Behavioral, Psychosocial and Ecological Aspects of Health and Disease
Social Work 613, Section 001
Winter, 2006

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Course location: 2228 School of Education Bldg.
Mondays 9:10-12:00
Office hours: By appointment on Mondays/Wednesdays
Class#: 24168

Course web-site:

1. Course Description:
This course will survey the distribution, determinants, and psychological and behavioral aspects of health and disease across the life span. Social, economic, environmental, and cultural variations in and determinants of health, disease, and quality of life will be addressed, including the influence of factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and biological factors. Barriers to access and utilization, geopolitical influences, environmental justice, social injustice and racism, historical trends, and future directions will be reviewed. Health beliefs and models of health behavior will be presented, including help-seeking and utilization of health services. Stress, coping and social support, adaptation to chronic illness, the influences of privilege, stigma and discrimination, quality of life, and death and dying will also be covered.

2. Course Content:
This course will provide students with an overview of major causes of mortality and morbidity in the United States, including demographic, biological, behavioral, social, and community factors affecting health, disease, and quality of life. Selected international comparisons will be made. Special emphasis will be placed on risk factors and protective factors and implications for health promotion and disease prevention over the life span. A major focus of this course will be the impact of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and sexual orientation on health and disease, as well as the effects of poverty, discrimination, and privilege on access, utilization, and quality of care. Comparative definitions and theories of health and disease, including their evolution, strengths, limitations, and implications for social work and social welfare, will be presented. Theories and research on health behavior will be examined, including cultural differences in health beliefs and practices, use of health services, and barriers to care. Research and theory on stress, coping, and adaptation to illness over the life span will be presented, including the role of social support and the impact of discrimination and privilege on health status and disease outcomes. Implications for social work practice and social policy will be addressed throughout this course.

Special Mini-themes for the semester: This term, we will use directed readings and discussion to examine ongoing, contemporary events in relation to the course content. We will focus on Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath and the Avian Flu crisis and use these two real-life situations to explore issues of epidemiology and disease transmission, the impact of environmental events on health and communities, and the role of science and health and social policy in the prevention and mitigation of the adverse effects of these events.
3. Course Objectives:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
A. Describe the major causes of mortality and morbidity in the United States, and identify significant differences among various population groups.
   a) Discuss the impact of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and sexual orientation on morbidity and mortality across the life span.
   b) Discuss the influence of social, economic, geopolitical, and environmental factors on mortality and morbidity.
   c) Discuss the ethical and social justice implications of differences in mortality and morbidity across population subgroups.

B. Compare concepts and definitions of health and disease, including their evolution, strengths, and limitations, as well as the implications for social work and social welfare.
   a) Identify biological, socioeconomic, cultural, and behavioral risk and protective factors for health, disease, and quality of life across the life span.
   b) Explain the impact of poverty, discrimination, and privilege on health status and disease outcomes, including the ethical and social justice implications.
   c) Discuss the implications of concepts of health and disease for health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

C. Describe current theories and models of health behavior and their implications for health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
   a) Describe socioeconomic, cultural, and religious differences in health beliefs and practices, utilization of health services, and barriers to care.
   b) Describe stress, strain, coping, and adaptation as they relate to health and disease across the life span.

4. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:
   • Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed throughout this course and will be highlighted in content related to cultural differences in health beliefs and health behavior and the role of protective factors and social support in health status and disease outcomes.

   • Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed in content on differences in mortality and morbidity in population subgroups and access and barriers to care.

   • Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through content on concepts and definitions of health and disease, theories and models of health behavior, and stress, coping, and adaptation as they relate to health and disease across the life span.

   • Behavioral and Social Science Research will be presented throughout the course and will include findings from epidemiology, demography, medical sociology, health psychology, medical anthropology, social work, public health, medicine, nursing, and health services research.

5. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:
This course will address ethical and value issues related to behavioral, psychosocial, and ecological aspects of health and disease. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to inform practice in this area. Special emphasis will be placed on issues related to health care and the social worker’s responsibility to promote the general welfare of society. In addition, ethical issues related to working with various client systems will be
reviewed, such as confidentiality, privacy, rights and prerogatives of clients, the client’s best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, interruption of services, and termination. Also, please see course objectives 1c and 2b.

6. Course Requirements:
   Attendance
   You are expected to attend and to be prepared to take part in each class session. Attendance is important for you to keep up with course work. Missing three classes will reduce your final grade one half grade (e.g. an A will be reduced to an A-) and each additional absence will reduce your final grade an additional half grade. As adult learners, I expect you to make appropriate decisions about attending class. Please notify me as soon as possible if you must miss a class. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to be in class. Please be cognizant of the disruptive nature of coming to class late. If you are delayed, please enter the classroom as quietly as possible and wait until break to catch up with what is going on.

