COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES 284

SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
Spring 2013

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 1:30 – 4:00, Tuesday 1 - 3 & by appointment
Sign-up sheet is next to the door to my office.

Class Moodle Site: https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/13S-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.

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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>3. To describe the prevalence of psychiatric disorders by SES, race/ethnicity and gender.</td>
<td>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>4. To explain theory concerning the social origins of mental illness, specifically the stress process model of mental health disparities.</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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5. To describe research findings about the social determinants of mental illness.

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.

6. To understand public attitudes towards persons with mental illness and how these attitudes affect the lives of persons with mental illness.

G1. Describe the roles of history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.

**CLASS FORMAT**

Interactive lecture and student-led discussion of reading.

**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 (35% of grade).

   COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS
   BECAUSE THEY INTERFERE WITH PARTICIPATION, DISTURB OTHER STUDENTS, AND DISTRACT THE INSTRUCTOR.

2. Students lead the discussion of at least one of the assigned readings (15% of grade).

3. A 20 page term paper of is due at noon on June 10th, which is Monday of finals week sent via email to: anshnsl@ucla.edu (50% of grade).

   A 1-page outline 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 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; interventions to reduce stigma associated with mental health.

   The paper should review and critique relevant theoretical and empirical work on the topic. As a rough guide, you should expect to read about as many articles as are assigned for reading for this course. 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.

   Examples of outstanding papers are on the class Moodle site.
Style: About 20 pages, references not included: double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. References should cite the authors’ last names (list up to three authors; for more than three, list first author and add “et al.”) and year in parentheses 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).

Please send a Word document not a pdf so I can make comments on it.

Papers 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.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
If you wish to request an accommodation due to a suspected or documented disability, please inform your 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.

**READING**


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

**COURSE OUTLINE/READINGS**

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<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Introduction: The Experience of Mental Illness</td>
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*Topics: 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.


Mental Illness as Psychiatric Disorder & Alternative Perspectives

Topics: Mental health versus mental illness; how psychiatric diagnoses are made; major depression, manic episode, schizophrenia, substance disorders; sociocultural factors in diagnosis; alternative perspectives on diagnosis—medicalization.

Read the following material on Moodle Site:

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


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


3 4/16 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.

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.

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


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.


Social Distribution of Disorder: II. Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Term Paper Topic and Outline Due

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


6 5/7 Social Distribution of Disorder: III. Gender

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.


7 5/14 Social Etiology: I. Stress

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


8 5/21 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.


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.


Topics: 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.


Term paper due June 11th, Monday of finals week at noon
via email to anshns1@ucla.edu