

***This syllabus is from Fall 2006 and is an example of what the syllabus will look like for Fall 2008. However, there may be changes caused by new publications, materials or research so IT MAY CHANGE. Do Not Purchase the Text Until after the First Day of Class as it also may change.

Sociology 616
Fall Semester, 2006

Libby O. Ruch
Office: Saunders 235
Phone: 956-7717
Fax: 956-3707
E-mail:

ruch@hawaii.edu

Office Hrs: by
appointment

Seminar on Stress and Health Research

The objective of this seminar is to analyze current theory and empirical research conducted on the relationship between stress and health. Topics include the history of this research tradition in the sociological, psychological, and psychiatric literature; theoretical models and current issues about the stress-illness relationship; and methodological debates. An emphasis will be placed on the role of social support and other variables as mediators of stress; gender and stress; the effect of stress among individuals experiencing highly traumatic events, such as sexual assault and child abuse; chronic stress (e.g., caretaker burden); and stress from a comparative approach.

Seminar requirements: Occasional short papers and projects, a research paper, and presentation of the paper to seminar participants.

Required Texts:

Avison, William and Gotlib, Ian H. (Eds.). Stress and Mental Health: Contemporary Issues and Prospects for the Future. New York: Plenum Press, 1994.

Lin, Nan, Dean, Alfred, and Ensel, Walter (Eds.). Social Support, Life Events, and Depression. New York: Academic Press, 1986. Selected chapters will be provided as handouts in class.

Other readings will be handouts as indicated in the outline of topics and readings.

Outline of Topics and Readings:

I. An Overview of Stress and Health Research

1 Avison and Gotlib, "Introduction and overview," Chapter 1 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 3-12.

Kazdin, "Preparing and evaluating research reports," han

II. The History of the Stress-Illness Research Tradition

Dean, "Social support in epidemiological perspective," Chapter 1, handout.

Selye, "The stress process: Past, present, and future," handout.

Holmes and Masuda, "Life Change and illness susceptibility," handout.

III. Stressful Life Events: An Overview of Current Theoretical and Methodological Issues

McLean and Link, "Unraveling complexity: Strategies to refine concepts, measures, and research designs in the study of life events and mental health," Chapter 2 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 15-42.

Thoits, "Undesirable life events and psychophysiological distress: A problem of operational confounding," handout.

Vinokur and Selzer, "Desirable versus undesirable life events: Their relationship to stress and mental distress," handout.

IV. Measurement of Life Stress and Mental Health

Monroe and McQuaid, "Measuring life stress and assessing its impact on mental health," Chapter 3 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 43-73.

Miller, "Current Measures in the Assessment of Stressful Life Events," handout.

Mirowsky, "The advantages of indexes over diagnoses in scientific assessment," Chapter 10 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 261-290.

Ensel, "Study design and data," Chapter 3, passim, handout.

Tausig, "Measuring Life Events," Chapter 5, handout.

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR), National Institutes of Health, 9/11 Attack Instrument, handout.

Ensel, "Measuring depression: The CES-D Scale," Chapter 4, handout.

Ruch et al., "The Sexual Assault Symptom Scale: Measuring sexual assault trauma in the emergency room," handout.

Ruch et al., "The Clinical Trauma Assessment: Evaluating sexual assault victims in the emergency room," handout.

Loo et al., "Measuring exposure to racism: Development and validation of a Race-Related Stressor Scale (RRSS) for Asian-American Vietnam Veterans," handout.

V. Other Kinds of Social Stress and Health: Chronic Stress and Hassles

Wheaton, "Sampling the stress universe," Chapter 4 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 77-114.

Menaghan, "The daily grind: Work stressors, family patterns, and intergenerational outcomes," Chapter 5 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 115-147.

Serido, Almeida, and Wethington, "Chronic stressors and daily hassles: Unique and interactive relationships with psychological distress," handout.

VI. Social and Social-Psychological Resources and Mediators of the Stress-Illness Relationship: Concepts and Measurement

Sarason, Pierce, and Sarason, "General and specific perceptions of social support," Chapter 6 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 151-177.

Lin, "Conceptualizing social support," Chapter 2, handout.

Turner and Roszell, "Psychosocial resources and the stress process," Chapter 7 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 179-210.

Ensel and Woelfel, "Measuring the instrumental and expressive functions of social support," Chapter 8, handout.

Dean, "Measuring psychological resources," Chapter 6, handout.

VII. Modeling and Empirical Research on the Stress-Health Relationship

Pearlin and Schooler, "The structure of coping," handout.

Pearlin, Lieberman, Menaghan, and Mullan, "The stress process," handout.

Lin, "Modeling the effects of social support," Chapter 10, handout.

Clair, Fitzpatrick, and Gory, "The impact of psychosocial resources on caregiver burden and depression," handout.

Ruch, Palmore, and Wang, "The role of negative change events and social support in the aftermath of sexual assault," handout.

Ruch, Wang, and Palmore, "Social support, negative life events, and depression in victims of sexual assault: A panel

study," handout.

VIII. Vulnerability to Stress (Integrative Models)

Holahan and Moos, "Life stressors and mental health: Advances in conceptualizing stress resistance," Chapter 8 in Avison and Gotlib, pp. 213-238.

Ruch and Leon, "The victim of rape and the role of life change, coping, and social support during the rape trauma syndrome," handout.

Dohrenwend, "The role of adversity and stress in psychopathology: Some evidence and its implications for theory and research," handout.

Research topic and list of relevant references due Sept. 25, 2006 or before; first draft of research paper due Nov. 20, 2006; and final paper due Dec. 4, 2006. Presentation of research papers will take place the last week(s) of class.

C:616 OUT Fall 08 for web