

SOC 542: Medical Sociology

Research Paper

Important Dates:

Prospectus (~1 page/2-3 paragraphs on your proposed topic)	minimum 24 hours before <u>scheduled</u>
	meeting (in-person/by phone) to discuss
Draft (optional)	5:00 PM Friday, November 30
(Dr. Shinberg's comments returned by December 4)	
Research Paper	12-noon Friday, December 14, 2018

You will write a research paper on an approved topic. This is your opportunity to explore sociological aspects of health, illness and healing. Your research paper requires a bibliography, which has some restrictions.

I. Bibliography/References Cited. Students are not at liberty to use just any sources. In terms of locating and identifying sources, you must obtain **printed material** (material that originally appeared in print – PDF journal article images may be acceptable). (Other than specific sites and domains listed below, the internet does not count as a legitimate source.) Identify material using:

1. the IUP library catalog to identify books. Also plan to spend some time browsing the stacks of Stapleton. Do not only rely on popular press books. **Books copyrighted before 2000 are subject to my approval.**
2. *SocINDEX* to identify journal articles. Use this database to help you navigate the sociological literature. After you identify an article, you must obtain (and read) a complete copy of the article. If you want to use an article that is not indexed in *SocINDEX*, you must get approval. Recommended journals include:
 - a. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)*
 - b. *Sociology of Health and Illness*
 - c. *Social Science and Medicine (SSM)*
 - d. *Health Affairs*
 - e. *Milbank Quarterly*
 - f. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*
 - g. *American Journal of Sociology*
 - h. *American Sociological Review*
 - i. *Social Problems*
3. Government publications. **These sources must be produced as published sources, not web-page-only sources.** All government sources are subject to my approval.
 - a. the National Institutes of Health (nih.gov domain)
 - b. the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (cdc.gov domain)
 - c. the World Health Organization (who.int domain)
 - d. the National Academy Press (www.nap.edu).
4. All assigned course materials (and unassigned readings from our texts) are acceptable.

All materials are subject to my approval (on a case by case basis). Be prepared to share a copy of the source with me. I generally will not approve articles from medical sources. You must include sociological sources.

II. The Research Paper will be 12 to 15 pages on your approved topic. (Suggested topics are listed in section III.) This is your opportunity to learn more about a specific topic and to apply sociological understandings to a specific area of health and medicine. Be certain that you organize your paper and include an *introduction* and a *conclusion*. In between, you must provide: definitions; sociological perspectives (and related sociological theories and models); the extent of the issue, problem, or disorder (What is its social distribution? What are the trends?); the social organization of care related to the problem; controversies, contested meanings or debates (be sure to identify and evaluate each “side”); and any “model programs,” solutions, success stories or cautionary tales.

III. Suggested topics. Topics listed below are broad. You should expect to fit your into one of these areas.

1) The Social Construction of Illness (and the Medicalization of Women's Bodies)

Childbirth practices	Birth Control
Menopause	Fetal Testing
Premenstrual Syndrome	Reproductive Technologies
Menstruation	Cosmetic procedures
Body size	

2) The Social Construction of Madness & Mental Illness

Institutionalization, de-institutionalization	Bipolar Disorder
Depression & feeling "blue"	Crime and mental illness
Schizophrenia	Disordered eating / dysmorphias

3) Health Care & Health Insurance Reform

Universal insurance systems	Insurance mandates & minimum benefits
Universal medical care systems	Regulating health care prices
Public insurances	"For profit" health sector

4) Health Disparities & Inequalities

Gender & health	Socioeconomic status/social class & health
Gender & medical care	Socioeconomic status/social class & medical care
Race/ethnicity & health	Health policy, education policy & economic policy
Race/ethnicity & medical care	

5) Health Care Encounters: Patient-Physician Interactions, Communication & Care

Quality of care	Continuity of care across different providers
Patient satisfaction and empowerment	Physician training (medical school)
Time constraints on patient-physician interactions	Bed-side manner and emotional detachment
Listening skills & cultural sensitivity of physicians	Evidence-base medicine

All specific topics are subject to my approval. Submit your topic requests in writing (your prospectus). Ask yourself whether your preferred topic could be fit into one of the pre-approved topics above. Remember your paper must focus on **sociological understandings** and should not be solely from a medical perspective.

IV. Rules on formatting your research paper

1. Include a title page with the document title, your name, the course number, my name ("Dr. Shinberg") and the date. State the style format (APA or ASA) you use.
2. Do not use running heads. (I find them distracting.)
3. All pages, except the title page, should be numbered. The first page of the prose (narrative) of the assignment should be page "1." Any pages placed before page 1 (and after the title page) should be numbered in lower case Roman numerals: *i*, *ii*, etc. Page length requirement (12-15 pages) includes only the prose, not the bibliography, title page, etc.
4. Following the prose (narrative) part of the assignment, include a "References" cited section (your bibliography) beginning on a new, sequentially numbered page.
5. Use letter size (8 ½ X 11) white paper with black ink. Print single-sided. Set all margins (top, bottom, right and left) at exactly 1 inch. Use a 12-point serif font (Times New Roman preferred).
6. Beginning with page 1, double-space all text, except extended quotations.
7. Do not use footnotes. If notes are needed, please format as endnotes.
8. Do not skip an extra line or add space between paragraphs. (Reset MS Office defaults to "force" this.)
9. Where appropriate, use headings and subheadings to impose a structure/organization on your prose.
10. Do not use report covers. Simply neatly staple together your assignment with the title page on top. Upload conforming papers to D2L for electronic submission.