SC3397: Social Determinants of Health across the Life Course
Spring 2015

Tuesday 2:00-4:30 pm
McGuinn Hall 415

Professor: Sara Moorman
Office: 404 McGuinn Hall
Office hours: Tuesdays 10:30-11:30; Thursdays 2:00-3:00; and by appointment
E-mail: moormans@bc.edu

About the Course
In 2008, the World Health Organization declared that "Social injustice is killing people on a grand scale." Their report continued: "Avoidable health inequalities arise because of the circumstances in which people grow, live, work, and age [because of] the systems put in place to deal with illness. The conditions in which people live and die are, in turn, shaped by political, social, and economic forces." This course examines the effects of a wide range of social forces such as gender roles, cultural beliefs, and poverty in creating and sustaining health inequalities across childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

Required Books
The bookstore has ordered:


These books are also available on 2-hour reserve at O’Neill.

If you need support to buy books, please contact the Montserrat Coalition—go to Brock House at 78 College Road, call 617-552-8865, or e-mail Paula Dias at paula.dias@bc.edu.
Schedule

January 13: Introduction to the course—no reading due.

January 20: Come to class having read the first half of *Saving Babies?*

January 27: Come to class having finished *Saving Babies?*

February 3: Come to class having read the first half of *Hooking Up*

February 10: Come to class having finished *Hooking Up*

February 17: Come to class having read the first half of *Health Care Reform…*

February 24: Come to class having finished *Health Care Reform…*

***March 3: Spring Break***

March 10: Come to class having read the first half of *Fresh Fruit…*

March 17: Come to class having finished *Fresh Fruit…*

March 24: Come to class having read the first half of *Heart-sick*

March 31: Come to class having finished *Heart-sick*

April 7: Come to class having read the first half of *Labors of Love*

April 14: Come to class having finished *Labors of Love*

April 21: Come to class having read the first half of *And a Time to Die*

April 28: Come to class having finished *And a Time to Die*

Accommodations

If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.
Canvas

Visit the Canvas page for this course regularly for announcements, grades, course materials, a copy of the syllabus, etc. I promise you that everything you’ve ever needed (or wanted) to know about this course is posted, so *look before you e-mail*. If you e-mail me and don’t get an answer within 48 hours, it’s because *you don’t need me to tell you the answer to your question*.

Academic Honesty

Your work must be *your* words and ideas. When writing papers, use quotation marks around someone else’s exact words and identify whose words they are. If you come across a good idea, by all means use it in your writing, but be sure to acknowledge whose idea it is. Failure to comply will result in (a) automatic failure of the assignment, and (b) a report to the Dean and the Committee on Academic Integrity. For further information, please review the College’s policies on academic integrity here: http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html

Assessment

Grading scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
<th>A+</th>
<th>93 – 100%</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>90 – 92%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>none at Boston College</td>
<td>87 – 89%</td>
<td>83 – 86%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>73 – 76%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 – 69%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>63 – 66%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 – 62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
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Task | Percentage of grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Leader</td>
<td>2 × 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper</td>
<td>3 × 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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More detailed information about each of these tasks will be forthcoming in class, but to give you an overview of what we’ll be doing…

*Participation and Discussion Leader:* This class is yours. I’ve provided the structure, but you’ll provide most of the content and direction. Our weekly meetings will be discussion-based and led by you. Each week 2-3 of you will work together to lead discussion, such that each of you will be a discussion leader twice over the course of the semester. When it’s not your week to lead, it’s
your week to participate in the discussion. It’s essential that you keep up with the reading and come to class prepared to support the discussion leaders in their work.

**Reflection Papers:** As students interested in social justice, you’ll have strong reactions to the books we’re reading. For three of the books, you’ll write a 4-5 page paper about those reactions. I’ll provide you with a list of possible prompts to guide your reflections, but you’ll be free to choose your own direction if you prefer. You’ll write reflections on three of the books. The only restriction is that you can’t write a reflection on a book for which you’re a discussion leader. Reflections will be due the class period after we finish discussing the book in class (e.g., *Saving Babies* papers will be due on February 3).

**Proposal and Final Paper:** All of the books are written by sociologists or scholars in closely allied fields (e.g., medical anthropology). Thus, the books take a sociological view of the problems they address. For a final project, you’ll take a topic from one of the books and compare and contrast the sociological view to another discipline’s view. If you’re a sociology major, you can choose any other discipline. If you’re not a sociology major, you’ll compare and contrast the approach of your major discipline to that of sociology. On **March 17**, you’ll submit a proposal so that (a) I can double-check that your idea is feasible, and (b) you don’t try to do the project at the last minute. For most of you, the paper will be 10-15 pages long. Medical Humanities minors who are using this course as a senior capstone should talk to me early in the semester, as your requirements will be a little bit different. For all, the paper will be due **May 5**.

**Assignment Submission**

All written assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 pm Eastern time on the due date. Papers submitted after 11:59 pm on the due date are late and will lose a letter grade a day. That is, a paper submitted on time is worth, at best, an A. A paper submitted between midnight and 11:59 pm of the day following the due date is worth, at best, a B. If you wish to avoid the late penalty, you must make arrangements with me in advance, or you must provide proof of extenuating circumstances (e.g., doctor’s note, funeral program) or a letter from your class dean.