COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES 284

SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
Spring 2014

Tuesday: 9 AM – 11:50 AM
Room: 61-269 CHS

Professor Carol S. Aneshensel
Office: 21-268 CHS
Telephone: 310-825-7479
Office Hours: Monday 10-12 & by appointment
Sign-up sheet is next to the door to my office.

CLASS MOODLE SITE: https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/14S-COMHLT284-1
Access it with your Bruin Online user id and password.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course describes the ways in which society shapes the mental health of its members and further shapes the lives of those who have been identified as mentally ill. A primary focus is on the differential distributions of mental illness throughout society and how these distributions constitute mental health disparities. These distributions are defined by major social statuses: gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (SES). The stress process model is used as a major theoretical model for understanding how social inequities become mental health disparities. The course also considers the social consequences of mental illness, including the ways in which these social responses to mental illness affect the lives of persons with mental illness and their families.

CLASS FORMAT
Interactive lecture and student-led discussion of reading.

GRADING:

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Reading presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
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<td>Assignment 3</td>
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Assignments that are late will be penalized a grade step for each day they are late (e.g., A becomes A- after a day) unless a compelling, unexpected emergency arises. Assignments are due at noon as a word document by email to anshnsl@ucla.edu.

Statement of Academic Integrity
Please see, UCLA Office Dean of Students: http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS
BECAUSE THEY INTERFERE WITH PARTICIPATION, DISTURB OTHER STUDENTS, AND DISTRACT THE INSTRUCTOR.
**Students with Disabilities**
If you wish to request an accommodation due to a suspected or documented disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Office for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible at A255 Murphy Hall, (310) 825-1501, (310) 206-6083 (telephone device for the deaf). Website: [www.osd.ucla.edu](http://www.osd.ucla.edu). This information is confidential.

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<th><strong>Learning Objectives</strong></th>
<th><strong>ASPH Competencies</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:</strong></td>
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<td>1. To identify and describe major types of psychopathology and how these conditions are diagnosed and assessed.</td>
<td>C3. Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, time and place.</td>
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<td>2. To understand the experiential world of someone with a serious mental illness.</td>
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<td>4. To explain theories concerning the social origins of mental illness its unequal distribution across society.</td>
<td>E1. Identify basic theories, concepts and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in public health research and practice. G1. Describe the roles of history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.</td>
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<td>5. To describe research findings about the social determinants of mental illness.</td>
<td>E2. Identify the causes of social and behavioral factors that affect health of individuals and populations. C3. Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, time and place. C9. Draw appropriate inferences from epidemiologic data. C10. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic reports.</td>
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<td>6. To understand public attitudes towards persons with mental illness and how these attitudes affect the lives of persons with mental illness.</td>
<td>G1. Describe the roles of history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.</td>
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**Course Requirements**

1. Attendance and participation are essential. Participation includes completing all assigned readings prior to class and bringing thoughtful questions that serve as starting points for discussion (15% of grade).
2. Students lead the discussion of at least one of the assigned readings (10% of grade). The emphasis is on identifying key issues and dominant themes in the reading instead of solely summarizing the reading.

3. Three assignments as follows:

**Assignment #1: Diagnoses and Measurement: Effect on Prevalence Estimates (20%) DUE 4/15 (SESSION 3)**
The goal of this assignment is to evaluate the accuracy of prevalence estimates of psychiatric disorders based on the dominant method of measuring these disorders in prevalence studies, that is, structured interviews by lay interviewers conducted with community samples. Use the survey document provided for this assignment.

Select a specific psychiatric disorder from those that have been assessed, such as major depressive disorder or generalized anxiety disorder. Compare the *DSM-IV* diagnostic criteria for that disorder to the way in which the disorder is assessed in the survey. Fill in the following matrix. Based on the matrix, (a) evaluate the validity of the measure and (b) describe the extent to which prevalence estimates based on it are likely to be affected by inadequately measured criteria, including any that are omitted. The effect on prevalence might be for the entire population or for some subgroup of the population (e.g., males). *Three pages double spaced not including the chart or any references.*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Disorder: ___________</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Diagnostic criteria: List verbatim</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. How is it measured? X = not measured</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Evaluate A = adequate Y= inadequate</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Briefly explain what is inadequate about the measurement of Y.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Evaluate the impact of X and/or Y on prevalence estimates.</td>
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<td>Comments /Notes Optional</td>
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**References:**

**Assignment #2: Study Design and Estimating Mental Health Disparities (25%) DUE 5/13 (SESSION 7)**
The goal of this assignment is to evaluate the ways in which the methods used to conduct psychiatric epidemiology surveys (other than the measure) impact what we know about the distribution of disorder within society, especially its unequal representation in some subgroups, i.e., biased estimates. For example, does limiting samples to residents of households affect estimates of racial/ethnic group differences in prevalence?

Select a major psychiatric epidemiology study using a survey method (e.g., National Survey of American Life) and read its method section. Select an element of the study design, such as method of data collection (e.g., in-person interview) or sample, and fill out the table below using multiple rows if the element has more than one impact. Then evaluate the likely impact of this element on prevalence estimates (of a specific disorder, or disorder overall) and at least one subgroup difference in these prevalence estimates (e.g., gender). That is, does this element introduce bias into estimates and if so, how much? Present your reasoning for why these estimates are biased, if you think they are biased, or why this element does not introduce bias. For example, the NCS-R conducted the interviews in English, which obviously impacts estimates of differences between Latinos and other racial/ethnic groups, but what is the direction of this effect: does it lead to an under- or over-estimate of the prevalence of disorder overall and among Latinos specifically, and would this be a big or small source of bias, and why? The most important part is the explanation you provide for the impact of the selected element. *Three pages double spaced not including the chart or any references.*
Assignment #3: Research Paper on Sociocultural Factors in Mental Health (30%)

DUE MONDAY OF FINALS WEEK 6/9 AT NOON.

