

# HLTHAGE 3R03: INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH INEQUALITIES

## Winter 2018

**Instructor:** Lydia Kapiriri  
**Class Meets:** Thursdays 7.00- 10.00pm

**Email:** kapirir@mcmaster.ca  
**Office:** KTH 236; ext. 27203  
**Office hours:** Thursdays: 3.00- 4.00pm

**Class Location:** CNH 103

### Course Description

Despite today's level of economic development and advancement in health technology, enormous inequalities in health persist both within and between countries. This course will introduce students to the key concepts, and theories that explain health inequalities at the individual, community, national and global levels. Using common examples of the intersections in health inequalities such as gender, ethnicity or race, we will critically analyze mechanisms through which health inequalities are produced, and sustained within societies.

### Course Objectives

By the end of the course participants should be able to:

- Define social inequalities and health inequalities and how they relate to each other
- Identify the health inequalities that exist within their environment
- Describe and apply the common explanatory models of health inequalities to explain the existing health inequalities
- Critically reflect on the usefulness of the explanatory models of health inequalities
- Critically analyse and evaluate current policies and approaches to reducing the existing disparities in health

### COURSE STRUCTURE

The learning modes will include in-class and out of class components. The in-class component of the course will predominantly comprise of lectures and group discussions.

While attendance is not mandatory; in order for students to complete the in class assignments and benefit from the course, attendance is encouraged. While the lectures will be based on power point slides; these are meant to provide highlights of the lecture, full details/ lecture notes will not be available. Hence, students are encourage to attend classes and take notes.

Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for obtaining information about any announcements that may have been made in class as well as notes on the material covered from their classmates.

### Required Text

- 1) Text Book: Bartley M. Health Inequality: An introduction to Theories, Concepts and Methods. 2017. Second edition. ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-9113-8 Polity Press, Cambridge. e-book is also available for purchase online from Wiley publishers
- 2) Additional readings in courseware, and online

## **Assessments**

The course will have the following components used for assessment:

In class Mini Reading Assignments	15%
Test I	25%
Test II	25%
Term Paper	35%

## **Details of the Assessment**

### **1) Reading Assignments (15%)**

Starting from Week 3- ; students will complete individual assignments which will contribute to their final grade. The individual assignments are designed to facilitate individual learning and application of the key concepts covered during the semester. These will feed into both written assignment and the tests.

During the first week, students will identify and discuss a health inequality they have experienced or witnessed. This will form basis of their weekly individual assignments.

**Based on the week's readings**, students will develop and submit a one double spaced page summary of the individual allocated assignment for the week. These will be evaluated for the quality of the content. All summaries will be discussed then submitted at the end of each class. You should also come prepared to share the content in your summary.

These summaries will be critical in developing your major written assignment; so it is highly recommended that students complete them. A perfect mark (15/15) is possible if the student submits **ALL** the required summaries with the relevant content. Each student is expected to submit **7 reading** assignments on avenue by the end of the class.

Details will be discussed in class.

### **2) Test 1& 2: (50%)**

The tests will comprise of material covered in class until the date of the test and will comprise of multiple choice and short answer questions.

**More details will be provided in class.**

### **3) Term paper (35%)**

The final paper will provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their learning by applying the theories of health inequalities to make recommendations to address a health inequality of their choice. Students will develop a 8- 10 double spaced page paper using at least 6 academic literature.

Building on the weekly individual assignments, students will provide a comprehensive discussion of the health inequality they have been working with, detailing the distribution of the inequality in society; they will then identify one model that they think **best explains** the inequality they have discussed. They will explain why they think it is the best explanatory model. Students will then make two detailed policy recommendations based on the model they have used to explain the inequality. They will then the limitations of using the selected model to make policy recommendations.

Lastly students will reflect on what they have learned about using a single framework to explain the existence of health inequalities and making policy recommendations.

**More details will be provided in class.**

### **Communication**

Official McMaster e-mails should be used for communication. Please allow for 48 hrs (excluding the weekends) for a response to your e-mail. Do not submit your assignment via e-mail.

Emails must identify the course in the subject matter, identify a specific question or concern. This should not have been covered in the course outline. If a student's question require detailed discussion, they may be asked to visit the office during office hours.

