Needs Security - Students in personal or academic distress and/or who may be specifically experiencing challenges such as securing food or difficulty navigating campus resources, and who believe this may affect their performance in the course, are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@slu.edu or 314-977-9378) for support. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so, as this will enable them to assist you with finding the resources you may need.

10. Disability Services Academic Accommodations - Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact Disability Services, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at Disability_services@slu.edu or by phone at 314.977.3484. Once approved, information about a

student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from Disability Services and within the instructor's official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact to Disability Services. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

11. **SLU Libraries** - In addition to providing access to valuable resources in print and online, [SLU Libraries](#) have Research & Instruction Librarians who offer expert research assistance with library and information sources, search strategies, the research process, finding the right sources for your project and more. Help is available Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm, through the [24/5 chat service](#), and by contacting your subject librarian directly. The Librarian for this course is Jill Bright; she can be contacted at jill.bright@slu.edu.

12. **Instructor/Course Evaluation** - The instructor and course will be evaluated at the end of the term by students. Each evaluation will cover the quality and relevance of course material and the quality of instruction. The intent is to seek information which will help to improve both the quality of the course and instructional competence.

13. **Weather policy** – 977-SNOW. Official university weather policy will be adhered to in this class.

14. **Technology policy** – Students should put away their cell phones during class but can put on vibrate for emergency situations. The use of laptops is allowed but only for class purposes (no Facebook, etc.). Should the use of laptops beyond class purposes become an issue in the class, the instructor reserves the right to change the laptop policy to “no laptop in class policy” at any time of the semester.

15. **Grading issues**

Grade negotiation – There will be no opportunity for extra credit to improve grades that have already been earned. Bargaining for grades (e.g. “I need a B because.....”) will not be tolerated. The only way to achieve the minimum grade you require is to attend class, study for quizzes, and successfully complete all the assignments.

Should the student want to discuss their grade on an assignment or exam, they must do so within 1 week after they are given a grade for their assignment or exam. After this one week, the grade cannot be changed.

Nitpicking over points is discouraged as this reflects the prioritization of the grade over learning.

Additional things that will bring down your grade are disruptive behavior; disrespect towards your professor or peers; comments that reveal a lack of preparation; sleeping in class; excessive tardiness, texting, Facebooking, excessive absences, web surfing, and any other unprofessional or distracting behaviors.

16. Students are **encouraged to use e-mail** as a means for correspondence with the instructor.

17. Students will be able to **download weekly PowerPoint slides** from Blackboard. The slides will contain class notes but with every few slides blank. It is the responsibility of the student to

print out the slides ahead of class (or save on laptop if typing in class), and fill in the missing slides as each lecture progresses. Complete PowerPoint notes will not be given to the student, unless the student's absence is excused by official documentation (i.e. excused absence).

18. ANY **technical issues** related to computer and/or Internet problems on the student's end (e.g., internet connectivity issues, power failures, computer failures, software issues, etc.) will not justify an extension, failure to take the quiz on time, or to complete the quiz until the end. Students are responsible for the reliability of their equipment. A problem with your Internet access may not be used as an excuse for late, missing, or incomplete coursework. If you experience problems with your Internet connection while working on this course, it is your responsibility to find an alternative Internet access point, such as a public library or Wi-Fi hotspot. This includes access to Blackboard and any related issues.

Evaluation

Grades in the course will be based on the following:

Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs) (10 points each x 9 RATs = 90 points)

The goal of RATs is to make sure students are up to date with lecture material and class readings. RATs will be composed of several multiple choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blanks questions. There will be 9 RATs throughout the semester, they will always occur on the first class meeting of the week, and *at the beginning of class*. Each RAT will cover material from the *previous* week.

Assignments (25 points each x 4 = 100 points)

There will be 4 assignments throughout the semester. Instructions for each will be given during class.

Midterm exam (100 points)

Midterm exam will include the material covered in the first half of the semester.

Final exam (100 points)

Final exam will include the material covered in the second half of the semester – it is NOT cumulative.

Class attendance and participation. See “Attendance” under Guidelines. Participation is important and expected.

