CHS 435  
Advanced Topics in 
Women's Health  
Spring 2011  
(Women’s Health Disparities)  

Instructor:  
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Class Times:  
Tuesdays  
12:00 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.  
71-257  

Office Hours:  
Tuesdays 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  

Objectives of Course:  

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an in-depth and theoretically focused approach to understanding the causes and consequences of women’s health disparities in contemporary American society. In order to adequately understand and critique the theoretical concepts and scientific literature, students should have at least on prior course in sociocultural aspects of health (e.g., CHS 210).  

Specific objectives are (and ASPH core competencies are listed in parentheses):  

1. To develop a comprehensive operationalization of women’s health, with an emphasis on understanding the ways in which health disparities are generated across groups (gender, race, ethnicity, SES, nativity status, and sociostructural context) (C3, E1-3, G1-3).  
2. To develop a historical appreciation for the women’s health movement in the US (1960s-1970s), the ways in which it has informed current women’s health care and programs, as well as its contribution to the “self help movement” (G1-G3).  
3. To better understand the social and theoretical underpinning contributing to the “gender paradox” in health (E1-E3, G1-G3).  
4. To deeply focus on women’s health disparities by investigating recent theoretical developments in medical sociology and other disciplines to better understand the ways in which these differences are promulgated (E1-E3, G1-G3).  
5. To explore some of the programs and policies addressing women’s health disparities and to critically evaluate their success (E4-E10, G4-G10, K1).  
6. To master advanced skills in summarization, critique, and presentation of research and programmatic findings on various topics related to women’s health disparities (J3, J6, J9).  

Course Requirements:  

Evaluation: Students will be assessed by: 1) Formulation and presentation of one substantive question for each class session (30%). A short write up (1 paragraph) of your question and discussion is to be handed in at the end of the session. 2) Class participation in discussion (20%); 3) A final paper on a related women’s health topic of interest (40%); and 4) Presentation (15 min) of this paper during the final class session (10%). Further details will be discussed in class. The final paper should be no more than 15 pages of text, double-spaced, 12-point font (excluding references and appendices).  

Course Format: The format of this course is a graduate seminar, which will provide students with ample opportunity to synthesize and discuss course readings. Consequently, the format is inherently interactive. Dr. Upchurch will provide a lecture on key issues/topics covered in the course readings and will pose questions throughout the session; students are expected to generate discussion.
Class Conduct: Attendance is expected at all class sessions and students are expected to participate in discussion and ask questions. The more you participate the more you get out of the class! In order to develop class discussions, please do not bring your computers to class. Due to the intimate nature and size of the class, they can potentially hinder useful discussion and interaction. Please check that all cell phones are off and no texting during class. We’ll have a break during the session and you’ll be able to call/text then. Thank you!

Required Readings:

The required readings are divided into two types. 1) Theoretical and Conceptual Papers provide you with an overview of dominant theories and conceptual approaches used in research of the specific substantive topic for the session. 2) Research and Application Papers provide you with illustrative examples of high-quality research and programmatic applications of the specific substantive topic for the session.

Although the articles were selected with care and are of high-quality, they are not exhaustive examinations of any given topic. Students are encouraged to seek additional articles according to their interests.

It is expected that all readings are completed prior to the relevant class session.

Access to the readings may be obtained as follows: 1) Download your own copy from the website links provided in this syllabus. 2) Download articles via BIOMED library. Details on specific BIOMED website location will be provided in class.

Remember to set up the proxy server in order to access articles: www.bol.ucla.edu/services/proxy

Web sites of interest:

National Library of Medicine, Medline Plus Health Information http://medlineplus.gov

National Women’s Health Information Center, DHHS http://www.4woman.gov/

CDC Women’s Health http://www.cdc.gov/Women/

COURSE SCHEDULE:

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Session 1. Introduction and Defining Women’s Health

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Research & Application Papers:


Session 2. History of the Women’s Health Movement in the US

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Can read online in Google Books – I don’t think the entire book chapters are available – but read what you can.

Session 3. What are “Health Disparities”?

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Research & Application Papers:


Session 4.           The Gender Paradox

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Research & Application Papers:


Session 5.           Women's Health Disparities: Part I

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Research & Application Papers:


Session 6.           Women’s Health Disparities: Part II

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Research & Application Papers:


Session 7.  

Women’s Health Disparities: Part III


Research & Application Papers:


Session 8.  

Programs and Policies Addressing Women’s Health

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:


Website: CDC Office of Minority Health, webpage on cultural competency

Research & Application Papers:


**Session 9. Women’s Health in Los Angeles**

Theoretical & Conceptual Papers:

Research & Application Papers:

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. (2007). Health indicators for women in Los Angeles County: Highlighting disparities by ethnicity and insurance status. *Publication of Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Women’s Health and Office of Health Assessment & Epidemiology.*

**Session 10. Student Presentations**

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, JUNE 3th BY 5:00 P.M.**