## **LATE PENALTY POLICY**

**DEADLINES ARE FIRM.** Assignments are to be submitted in class on, or before, the due date indicated. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Late assignments should be submitted to Danielle Schumacher (KTH/226) where they will be date/time stamped. Papers submitted after the due date will be assessed a 5% per day penalty. Weekends will be treated as one day late. Please note that no extensions will be permitted for reasons other than a documented illness. If you are unable to hand-in a paper because of illness, please consult with the Dean's Office.

## **RETENTION OF WORK**

I require that students keep **ALL** of their rough work for their essays and be able to produce this material on 24 hours notice. In some cases, I will ask for this material to be submitted with your assignments. This includes rough notes, early drafts, etc. This is partly a protection for you. If there is any doubt over the grade assigned on a project, or if you would like to appeal a grade or if you happen to be charged with plagiarism, this work can provide a basis for settling the issue. Without it, you may not be given the benefit of the doubt. With it, the issue is easily resolved. You should keep this material until you have been notified of your grade. If you are using a word-processor, keep both your rough notes and early drafts.

## **CITATIONS**

I expect you to cite and properly reference **any and all** material taken from a secondary source for **ALL YOUR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**. You must acknowledge every **idea, fact, or mode or analysis** taken from another source and **not just direct quotes**. This includes **ALL** material that you use in your papers other than that based on your own ideas and analyses. This includes required course readings and paraphrases taken from a source. It is perfectly respectable to take an idea from another source and then develop that idea in your own way, or to use someone's method or structure and apply it to a new case **so long as you indicate clearly what was derived from the original source** and what is your own. You are **required** to use the citation and referencing guidelines from the American Psychological Association. These guidelines are contained in the publication, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (the references in the course guide roughly follow APA format). Papers with poor referencing and acknowledgement of original sources will be marked down severely. Not acknowledging sources that you have used or acknowledging them only part of the time borders on plagiarism and may be treated as such. If in doubt, acknowledge the source.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For

information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- 1) Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- 2) Improper collaboration in group work.
- 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who require academic accommodations must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652, or by email at [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

### **FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society at 905.525.9140 ext. 27227 or [hasdept@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hasdept@mcmaster.ca).

**The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes .**

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Week 1: Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	Exploring Health Inequalities	<p>No Readings assigned and No in class session</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>Develop a ½ pg summary of a health inequality you have observed in life, describing how it is distributed.</i></p>
Week 2: Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	Social inequalities and Health inequalities: Definitions, concepts and theories	<p>Text Book: Chapter 1 &amp; 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arcaya MC., Arcaya AL.and Subramanian SV. Inequalities in health: definitions, concepts, and theories. <i>Glob Health Action</i> 2015, <b>8</b>: 27106 -</li> <li>2. Mackenbach, J.P. (2012). The persistence of health inequalities in modern welfare states: The explanation of a paradox. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i>, 75(4), 761-769.</li> </ol> <p>Individual assignment: <i>Think about possible ways to explain the unequal distribution of the health issue of interest within society.</i></p>
<b>Overview of the models</b>		
Week 3: Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	Model I: Behavioral and cultural explanations	<p>Text Book: Chapter 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abel, T. &amp; Frohlich, B.K.(2012). Capitals and capabilities: Linking structure and agency to reduce health inequalities. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i>,74(2),236-244</li> <li>2. Pinxten, W. &amp; Lievens, J. (2014). The importance of economic, social and cultural capital in understanding health inequalities: Using a Bourdieu-based approach in research on physical and mental health perceptions. <i>Sociology of Health and Illness</i>, 1-16. Early online preview available at: <a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9566.12154/pd">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9566.12154/pd</a></li> </ol> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How can the behavioral and cultural pathway be used to explain the identified health inequality?</i></p>
Week 4: Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	Model II: The Psycho- social model	Text Book: Chapter 5