   Assignments
   You will have three assignments in this class and an article critique and facilitated discussion. Instructions for the assignments will be posted on the CTools website, as well as the grading criteria for each assignment.

   Format of papers
   All papers must be typewritten and double-spaced using a 12 point font and one inch margins. Use APA* for your papers, including proper headings and citations.

   General Expectations for Written Work
   You must use scholarly literature to support your presentation of material. You need to use multiple sources and synthesize them. Do not rely on direct quotations from your sources, instead summarize them in your own words.

   All written work should adhere to the following NASW editorial policy:

   In the interest of accurate and unbiased communication, the NASW publications program subscribe to a belief in the importance of avoiding language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. NASW is committed to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and groups, and material submitted should not promote stereotypic or discriminatory attitudes and assumptions about people. (Health and Social Work, 11:3, Summer 1986.)

   I suggest that you have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you turn it in. An outside reader can tell you if your writing is not clear, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful tools, but not as reliable as a human reader. For assistance with writing, contact The Sweetland Writing Center, 1139 Angell Hall, (734) 764-0429; http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/contact.html

   Academic Conduct and Integrity
   The conduct of a student enrolled in courses offered by the School of Social Work should be consistent with that of a professional person. Courtesy, honesty, and respect should be shown by students toward faculty members, guest lecturers, administrative support staff, and fellow students. Similarly, students should expect
faculty to treat them fairly, showing respect for their ideas and opinions and striving to help them achieve maximum benefits from their experience.

Student academic misconduct refers to behavior that may include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, falsification of records or official documents, intentional misuse of equipment or materials (including library materials), and aiding and abetting the perpetration of such acts. The preparation of reports, papers, and examinations, assigned on an individual basis, must represent each student’s own effort. Reference sources should be indicated clearly. The use of assistance from other students or aids of any kind during a written examination, except when the use of aids such as electronic devices, books or notes has been approved by an instructor, is a violation of the standard of academic conduct. Plagiarism – not referencing another’s words or ideas – is a violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment. In addition, papers that are completed for another course are not acceptable and will be assigned 0 points. Additional resources for discussions of academic conduct and integrity include the School of Social Work and the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT). Please refer to the Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2005-2006 for further discussion of appropriate academic conduct.

All assignments are due on the dates specified. Incomplete grades and late assignments are determined only through negotiation with me and that negotiation must occur before the end of the term or the assignment’s due date. Unless an extension contract has been arranged between me and a student, any assignment that is not completed on the due dates will have points deducted.

Grading
Both content and format will be considered in assigning grades. Though content is more heavily weighted in grade assignment, format, and presentation are also important. Failure to follow APA guidelines for referencing and for headings will result in a lower grade. Each assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria for each grade are as follows:
A or A- Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.
B+ Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.
B Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations
B- Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.
C or C- Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas need improvement in order to meet course requirements.
E Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Your final grade will be determined taking into account the following components:

1. Article Critique and Facilitated Discussion 10%
2. Assignment 1 – Health topic description 20%
3. Assignment 2 – Distribution and social determinants of health issue 35%
4. Assignment 3 – Effects of culture and behavior on health and illness 35%

Final grades will be assigned with the following scale:
A+ = 99 - 100       B+ = 86 - 89       C+ = 74 - 77
A  = 95 - 98        B  = 82 - 85        C  = 70 - 73
A- = 90 - 94        B- = 78 - 81        C- = 66 – 69

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**Important:** When making final grade assignments, I take into account various measures of class involvement and conduct such as level of class participation, attendance record, tardiness and/or preparation for class.

### 7. Course Materials:
The two required texts for this class (listed below) are available at Shaman Drum Bookstore (311-315 S. State Street; 734 662-7407; email: books@shamandrum.com). The books are on order and should be available the week of January 31st (copies of chapters for Weeks 3 and 4 are available in PDF form on the CTools website).


Reading Assignments: Articles are available on the CTools website for the class, on-line through the U of M Electronic Journals or they can be found in print in the U of M Libraries. Some reading assignments are handouts and are so noted on the list below.

### 8. Course Administrative Tasks

**Electronic Devices**
In consideration of your classmates, and due to their disruptive nature, I request that all students turn off all telephones and pagers while you are in my class. This is your time and I want you to be able to protect it. I prefer that you receive no messages during class time, however, if you must be on call for an emergency, please let your home or office knows that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager, please set it to vibrate only.

