In this course we will be discussing mental illness from a sociological perspective. Or more appropriately put: from sociological perspectives. From a sociological point of view, mental illness has social causes and social consequences, and it is socially constructed as well as socially controlled. Mental illness also has a history regarding all of the above. Mental illness is sometimes discussed as a monolith, and yet there is a wide range of psychiatric diagnoses. This is a lot of terrain to cover! In this course you will get a broad view of these topics, as well as the opportunity to delve more substantively into your own chosen research topic throughout the semester, culminating in your final paper.

This is an upper level course, so expect to be pushed. There is a lot of reading, albeit much of which should be very approachable (for an upper level college student), and, at least in my mind, very engaging. That said, sociology is not mathematics, I do not cold call students, and I do not give exams. What you get out of this class will be what you put into it. The readings cover a wide range, so use them strategically and focus the closest on what is most useful for you. I will be actively engaging with you concerning your written work throughout the semester, and how you work with the comments I give you on your midterm paper will be an important part of your grade in your final paper (hint: they’re connected!). As I see it my job is not just to give you information and grades, but more importantly it is to help you improve your sociological knowledge, your critical thinking, and your academic writing, and to facilitate your active engagement with the course content in ways that are personally relevant to you. There are several reflection papers in this course which are up to you to work into your own schedule, but generally speaking, students should expect to be doing some amount of writing for this course on a pretty consistent basis.

Course Requirements:
10% attendance
15% participation
20% reaction papers (5 papers, each 2 pages and due night before classes of student’s choice)
27% midterm paper (5 pages; upload to Canvas by October 29th at 11:59pm)
28% final paper (10 pages; upload to Canvas by December 15th at 11:59pm)
More About Course Requirements: The 5 reaction papers will be on the weekly readings of each individual student’s choice, due by 11:59pm on the nights before the appropriate classes. Participation in class discussion is important, but different people have different styles and patterns of contribution. Each student should aim to contribute at least once during each class period, although I will not be tallying off precisely how many times so and so spoke, and when. I also consider meeting with me during office hours to count for class participation; although students should keep in mind that participating in class discussions makes class more lively and interesting, and is a good habit for students to get into. Every week I will ask all students to draw something pertaining to the week’s reading and discussion that I will name (these also count towards class participation). Students will hand these in to me and I will post the ones I consider the best up on Canvas (student names omitted). More information on the midterm and final papers will be posted on Canvas, well in advance of their due dates.

Grading scale

A: 93 – 100%
A-: 90 – 92%
B+: 87 – 89%
B: 83 – 86%
B-: 80 – 82%
C+: 77 – 79%
C: 73 – 76%
C-: 70 – 72%
D+: 67 – 69%
D: 63 – 66%
D-: 60 – 62%
F: 0 – 59%
Academic Integrity

Students must remain honest about their own work, and not plagiarize the work of others or present others’ ideas as their own without referring to the applicable sources of the ideas. Students cannot refer to imaginary facts or sources of information in their work. Students cannot assist others in breaches of academic integrity either. This should all be common sense, but then again, what is “common sense” really? To view the University’s full statement about academic integrity and how students are bound to it, visit: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html) (Links to an external site.).

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.

Required Texts:

Foucault. *Abnormal.*

Foucault. *Psychiatric Power.*


Scull. *Hysteria: The Disturbing History.*


SCHEDULE

Week 1: INTRODUCTION, August 30, September 1

For Tuesday: Chapters 1 & 6 in Scheid and Brown, *Handbook*.

For Thursday: Chapter 4 in Scheid and Brown, *Handbook*; & "Constructing Normality: A Discourse Analysis of the DSM-IV" by Crowe (find it in "Files" on the course Canvas page)

Week 2: Self & Identity, September 6, 8


Thursday: Karp. “Illness and Identity,” and “Self, Sickness and Society,” from *Speaking of Sadness*.

Week 3: “Nobody knows you when you’re down and out”, September 13, 15

Tuesday: Chapters 9 and 10 in Scheid and Brown, *Handbook*.


Week 4: Gender I, September 20, 22

Scull. *Hysteria* (first half)

Rosenfeld and Smith. Chapter 13: “Gender and Mental Health: Do Men and Women have Different Amounts and Types of Problems?” In Scheid & Brown, *Handbook*.

Week 5: Gender II, October 27, 29

Scull. *Hysteria* (second half)


Week 6: Race and Colonialism I, October 4, 6
Fanon. “Medicine and Colonialism” from *A Dying Colonialism*, “The Black Man and Psychopathology” from *Black Skin, White Masks*, and “Colonial War and Mental Disorders” from *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Wyrick. “Who is Frantz Fanon?” from *Fanon for Beginners*.


**Week 7: Race and Colonialism II, October 11, 13**


Heaton. Introduction, Chapters 4, 6 and Conclusion in *Black Skin, White Coats*


**Week 9: Foucault and Family I, October 18, 20**

Foucault. *Abnormal*, first half


**Week 10: Foucault and Family II, October 25, 27**

Foucault. *Abnormal*, second half


MIDTERM PAPER DUE October 29th (upload to Canvas by 11:59pm)

**Week 11: Treatment: Past and Present I, November 1, 3**

Whitaker. Chapters 3 – 7 in *Mad in America*.

**Week 12: Treatment: Past and Present II, November 8, 10**

Foucault. *Psychiatric Power*, first third

Whitaker. Chapter 8 in Mad in America

**Week 13: Treatment: Past and Present III, November 15, 17**

Foucault. Psychiatric Power, second third


Whitaker. Chapter 9 is Mad in America

**Week 14: Treatment: Past and Present IV, November 22**

Foucault. Psychiatric Power, third third

Scheid. Chapter 27: “Consequences of Managed Care for Mental Health Providers” in Scheid and Brown, Handbook

Whitaker. Chapter 10 in Mad in America

**Week 15: Conclusion?, November 29, December 1**

Whitaker. Chapter 11 and Epilogue in Mad in America


**Week 16: December 6, 8**

Laing. Politics of Experience

*FINAL PAPER DUE December 15th (upload to Canvas by 11:59pm)*