SOCA1200 - Health Sociology I
Course Outline

Semester: Semester 2 - 2010
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods:
Lecture
Tutorial

Brief Course Description
This course will introduce students to the sociological study and understanding of health and illness, focusing predominantly on Australian society. The course will examine the causes, nature and consequences of major health inequalities, the ways they are culturally understood, and some of the most important attempts to address them. Substantive topics may be drawn from a range of areas including the social distribution of health and illness; health promotion and illness prevention; access to health care; the state and health care system; the division of labour in the health workforce; ideologies of health, illness and inequality; and health, politics and social change.

Contact Hours
Lecture for 1 Hour per Week for the Full Term
Seminar for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

Course Objectives
On successful completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate:
1. An understanding of sociological approaches to the study of health and illness.
2. An understanding of some of the social, economic, political and cultural factors involved in the reproduction or transformation of inequalities in health and health care in Australian society.
4. Skills in researching, constructing and presenting well-supported arguments in written and verbal form.

Course Content
1. Sociological approaches to the study and understanding of health and illness.
2. The social distribution of health and illness in Australian society.
3. Health promotion and illness prevention.
5. The Australian health care system.
6. Health, politics and social change.

Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>Essay 1,200 words worth 40% due week 8.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination: Formal</td>
<td>(50%) A two and a half hour multiple choice exam due end of semester based on lecture and tutorial readings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group/tutorial participation and contribution</td>
<td>Tutorial Participation worth 10%</td>
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</table>

Assumed Knowledge
Not applicable.

Callaghan Campus Timetable
SOCA1200
Health Sociology I
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 2 - 2010
Lecture and Seminar Tuesday 11:00 - 12:00 [V107]
Tuesday 16:00 - 18:00 [W202]
Tuesday 12:00 - 14:00 [V111]
IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

Academic fraud is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;

b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;

c) reusing one's own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);

d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;

e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and

f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.

g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one's own.

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one's own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;

b) using another person's ideas without due acknowledgment;

c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

Turnitin is an electronic text matching system. During assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or

- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking).

- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

RE-MARKS AND MODERATIONS

Students can access the University's policy at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html

MARKS AND GRADES RELEASED DURING TERM

All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT ITEMS
Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the University policy specified in Late Penalty (under student) at the link above.

Requests for Extensions of Time must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:

- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

- whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment.

Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html

Note: different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.

- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

Late applications may not be accepted. Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer or their Program Executive if studying in Singapore.

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au. As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

CHANGING YOUR ENROLMENT

Students enrolled after the census dates listed in the link below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/fees/censusdates.html

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of term. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of term will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au
STUDENT INFORMATION & CONTACTS

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit:
www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Callaghan Campus</th>
<th>Port Macquarie Student Hub</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building</td>
<td>The University of Newcastle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre</td>
<td>A Block, Administration</td>
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City Precinct
City Hub & Information Common, University House

Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)
Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria

Port Macquarie Student Hub
The University of Newcastle
A Block, Administration
Widderson Road
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
Phone: 49215000

Singapore students
contact your PSB Program Executive

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Faculty Websites</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/</a></td>
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Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html

Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000580.html

General enquiries
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Dean of Students Office
The Dean of Students and Deputy Dean of Students work to ensure that all students receive fair and equitable treatment at the University. In doing this they provide information and advice and help students resolve problems of an academic nature.
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/dean-of-students/
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: Dean-of-Students@newcastle.edu.au

University Complaints Managers Office
The University is committed to maintaining and enhancing fair, equitable and safe work practices and promoting positive relationships with its staff and students. There is a single system to deal with all types of complaints, ranging from minor administrative matters to more serious deeply held grievances concerning unfair, unjust or unreasonable behaviour.
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/complaints/
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: Complaints@newcastle.edu.au

Campus Care
The Campus Care program has been set up as a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour.
Phone: 02 4921 8600
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: campuscare@newcastle.edu.au

This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of the change.
Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/regdates.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/regdates.html)

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

**Studentmail and Blackboard:** Refer - [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

**Important Additional Information**

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication
- Essential Online Information for Students

**Further details on assessment items**

1. **Tutorial participation:**

   **Weight:** 10%
   **Due:** Throughout the Semester

2. **Essay**

   **Words:** 1200
   **Weight:** 40%
   **Due:** Week 9, Monday September 20th 2010 (Place in Student Hub by 5.00pm – Shortland hub if possible. Also upload to Turnitin)

The essay questions will be provided early in the course.

**Criteria:**

The essay will require the student to display a sophisticated understanding of theories, concepts and data explored in the lectures and course readings.

The essay is intended to provide an opportunity for students to critically examine and evaluate the reading material provided through this course, as well as readings students have found themselves. There are two primary aims informing this task:
1. To ascertain whether students have a clear and sophisticated understanding of some of the key themes, concepts, theories and perspectives introduced in the readings from this course;

2. To assess whether students can clearly and accurately express this understanding in the form of a scholarly essay.

Students’ work will be evaluated in terms of their ability to research, analyse, evaluate and synthesize relevant knowledge. Credit will also be given to work that demonstrates imagination, style and clear and persuasive expression.

3. Formal Examination:

Description: Two and a half hour multiple choice formal exam based on lecture and tutorial readings.

Weight: 50%
Due: To be held at the end of semester during the exam period.