**Special Circumstances**
If there are any circumstances that require that I and/or the class adapt to your special needs, please consult with me.

**Religious Observances**
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.
9. Course Schedule:
Required readings are indicated by an asterisk (*). Please note that this schedule should be considered a flexible plan and is subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week in Term/Date</th>
<th>Topic(s) for Class Session</th>
<th>Course Preparation and Assignment Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> January 9</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Review of course requirements, topics and assignments.</td>
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| **Week 2** January 16 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday University-wide symposia | What: Health Sciences Program Featuring Dr. Na’im Akbar  
When: Monday January 16, 2006 at 11:45am  
Where: Dow Auditorium in the Towsley Center, UM Hospital, Second Floor  
***  
What: Dr. Beverly Wright, Director of Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, “Surviving Katrina: The Interplay of Race and Class”  
When: Monday January 16, 2006 at 5:30 pm  
Where: Lydia Mendelssohn Theater |
| **Week 3** January 23 | Environmental impacts on health | Special Symposium: Dr. Gregory Button will present “Human Rights Violations of the Hurricane Katrina Evacuees”  
When: 10-12 noon Monday, January 23, 2006  
Where: Educational Conference Center  
Dr. Button is a Visiting Lecturer in the School of Public Health. He has conducted research on disasters for over 25 years and has studied almost every major disaster in North America since Love Canal.  
NOTE: We will meet as a class from 9:10 to 9:50 and then proceed to the ECC to hear the presentation.  
The following materials from “Understanding Katrina” [http://understandingkatrina](http://understandingkatrina) should be read prior to this session:  
| **Week 4** January 30 | Introduction to health as a concept  
*** Distribution of health and illness | *Berkman & Kawachi* Chapters 2 & 3  
*Purnell & Paulanka* Chapter 1  

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Epidemiology</th>
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*All of the following articles from *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2005: Garrett, Laurie. “The Next Pandemic?”  
Osterholm, Michael. “Preparing for the Next Pandemic.”  

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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Social epidemiology</th>
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| February 13 | *Berkman & Kawachi* Chapter 1  
*Purnell & Paulanka* Chapter 2  |

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<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>“Race,” culture and health</th>
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*Purnell & Paulanka* Select 2 from Chapters 3, 8, 17 or 20  

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<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Winter Break</th>
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<td>February 27</td>
<td>No class session.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Gender and health</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>***Life course and childhood experiences and health</td>
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| Week 10 | March 13 | Health and adulthood
***
Work and unemployment |
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Berkman &amp; Kawachi</em>, Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Purnell &amp; Paulanka</em> Chapters 6 and 11</td>
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| Week 11 | March 20 | Social Support and social cohesion
***
Religion and health |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Berkman &amp; Kawachi</em> Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Purnell and Paulanka</em> Chapters 4 and 15</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>March 27</th>
<th>Poverty and social exclusion and health</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Berkman &amp; Kawachi</em> Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Purnell and Paulanka</em> Chapters 5 and 10</td>
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*Purnell & Paulanka* Select 2 from Chapters 12, 13 or 19


**Health Topic Description due**

**Distribution and Social Determinants Paper due**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>Social contexts and health ***</th>
<th><em>Berkman &amp; Kawachi</em> Chapters 9, 10 and 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>April 3</strong></td>
<td>Health and indigenous populations ***</td>
<td><em>Purnell and Paulanka</em> Chapter 18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>April 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Young, T. K.</em> (1996). Sociocultural and behavioural determinants of obesity among Inuit in the Central Canadian Arctic. <em>Social Science and Medicine</em> 43 (11), 1665-1671.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Health among diverse groups ***</th>
<th><em>Purnell and Paulanka</em> Select 2 from Chapters 7, 9, 14, 16, or 21</th>
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<tr>
<th>Week 15</th>
<th>Closing comments – Social justice and health ***</th>
<th><em>Berkman &amp; Kawachi</em> Chapter 15</th>
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10. **Additional Source Materials:**

A. **Books**


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B. Journals

American Journal of Epidemiology
American Journal of Public Health
Ethnicity and Disease
Gerontologist
Health and Social Work
Health Psychology
Journal of Adolescent Health
Journal of Aging and Health
Journal of Gerontology
Journal of Health and Social Behavior
Journal of the American Medical Association
Journal of the National Medical Association
New England Journal of Medicine
Pediatrics
Public Health Reports
Social Science and Medicine
Social Work in Health Care
Women and Health