The purpose of this paper is to allow you to “customize” the class by researching a topic in your area of interests. The substance of this paper is your choice within the broad area of sociocultural aspects of mental health. Examples include: the role of parenthood in explaining gender differences in depression; acculturation and the mental health of immigrants; efficacy of interventions to reduce stigma associated with mental health. A 1-page description of the paper is due week 5 and will be discussed briefly in class. It should describe the major theme of the paper and give at least 3 references to demonstrate that there is a literature on the topic.

The paper should review and critique relevant theoretical and empirical work on the topic. As a rough guide, you should expect to read about a dozen articles. After evaluating this body of literature, you should give a conclusion about it, substantiating your conclusion with the material you have read. In other words, you should not just summarize the material; you also should evaluate it and express an informed point of view about it.

Style: 10 pages, references not included: double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. References should cite the authors’ last names and year in parentheses in the text with an alphabetical bibliography at the end. For example, “Pearlin and Bierman (2013) argue that ….” Or “The gap between apparent need and actualized use of mental health services is greatest among minority populations (Gallo, et a. 1995; Harris 2005; Wang et al. 2005a).

CLASS PROJECT (Optional: Not included in grading).

The area of mental health is under-represented in the curriculum of the Fielding School of Public Health. To draw attention to the importance of mental health and to increase awareness of stigmatization, we will create a poster to display in a prominent place in CHS that presents data about the magnitude of mental health problems (e.g., impact on life expectancy, costs associated with) and how mental illness is portrayed in the media. Over the course of the quarter we will collect materials suitable for the poster, i.e., materials that address these concerns and make a visual impact or that draw the viewer into reading text on the poster. As a group, we will select the materials for the poster and do layout of it that some of us will then put together as a PP poster. Or, if someone wants to lead the class in a different media presentation, we can decide as a group how to proceed.

See class moodle site for readings for individual use by students registered in the class.

### COURSE OUTLINE/READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td><strong>Introduction: The Experience of Mental Illness</strong></td>
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*Topics: Overview: mental illness; the medical model; mental illness as experienced by the person; public perceptions of the mentally ill; stigma as experienced by persons with severe mental illness and their families.*

APB: Chapter 1. The Sociology of Mental Health: Surveying the Field, Carol S. Aneshensel, Jo C. Phelan, and Alex Bierman, pages 1 – 19.


| 2    | 4/8  | **Mental Illness as Psychiatric Disorder** |

*Topics: Mental health versus mental illness; how psychiatric diagnoses are made; major depression, manic episode, schizophrenia, substance disorders.*

Read the following material on Moodle Site:

- **Diagnostic criteria:** Bipolar disorders; major depressive disorder; major depressive episode; manic episode; schizophrenia; substance disorders.

Go to at least two of these sites to and review these interview materials. They are for lay interviewers with community based samples for epidemiological surveys of the prevalence of diagnosable psychiatric disorders. They are not used to diagnoses people, but to obtain a “research” diagnosis. [Psychosis](#), [Depression](#), [Mania](#), [Substance](#).

Under Diagnostic Assessment on the moodle site, review mood.


The radical critique of psychiatry; medicalization of deviance; medicalization of normality; mental illness as a social role.

APB: Chapter 4. The Medicalization of Mental Disorder, Peter Conrad and Caitlin Slodden, pages 61-73.


4 4/22 Prevalence and Distribution of Psychiatric Disorder

*Topics: Research methods for estimating prevalence—National Comorbidity Survey-Replication; prevalence of major psychiatric disorders in the US; distribution of disorder across social groups (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity); sociocultural issues in assessing disorder.*

APB: Chapter 9. Overview of Descriptive Epidemiology of Mental Disorders, Ronald C. Kessler, pages 169-182.


5 4/29 Social Distribution of Disorder: I. Race, Ethnicity

*Topics: Research Methods for Estimating Prevalence by Race/Ethnicity—National Survey of American Life (NSAL), National Latino and Asian American Study (NLAAS); Differences by race/ethnicity; variation within racial/ethnic groups.*


### 6 5/6 Social Distribution of Disorder: II. Socioeconomic Status (SES)

*Topics: Association between SES and mental illness; social causation versus social selection; modes of social causation; modes of social selection.*


### 7 5/13 Social Distribution of Disorder: III. Gender ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

*Topics: rates of disorder by gender; explaining gender differences; feminist critique of psychiatry.*

APB: Chapter 12 Gender and Mental Health, Sarah Rosenfield and Dawne Mouzon, pages 227-296.


### 8 5/20 Social Etiology: I. Stress

*Topics: Definitions of stress; stress and mental health; stress process model; differential exposure as an explanation for mental health disparities.*


9  5/27  Social Etiology: Stress Mediators

Topics: explaining how stress affects mental health; why stress affects people differently; coping, social support, and self-concept; differential vulnerability as an explanation for mental health disparities.


10  6/3  Prevention; Social Responses to Mental Illness

Topics: Stigma and social distance; promoting mental health versus preventing mental illness; identifying groups at high risk; preventing first onset and relapse; families and prevention for children; school-based prevention and early intervention.

APB: Chapter 25. Labeling and Stigma, Bruce G. Link and Jo C. Phelan, pages 525 – 541.

APB: Chapter 5. Public Beliefs about Mental Illness, Jason Schnittker, pages 75-93.


ASSIGNMENT 3 IS DUE MONDAY OF FINALS WEEK,
JUNE 9 AT NOON.