Summary of Evaluation

RATs (10 pts each x 9).....	90
Assignments (25 pts each x 4).....	100
Midterm exam.....	100
Final exam (not cumulative).....	100

Total.....390

Grading

Grade	Grade Points
93% <= A	4.0
91% <= A- <93%	3.7
89% <= B+ <91%	3.3
82% <= B <89%	3.0
80% <= B- <82%	2.7
78% <= C+ <80%	2.3
70% <= C <78%	2.0
68% <= C- <70%	1.7
60% <= D <68%	1.0
F <60%	0

*This course uses the Arts & Sciences Grading Scale (2005) of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F that can be accessed at:

http://www.slu.edu/Documents/enrollment/registrar/09-10_Main_Policies&Procedures.pdf

Detailed Schedule and Assignments

PART I – Introduction to Medical Sociology

Week 1 (Aug 17, 19, 21)

Introductions
 Course overview
 Introduction to medical sociology
 History of medical sociology

Chapter 1 and Blackboard reading/s

Week 2 (Aug 24, 26, 28)

History of medical sociology (contd.)
 The development of scientific medicine

Chapter 2 and Blackboard reading/s

PART II – Social Environment and Health and Illness

Week 3 (Aug 31, Sep 2, 4)

The medical profession
 Medical education
 Socialization of physicians

Chapter 8 & 9 and Blackboard reading/s

Sep 2 – Labor Day, Class will be held

Aug 31 – RAT 1 (on Week 1 and 2 material)

Sep 4 - Assignment 1 assigned

Week 4 (Sep 7, 9, 11)

Social epidemiology
Demographics and disease
Health statistics

Chapter 3 and Blackboard reading/s

Sep 7 – RAT 2 (on Week 3 material)

Sep 11 - Assignment 1 due

Week 5 (Sep 14, 16, 18)

Society, disease and illness
Developing countries
Disease in the United States

Chapter 4 and Blackboard reading/s

Sep 14 - RAT 3 (on Week 4 material)

Week 6 (Sep 21, 23, 25)

Social stress
Workplace stress

Chapter 5 and Blackboard reading/s

Sep 21 - RAT 4 (on Week 5 material)

Sep 25 - Assignment 2 assigned

Sep 25 - Guest speaker (APA style writing or
Library Research, TBD)

PART III – Health, Illness Behavior and Health Care Practitioners

Week 7 (Sep 28, 30, Oct 2)

Health behavior
Health promotion
Health communication
Video

Chapter 6 and Blackboard reading/s

Sep 28 - RAT 5 (on Week 6 material)

Oct 2 - Assignment 2 due

Week 8 (Oct 5, 7, 9)

Experiencing illness and disability
The sick role

Illness identity

Chapter 7 and Blackboard reading/s

Oct 5 – RAT 6 (on Week 7 material)

Week 9 (Oct 12, 14, 16)

Video (contd.) (may be online)

Oct 16 – MIDTERM EXAM online (FYI: Oct 12-17 Midterm Exams at SLU)

Week 10 (Oct 19, 21, 23)

The doctor-patient interaction and relationship
Patient consent
Ethics in a doctor-patient interaction

Chapter 12 & 13 and Blackboard reading/s

(FYI: Oct 20 – FALL BREAK)

Oct 23 - Assignment 3 assigned

Week 11 (Oct 26, 28, 30)

Alternative medicine

Chapter 11 and Blackboard reading/s

Oct 26 - RAT 7 (on Week 10 material)

Oct 30 - Assignment 3 due

PART IV – The Social Organization of Health Services

Week 12 (Nov 2, 4, 6)

The American health care system

Chapter 14 and Blackboard reading/s

Nov 2 – RAT 8 (on Week 11 material)

Week 13 (Nov 9, 11, 13)

The American health care system (contd.)
(Video: *Sick Around America*)

Blackboard reading/s

Week 14 (Nov 16, 18, 20)

Health Care Technology

Chapter 16 and Blackboard reading/s

Nov 16 – RAT 9 (on Week 12 and 13 material)

Nov 20 - Assignment 4 assigned

Week 15 (Nov 23, 25, 27)

Video TBD

Nov 23 – LAST DAY OF OUR CLASS (Fall classes end Nov 24)

Nov 27 - Assignment 4 due (by email)

Week 16 (Nov 30, Dec 2, 4)

Dec 3 (Thursday), 12pm-1:50pm: FINAL EXAM online

(FYI: Nov 30-Dec 4 Fall Final exams, all online)

**Please be advised that the dates indicated on this syllabus are tentative in nature and may be revised during the semester. As the professor of this class I reserve the right to amend this syllabus should I deem it warranted and/or necessary at any point during the semester. Should changes be required they will be announced during regularly scheduled class time.