SOCI 4112: SOCIOLOGY OF MENTAL HEALTH & ILLNESS IN CANADA

Lecture days/times: Mondays 2:30-5:30pm
Location: RB 1045

Instructor: Dr. Chris Sanders
Office: RB 2038
Office hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines various sociological contributions to the study of mental health and illness, including sociological theories and research regarding the history, definition, experience, diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. The first unit of the course examines from a structural perspective the relationship between social factors and mental health. The second unit examines from a social interaction perspective how mental disorders are defined, diagnosed and experienced by people. The final unit considers how social institutions influence the treatment of and public responses to mental illness across society. Along the way we will consider various social anxiety and spectrum disorders including schizophrenia, depression, ADHD, OCD, autism, and substance use. We will be particularly interested in ways that definitions of mental disorders are socially constructed, how health care professionals’ diagnoses are influenced by social factors, and how Canadians have organized at the grass roots level to resist certain practices and perceived abuses of the psychiatric profession.

Learning objectives:

• To understand sociological approaches to mental health and illness;
• To become familiar with historical and contemporary social issues in mental illness;
• To examine the emergence and application of specific categories of mental disorder;
• To evaluate origins and consequences of social policies toward mental disorder in Canada as well as how policies have inspired resistance movements;
• To articulate thoughtful discussion questions and engage in open discussion of course material with classmates.

COURSE READINGS
We will use the following book(s) available at the LU Bookstore:

• Additional readings are uploaded to the D2L course website.
COURSE EVALUATION AND SUMMARY OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test 1 (in class)</td>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2 (take home)</td>
<td>November 28</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussant Duty</td>
<td>see schedule below</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Reflections (2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Participation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra Credit (2)</td>
<td>see schedule below</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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Tests are comprehensive and will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Test questions are designed to evaluate students’ ability to apply key concepts as opposed to rote memorization of materials. There are no make-up tests except with appropriate authoritative documentation (e.g., no parents, partners, etc.); make-up tests are essay format.

Each week 2-3 students will serve as discussants. Discussant duties include a close reading of the assigned materials, facilitating class discussion, and providing discussion questions in advance of lecture. You may work independently or collaborate with the other discussants for that week; you may also design in-class activities or present short lectures. The goal is to encourage discussion and exchange of ideas (so no quizzes or lengthy writing assignments).

Students are responsible for writing two critical reflections. The reflections should apply a concept, argument, or research finding from a weekly reading to another contemporary issue in mental health (see online sources listed below). You may choose which weeks to write on, however reflections are due prior to seminar on the week the reading is assigned.

This course relies on weekly participation. My philosophy is that the greater the level of active participation, the greater the level of understanding will be overall. Students are therefore expected to reflect upon readings and discussion questions in advance of class and to bring questions and comments to lecture for open discussion. Your participation grade will reflect the degree of participation and preparation you show throughout the semester. Additional quizzes and assignments may be given to foster participation.

An optional course paper (approx. 10-15 pages) can be completed at the end of the semester. The essay is intended to replace the lowest grade. Students must meet with me in advance of the end of the semester to discuss this option and receive specific guidelines.

Two extra credit assignments are offered this semester. For information see the extra credit folder on the D2L course website. Due dates are listed below and are non-negotiable.

All work must be completed with academic integrity. Please review the Lakehead University policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty; it can be accessed from the LU homepage or the course information module of the course website. Please discuss with me any questions or concerns about this policy prior to handing in assignments or taking the tests.
**Accommodations:** LU is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. This commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as early as possible. Please visit: [http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca](http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca)

**GENERAL POLICIES**

**Etiquette:** Common courtesy goes a long way. This includes paying close attention in class (i.e., not multitasking with social media/email), listening to what others have to say (i.e., not interrupting), and doing your best to promote a civil and constructive learning environment. Try to be mindful that some of your classmates will have deeply personal experiences with matters of health and illness.

**Email:** Students may contact me through D2L/mycourselink. Please note the course in the subject line as I am teaching several classes. I will respond to emails during office hours. Emails should be courteous and brief, requiring only a 1-2 sentence response. Lengthier inquiries and concerns should be brought to my office hours to discuss in person.

**Attendance:** Lecture attendance is strongly recommended. When you attend lecture you are expected to arrive on time and to be prepared, having read the assigned materials in advance.

**Grades:** I do not discuss grades by email. Grade inquiries must be in person during office hours or by appointment.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES**

- History of Madness in Canada: [http://historyofmadness.ca](http://historyofmadness.ca)
- Science-Based Medicine blog: [https://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org](https://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org)
FALL TERM SCHEDULE

UNIT 1: SOCIAL STRUCTURE PERSPECTIVES

WEEK 1. September 12: Welcome! Introductions and Course Overview
- D2L: “The Limits to Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics” (Clarke) (skim for main ideas)
- D2L: “The Medical Model” (Bury)
- D2L: “Mental Disorder: Social Epidemiology” (Cockerham)
- D2L: “Rethinking the Sociology of Mental Health” (Busfield)
- Mad Matters: “Introducing Mad Studies”

WEEK 2. September 19: The Stress Process Model
- D2L: “The Sociological Study of Stress” (Pearlin)
- D2L: “Racial and Gender Discrimination in the Stress Process” (Perry et al.)
- MM: “Ch 3. Democracy is a Radical Idea” and “Ch 4. What Makes Us a Community?”
- Discussants: Alycia B. & Julia B-R.

