COURSE DESCRIPTION
SOCl 5115 explores sociological research and perspectives on public health in a global context. A sociological perspective offers vital contributions to public health practice and research. In theory, public health articulates important social justice principles such as reducing health inequalities and improving the social and economic conditions in which people live. In practice, public health interventions can surveil and regulate intimate aspects of people’s lives—often those who are most marginalized—in problematic ways. We will keep both aspects of public health front and center and their implications for sociological engagement with public health throughout the course. Additionally, we will focus the following questions: What are the vital cultural, political, and economic issues affecting the health of populations and public health practice today? How do social factors influence our understanding of risk and epidemics and, in turn, affect our approaches to disease prevention and containment? How do public health objectives differ from those of hospital medicine? What is the role of the state in determining public health? Who benefits most by action and who suffers most from inaction? How are claims about disease, epidemics, pandemics, contagion, and risk put together? Who are represented and whose are excluded? What assumptions about health and populations underlie public health policy and programs? And how do contemporary public health issues in Canada differ from global public health issues?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• To demonstrate understanding of sociological ways of thinking about and critically exploring contemporary public health issues;
• To show an appreciation of the complexity and challenges of public health work;
• To identify the central social, political, and economic determinants of population health;
• To identify social inequalities in health and explain where they stem from;
• To compare and articulate the interrelations between health and social status at the individual level, and social inequalities in health at the macro (societal and global) levels;
• To develop an informed opinion and be ready to support it during seminar discussions;
• To articulate thoughtful discussion questions and engage in open discussion of material.

* This is a general outline and is subject to change. Contact me for current version.
COURSE FORMAT
This course is run as a three-hour seminar. We will draw on a range of approaches to learning about public health: personal experience and reflection, interdisciplinary discussion, and critical analysis of readings. The success of this course relies on your careful preparation and active participation in class discussions. You will be expected to carefully read all assigned material before class and to share your thoughts and perspectives during class discussion.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Individual articles and book chapters are posted to the course website as PDFs, though you’ll still need to purchase (or otherwise acquire) three books:

- Additional readings are uploaded to the D2L course website or are available online.

EVALUATION
Students will be evaluated based on class participation (20%), two short analytic papers (20%), facilitating two seminars (20%), and one major course paper that applies course concepts to a topic of your choosing, due by Friday 13 April 2018 (40%).

Class Participation: Students are expected to attend every class and have readings completed prior to seminar. Students should bring discussion questions to class regardless of whether they are facilitating. Evaluation is based upon attendance and participation.

Analytic Papers: Students are responsible for writing two short analytic papers. Write about the readings assigned during a week of your choosing. I ask that you write one paper before reading week and one paper after. Papers may NOT be on weeks that you facilitate.

Facilitating Seminars: Each student will be required to facilitate two seminars. This will require advanced preparation, including a close reading of the assigned materials and providing discussion questions for everyone.

Major Course Paper: Different options for the major writing assignment will be discussed in seminar.
UNIT I. THEORY AND PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATIONS

WEEK 1. Sept 06: What is Public Health? Historical Perspectives

WEEK 2. Sept 13: Social Determinants and the Critique of Health Promotion

UNIT II. SOCIAL STRUCTURES, INSTITUTIONS, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

WEEK 4. Sept 27: So-Called “Reckless Vectors”
- In class film.

WEEK 5. Oct 04: Global HIV Pandemic

WEEK 6. Oct 11 26: Reading Week (no classes)
- Enjoy the break.

- Podcasts: “Harry’s Last Stand” (Episodes 5 & 10)

WEEK 9. Nov 01: Holiday
- Enjoy the break.

UNIT III. PHARMACEUTICAL APPROACHES TO PUBLIC HEALTH

WEEK 10. Nov 08: The Public Health Effect of Vaccine Hesitancy
- FACILITATOR:

WEEK 11. Nov 15: The Public Health Effect of Vaccine Hesitancy (con't)


WEEK 13. Nov 29: Global Clinical Trials