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Fail (FF)</th>
<th>Pass (P)</th>
<th>Credit (C)</th>
<th>Distinction (D)</th>
<th>High Distinction (HD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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SOCA1200: Health Sociology 1 (2010)

Tutorial Program and Readings

The **required reading** for this course is:


**Week 1 27th July**

*Course Introduction and Overview*

This week provides an overview of the course and assessment and introduces the broad area of sociology of health and illness. Drawing on the reading, we examine how sociology can help us better understand ourselves in relation to societal structures and influences, and the importance of social forces in shaping health problems.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


Week 2 3rd August

*Theoretical perspectives in health sociology*

This week we look at the major theoretical ideas developing in sociology as they have been applied to health and illness. We look at the ways in which sociologists have developed theories that can be applied to contemporary health issues including: suicide, mental illness, drug use, sexuality, gender and dying.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


**Week 3 10th August**

*Class, Health Inequality and Social Justice*

This week we examine the relationship between social inequalities and health outcomes, with a particular focus on class.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


Week 4 17th August

**Gender and Health**

This week we examine the relationships between gender and health and consider why there are differences in morbidity (rates of disease) and mortality (deaths) between males and females. We focus on the adverse effects of gender stereotypes for women and men's health and wellbeing.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


Week 5 24th August

The Media and Health

The week we explore the role of the media in health, examining the significance of more traditional forms of media such as newspapers and television as well as the emerging role of the Internet in shaping experiences of health and illness. From eating disorders to virtual communication, this week we look at the complex intersections between mass media and new media and the health of individuals and the wider population.

Required readings:

Further readings:


Week 6 31st August

Medicalisation and social control

This week we look at the process of medicalisation and the ways in which certain types of people, personalities and behaviours have come to be viewed as ‘abnormal’, and furthermore, how they have been medicalised over time. We look at childhood behaviour (ADHD), ‘madness’, depression and suicide as key sites of medicalisation and social control.

Required reading:


Further readings:


Week 7  7th September

Indigenous Health

This week we explore indigenous health in the Australian context, examining the health differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. We then consider some of the broader structural factors that have influenced Indigenous health and the historical factors that have produced them. We look at the social, political and cultural factors underpinning ongoing issues including to alcohol abuse, chronic illness, mental health problems, and low life expectancy amongst the Australian aboriginal community.

Required reading:


Further readings:


Week 8 14th September

Restructuring health:
Competition, Rationalisation and Privatisation

This week we examine the influence political ideologies on health policy in Australia. The ideological differences between Australian political parties and important ‘stake-holders’ (e.g. politicians, doctors, hospitals, insurance industry are delineated, and their influences on Australia’s health care system and national health insurance arrangements are examined. Following Belcher (2005), it is argued that the current health care arrangements are not so much a rationalised response to Australia’s health needs, but more the historical product of ideological struggles and compromises, vested interests and market manoeuvrings.

Required reading:


Further readings:


Week 9 21st September

Medical Dominance and professionalism: challenges and new perspectives

Following last week’s theme about the social organisation of health, we look at a major strand of health sociology, the role of the medical profession in the organisation of health care, the concept of ‘medical dominance’ and the extent to which it has been or is being challenged by other professional groups such as nurses and midwives or by the changing organisation of health care under neo-liberal governments.

Required reading:

Further readings:


| Semester Recess: 27th September to 8th October |

**Week 10 12th October**

*Health Promotion Dilemmas*

This week we examine the issues and problems associated with public health promotion. A particular focus is on the provision of health information to individuals and groups, and the limitation of such a strategy. It is argued that an individualistic health promotion model does not address structural influences and inequalities, therefore a broader approach, one based on a ‘structuralist-collective model’ of health, is needed if significant changes to public health are to be achieved.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


**Week 11 19th October**

*Ageing, dying and death*

This week introduces the sociology of aging, dying and death. Of particular concern is how our understanding of aging, death and dying is socially constructed. It wasn't that long ago that the 'premature' death of an infant or child was considered 'normal' and unpreventable, and the achievement of old age extraordinary. These days 'old age' is considered somewhat commonplace and the premature death of an infant or child is seen as unacceptable and preventable. We also consider some key debates around aging, dying and death, in particular, ageism, the effects of economic rationalism, the notion that the elderly are a burden on our limited health resources, and euthanasia.

**Required reading:**


**Further readings:**


Week 12 26th October

The New Genetics: A focus on the Human Genome Project

This week we look at the Human Genome Project (HGP) and its implications for society. The reading provides an example of how a sociological analysis can be used to broaden our understanding of the influence of emerging biotechnologies on contemporary society, as well as the influence of contemporary society on these new biotechnologies. We consider the historical, cultural, structural and critical elements associated with the HGP, and the tensions that exist between individual and collective uses of contemporary biotechnologies.

Required reading:


Further readings:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>27(^{th}) July</td>
<td>Course Introduction and Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3rd August</td>
<td>Theoretical perspectives in health sociology</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10th August</td>
<td>Class, Health Inequality and Social Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17(^{th}) August</td>
<td>Gender and Health</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>24(^{th}) August</td>
<td>Media and health</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>31st August</td>
<td>Medicalisation and social control</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7(^{th}) September</td>
<td>Indigenous health, Ethnicity and multiculturalism</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>14(^{th}) September</td>
<td>Restructuring health: Competition, Rationalisation &amp; Privatisation</td>
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<td><strong>NB: Essay due Monday 20(^{th})</strong></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>21st September</td>
<td>Medical dominance and professionalism – challenges and new perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12(^{th}) October</td>
<td>Semester Recess: 27(^{th}) September to 8(^{th}) October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>19(^{th}) October</td>
<td>Health Promotion Dilemmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>26(^{th}) October</td>
<td>Ageing, dying and death</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Week beginning 1(^{st}) November</td>
<td>New genetics and future technologies</td>
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<td>Exam preparation time and individual consultations (if required)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>[No lecture, tutorials or tutorial readings]</td>
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<td><strong>NB: Formal exam to be held during the exam period.</strong></td>
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Examination period: 8\(^{th}\) November to 26\(^{th}\) November