		<p>1. Elstad J. (1998). The Psycho-social Perspective on Social Inequalities in Health. <i>Sociology of Health &amp; Illness</i>, 20 (5): 598-618</p> <p>2. Toselli, S., Gialdo-Russo, E., Marzouk, D., Sundquist, J. &amp; Sundquist, K. (2014). Psychosocial health among immigrants in central and southern Europe. [Supplement 1]. <i>European Journal of Public Health</i>, 24, 26-30.</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How can the psycho- social pathway be used to explain the identified health inequality?</i></p>
Week 5: Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	Model III: The materialist explanations	<p>Text Book: Chapter 6</p> <p>1. Blane, D.B., Bartley, M. &amp; Davey Smith, G. (1997). Disease etiology and materialist explanations of socio-economic mortality differentials. <i>European Journal of Public Health</i>, 7,385-391.</p> <p>2. Rajan, K., Kennedy, J., &amp; King, L.(2013). Is wealthier always healthier in poor countries? The health implications of income, inequality, poverty, and literacy in India. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i>, 88:98-107</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How can the materialistic pathway be used to explain the identified health inequality?</i></p>
Week 6: Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	Model IV: Macro-social explanations	Text Book: Chapter 7
Week 7: Feb 15 <sup>th</sup>	Test	<b>Test 1</b>
<b>Feb 19<sup>th</sup>- 25<sup>th</sup>: No Classes</b>		
<b>Sample determinants of Health Inequalities</b>		
Week 9: March 1st	Gender and Health Inequalities	<p>Text Book: Chapter 8</p> <p>1. Richardson, E.T., Collins, S.E., Kung, T., Jones, J.H., Tram, K.H., Boggiano, V.L., Zolopa, A.R. (2014). Gender in equality and HIV transmission: A global analysis. <i>Journal of the International AIDS Society</i>, 17(1),1-5. Retrieved from</p>

		<p><a href="http://www.jiasociety.org/index.php/jias/article/view/19035/3821">http://www.jiasociety.org/index.php/jias/article/view/19035/3821</a>)</p> <p>1. Griffith, D.M., Metzler, J.M. &amp; Gunter, K. (2011). Considering intersections of race and gender in interventions that address US men's health disparities. <i>Public Health</i>, 125(7), 417-423.</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How does the health issue you have chosen vary across different genders?</i></p>
Week 10: March 8 <sup>th</sup>	Race, Ethnicity and Health inequalities	<p>Text Book: Chapter 9</p> <p>1. Gee, G.C., Wasleman, K.M. &amp; Brondolo, E. (2012). A life course perspective on how racism may be related to health inequities. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 102(5), 967-974.</p> <p>2. Sawyer, P.J., Major, P., Casad, B.J., Townsend, S.S. &amp; Mendes, W.B. (2012). Discrimination and the stress response: Psychological and physiological consequences of anticipating prejudice in interethnic interactions. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 102(5), 1020- 1026.</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How does the health issue you have chosen vary across races and ethnicities?</i></p>
Week 6: Feb 15 <sup>th</sup>	Health Inequality in the Life Course	<p>Text Book: Chapter 10</p> <p>1. Hatch, S.L. 2005 Conceptualizing and Identifying Cumulative Adversity and Protective Resources: Implications for Understanding Health Inequalities. <i>J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci</i> 60 (Special Issue 2): S130-S134</p> <p>2. Zlotnick, C., Tam, T.W. &amp; Soman, L.A. (2012). Life course outcomes on mental and physical health: The impact of foster care on adulthood. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 102(3), 534-540.</p> <p>Individual assignment: <i>How can the life-course pathway be used to explain the identified health inequality?</i></p>



Week 11: March 22nd	Test II	No readings
<b>Tackling health inequalities</b>		
Week 12: March 29th	Health inequalities: Implications for Social Policy and research	<p>Text Book: Chapter 11</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bleich, S.N., Jarlenski, M.P., Bell, C.N. &amp; LaVeist, T.A. (2012). Health inequalities: Trends, progress, and policy. <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i>, 33, 7-40</li> <li>2. Woodward &amp; Kawachi. Why reduce health inequalities? <i>J Epidemiol Community Health</i> 2000; 54: 923-929</li> <li>3. Marmot, M. &amp; Bell, R. (2012). Fair society, healthy lives. [Supplement 1]. <i>Public Health</i>, 126, S4-S10.3.</li> </ol> <p>Individual assignment: <i>Why do you think it would be critical for the health inequality you have chosen to be addressed? What strategies have been used to address the health inequality you have selected? How would you address the health inequality?</i></p>
Week 13: April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Review and wrap up	No readings assigned
<b>**April 12<sup>th</sup>: Final Paper due by 10.00 pm.**</b>		