STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK

MASTER SYLLABUS

SOCI 320 Sociology of Health, Illness and Health Care

CIP Code: 45.1101

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School of Business and Liberal Arts
Department of Social Sciences Department
Spring 2026

A. **TITLE**: Sociology of Health, Illness and Health Care

B. **COURSE NUMBER**: SOCI 320

C. **CREDIT HOURS**

# Credit Hours per Week	3
# Lecture Hours per Week	3

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE**:

No	X

E. **GER CATEGORY**: n/a

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED**:

Fall and Spring	**X**

G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION**:
Using the sociological perspective, students in this course will explore how social factors such as age, gender, social class and race / ethnicity influence personal experiences of health, illness, and health care utilization. This course challenges assumptions about health, illness, and health care. Topics include the social construction of illness and health, a critique of the 'sick role', the meaning and experience of disability, chronic pain and chronic illness, an exploration of health care systems in the developed and developing worlds, and the challenges and opportunities facing both consumers and providers of health care in the 21st century.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES:** Junior level status; Introduction to Sociology (SOCI101) or Introduction to Gerontology (HLTH 104) or permission of instructor.
CO-REQUISITES: NONE

I. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**:

Course Student Learning Outcome [SLO]	*ISLO & Sub-Sets*
a. Analyze the social construction of illness and health, distinguishing topics such as the experience and meaning of illness, disability, chronic pain, mental illness, and chronic illness in different cultural settings.	#2 Critical Thinking [CA]
b. Examine the social factors that influence illness and health, separating such factors as the distribution of illness and health care in both the developed and developing worlds.	#2 Critical Thinking [CA]
c. Evaluate both mainstream and alternative health care systems, settings, and technologies in the US and around the world, including such topics as the interaction between consumers and providers of health care in different cultural settings.	#2 Critical Thinking [IA]

d. Appraise options in health care, including such topics as bioethics, and the interaction between consumers and providers of health care in different cultural settings.	#2 Critical Thinking [IA]

J.   APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT:

No	X

K.   TEXTS: To be determined by the instructor

L.   REFERENCES:

Weitz, R. (2017). *The sociology of health, illness, and health Care: A critical approach* (7th Ed.). Belmont CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Aday, LuAnn (2002). *At Risk in America: The Health and Health Care Needs of Vulnerable Populations in the United States*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

American Medical Association. http://www.ama-assn.org/

American Nursing Association. http://nursingworld.org/

American Pain Society. http://www.ama-assn.org/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/

Frontiers. Sociol., 05 April 2018 | https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2018.00004

The Henry J. Kaiser Foundation for Health Policy and Public Health Education. http://www.kff.org/

Invisible Disabilities Association https://invisibledisabilities.org

Marmot, Michael G. (2005). *The Status Syndrome: How Your Social Standing Directly Affects Your Health and Life Expectancy.* McMillan: Holt Paperbacks.

Rosenfeld, Dana and Christopher A. Faircloth, eds. (2005). *Medicalized Masculinities*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Wiley Online Library https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14679566

World Health Organization. World Health Reports http://www.who.int/whr/en/index.html

M.   EQUIPMENT: Technology Enhanced Classroom/OL Learning Management System

N.   GRADING METHOD: A-F

O.   SUGGESTED MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:
   - Exams • Quizzes • Assignments • Participation/Discussion • Paper

P.   DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:

Introduction to the Sociology of Health, Illness, and Health Care
   I.   The Social Construction of Health: A Sociological Perspective
      A.   The Social Construction of Illness
      B.   An Introduction to Epidemiology
      C.   A Brief History of Disease
      D.   The Social Distribution of Illness in the United States and the Developed World
         1.   Influences of Age
         2.   Influences of Gender

3. Influences of Social Class
4. Influences of Race and Ethnicity
5. The Confluence of These Factors
E. Illness in the Developing World Disease Patterns Around the Globe
1. Sources of Disease in Developing Nations
2. The Influence of Politics, Religion, Economics and Education on Illness and Health Care Availability

II. The Meaning and Experience of Illness
A. The Social Meaning of Illness
B. The 'Sick Role': A Critique
C. Medicine as Social Control
D. The Experience of Disability, Chronic Pain, and Chronic Illness
E. The Sociology of Mental Illness

III. Health Care Systems, Settings, and Technologies
A. The US Health Care System
1. The Current System and the Need for Reform
2. Availability and Financing of Health Care
B. Health Care Settings and Technologies
1. Mainstream and Alternative Health Care
2. Hospitals
3. Nursing Homes and Assisted Living
4. Hospice
5. Home Care
6. Alternative Health Care
7. The Influence of Politics, Religion, and Education
8. Health Care Availability