

FALL 2016
SOCIOLOGY 417
SOCIOLOGY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ILLNESS
Professor Debora Paterniti

Contact Information: paternit@sonoma.edu

Prerequisites: Sociology major/minor or instructor consent

General Education: No

Course Description: This course will provide an overview of the sociology of mental health and illness by examining various theories and constructs of mental health and illness through the lens of culture, religion, and medicine. We will begin with an understanding of the historical perspectives and theoretical foundations that have shaped the sociological exploration of mental health and illness. Next, we will identify the contexts within which mental health and illness are defined (and by whom), and we will discuss the *social* sources of emotions and behavior defined as "mental illness" as well as their cultural and historical variants. We will examine the emergence of definitions and labels as well as related interventions and treatments for mental illness. Finally, we will examine contemporary mental health practices and policies.

Course Requirements: Students will be expected to complete all required reading and to come to class prepared to participate in lecture and discussion periods. Active course participation and attendance will constitute a portion (10%) of the final course grade. There will be two examinations (40%), which will consist of some multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions (essay questions will be selected from a list of study questions). A midterm paper (15%) and a final term paper (25%) will also be required. Five journal assignments (500 word minimum) will be assigned so that students can reflect in writing on course concepts and various topics (10%). Written assignments will be due on their designated due date, and must be turned in at the beginning of class to receive full credit.

Required Readings:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1973) *The Yellow Wallpaper*. The Feminist Press.
David Karp (1996) *Speaking of Sadness*. Oxford University Press.

Selections from:

Michel Foucault (1965) *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Random House.
Erving Goffman (1963) *Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Doubleday Anchor.
David Rothman (1971) *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*. Little, Brown & Company.

Additional publications (book chapters and academic articles) announced in class and posted to MOODLE.

Additional Expenses:

- Students will have some expenses associated with printing or photocopying required readings and course materials, including instructions for written assignments, example surveys, interview transcripts, and other materials.

Please note: the information above is subject to change.