WEEK 3. September 26: Gender and Marital Status
- D2L: “Gender” and “Social Roles, Spouse & Parent”
- D2L: “Do Men and Women Have Different Problems?” (Rosenfield & Smith)
- MM: “Ch 2. Women in Asylums”
- Film: Delirium (1993, directed by Mindy Faber, 23 min.), accessible at: https://vimeo.com/31336521
- Discussants: Georgina C. & Emily A.

WEEK 4. October 03: Community and Legacy
- D2L: “Social Status: Community”
- D2L: “Race and Mental Health” (Evans-Campbell et al.)
- D2L: “Intergenerational Trauma from a Mental Health Perspective” (Menzies)
- MM: “Ch 8. A Denial of Being” and “Ch. 9. Mad Success”
- In-class film: After the Last River (CBC, 2016)
  Trailer accessible at: http://www.cbc.ca/documentarychannel/docs/after-the-last-river
- Discussants: Kaitlin G & Charisse C.

WEEK 5. October 10: Reading Week!
- Study for the upcoming test

WEEK 6. October 17: Test 1 in Class
UNIT 2: SOCIAL INTERACTION PERSPECTIVES

WEEK 7. October 24: “Deviance” and Labeling Theory
- D2L: “Labeling Behavior as Mental Illness”
- D2L: “Identifying Delusional Discourse” (Palmer)
- D2L: “Labeling and Stigma” (Link & Phelan)
- MM: “Ch 5. A Rose by Any Other Name” and “Ch. 11. “Electroshock”
- Discussants: Brennan J. & Cassandra L.
- Extra Credit #1 due before class
- Film: Lobotomy (5 min.), accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0aNILW6ILk

WEEK 8. October 31: Diagnosis
- D2L: “DSM and the Relationship Between Public Attitudes and Labels”
- D2L: “Mental Disorder: Social Epidemiology” (Cockerham, pp. 109-111)
- D2L: “Toward a Sociology of Diagnosis” (Jutel & Nettleton)
- D2L: “Depression: The Ambivalence of Diagnosis” (Kokanovic et al.)
- D2L: “Psychiatric Diagnosis Under Conditions of Uncertainty” (Manning)
- D2L: “Fitting Children to the Autism Spectrum” (Turowetz & Maynard)
- Discussants: Janelle K. & Shannon W.

WEEK 9. November 07: Medicalization
- D2L: “Medicalization of Deviant Behavior and Mental Illness”
- D2L: “From Hyperactive Children to Adult ADHD” (Conrad)
- D2L: “Remembering Masturbatory Insanity” (Szasz)
- MM: “Ch 22. Rerouting the Weeds” and “Ch 19. Mad Nation?”
- Discussants: Molly M. & Tanner H.

UNIT 3: SOCIAL INSTITUTION INFLUENCES

WEEK 10. November 14: Restructuring, Deinstitutionalization & Community Health
- D2L: “Deinstitutionalization and Regionalization” (Davis)
- D2L: “The Impact of Deinstitutionalization of Mental Health in Canada” (Sealy)
- D2L: “Policing Vancouver’s Mental Health Crisis” (Boyd & Kerr)
- MM: “Ch 10. The Tragic Farce of Community Health Care” and “Ch 16. They Should Not Be Allowed to Do this to the Homeless”
- Film: The Secrets of Oak Ridge (CBC, 15 min.) accessible at: http://www.cbc.ca/1.3471852
- Discussants: Cassandra R-W. & Paige R.
WEEK 11. November 21: Medico-Legal Borderland
- D2L: “Interface with the Criminal Justice System” (Davis)
- D2L: “Mental Health and the Changing Context of HIV” (Walkup & Crystal)
- D2L: “Civil Commitment Due to Mental Illness and…” (Dallaire et al.)
- D2L: (Conference Paper)
- MM: “Ch 14. Mad Patients as Legal Intervenors” and “Ch 15. Removing Civil Rights”
- Discussants: Sara S. & Samuel A-K.

WEEK 12. November 28: Media Portrayals of Mental Health
- D2L: “Media and Health” (Seale)
- D2L: “Contesting the Text…” (Olstead)
- D2L: “About a Year Before the Breakdown…” (Rowe et al.)
- D2L: “Mental Illness Stigma in the Media” (Smith) (RECOMMENDED)
- MM: “Ch 17. Making and Marketing of Mental Health” and “Ch 18. Pitching Mad”
- Discussants: Kelcie T. & Marcie W.
- **NOTE: Take home test distributed (due date TBD)**

WEEK 13. December 05: In-Class Film and Course Wrap-Up
- In class film: *Titicut Follies* (1967, directed by Frederick Wiseman, 84 minutes)
- MM: “Ch 7. Mad as Hell”
- Extra Credit #2 due before class

* Schedule subject to change as needed