

Fall 2017
Women and Health
Sociology 305 (Women's Studies 305)
TR 1:30-2:45 WEB 104

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Course description

This course's goal is to critically assess women's health issues from sociological perspectives. This course deals with a variety of topics related to women's health, from body image to violence against women. The course is guided by sociological concepts and feminist theories, and emphasizes power relations in society that influence health status, access to health care, and the structuring of care itself. Students will always be urged to think about women's health issues at the intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and gender.

This course's principal aim is NOT to provide students with the latest biomedical information on causes, treatments, and consequences of diseases and health. In other words, this is not a class in medicine or nursing. Rather, it aims to unpack social, economic, cultural, and political factors that influence health status of women. It will also critically examine the notions of "health" and "unhealth" themselves.

The course is lecture-based, and not a seminar with small number of students. But discussion in class on readings and discussion questions is critically important. Often times, there will be no "right" answer to themes raised in the discussion. Students will be encouraged to develop their own sociological arguments, but willingness to listen to other opinion is also critical to this process.

Student learning objectives

- To be able to sociologically analyze contemporary biomedical issues
- To understand feminist debates on major health-related issues for women
- To understand important concepts in feminist studies and to apply them to biomedical-health issues

Readings

Readings are posted online on the Laulima course link. Please make sure to have finished reading all the assigned readings before coming to class. Pop-up quizzes are intended to make sure that you have done that.

On missing classes

- Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in discussions and other activities.
- Each student is entitled to 4 absences throughout the semester. Each absence beyond this will result in lowering your overall grade significantly. Since I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences, I suggest you keep at least two of your absences on hold for illness or other unanticipated events.

Assignments and grades

	Max possible points	% total grade	Note
Reflection paper	100	20%	More instructions to follow
Mid-term exam	100	30%	More instructions to follow
Final essay exam	100	30%	More instructions to follow
In-class quizzes on assigned readings	56	15%	4 points X 14
Participation	60	5%	Absence (0), Attendance (1), Good discussion participation (1), Disruptive/unacceptable behaviors in class including unrelated use of electronic devices (-2)

On electronic distractions

- I take the class as a collaborative effort between myself and students. Each of you is an important co-creator of the course and your unique background and experience will enrich the course. Your full engagement in class is therefore necessary. Electronic gadgets tend to interfere with focus and engagement in class. Let's try to create a space that enables you to focus. Each class period is only for 1 hour and 15 minutes.
- Turn off your electronic gadgets (I-phones, etc). Put them away. You might need your gadgets for looking at the readings and taking notes, but if you know that you will be distracted, download the readings and turn off the internet connection.
- If I see unrelated use of electronic gadgets, I will reduce your participation points (see above). In order to avoid the point deduction, you have to let me know in advance that you have some emergency that you need to be connected in class (e.g. your child is sick and you are waiting to hear from a doctor).

Other rules

- Each student should check his or her email frequently for messages about the class. I will assume you check your email at least once a day. It is strongly recommended that you use your UH email address—I do not take responsibility for email messages that fail to arrive if you are using a non-UH email address
- Make-up exam/exams on different dates will not be given unless under extreme circumstances.

- If you have a physical/mental disability and you have disability access concerns, please contact the KOKUA Program.
- Please refer to the UHM website on academic dishonesty and related issues. http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/students/conduct/impermissible_behavior.html.
- Plagiarism and any kind of cheating will result in F.

Course schedule and required readings

Date	Required readings	Check when you finished the reading
August 22	Introduction to class (no required readings)	
WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENTS		
August 24	Ratcliff, K.S. 2002. "Introduction". <i>Women and Health: Power, Technology, Inequality, and Conflict in a Gendered World</i> .	
August 29	Murphy, M. 2012. <i>Seizing the Means of Reproduction</i> . Duke University Press. Chapter 2 "Immodest witnessing, affective economies, and objectivity"	
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN		
August 31	Dasgupta, Shamita Das. 2005. "Women's realities: defining violence against women by immigration, race, and class" in <i>Domestic violence at the margins: readings on race, class, gender, and culture</i> . Eds. N. J. Sokoloff and C. Pratt. Rutgers University Press.	
September 5	Smith, Andrea. 2005. "Looking to the future: domestic violence, women of color, the state, and social change" in <i>Domestic violence at the margins: readings on race, class, gender, and culture</i> . Eds. N. J. Sokoloff and C. Pratt. Rutgers University Press.	
BREAST CANCER		
September 7	Beam, Cris. 2007. "The Breast Cancer Club: When a Woman Receives That Dreaded Diagnosis, What Happens If She Doesn't Fit With the Pink-Ribbon Gang?" <i>Marie Claire</i> 152-153. Ehrenreich, Barbara, 2001. "Welcome to Cancerland." <i>Harper's Magazine</i> .	
September 12	Klawiter, Maren. 2008. "Early detection and screening activism" in <i>The biopolitics of breast cancer changing cultures of disease and activism</i> . Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.	
BODY IMAGE		
September 14	Hesse-Biber, S. N. <i>Cult of Thinness</i> . Chapter 3 and 4.	
September 19	Johnston, Josee and Juidth Taylor. 2008. "Feminist consumerism and fat activists: a comparative study of	

	grassroots activism and the Dove Real Beauty Campaign.” <i>Sings</i> . 33 (4) 941-966.	
CODES OF BEAUTY		
September 21	Glenn, Evelyn N. 2008. "Yearning for Lightness: Transnational Circuits in the Marketing and Consumption of Skin Lighteners." <i>Gender and Society</i> 22(3):281-302.	
September 26	Kaw, Eugenia. 2003. "Medicalization of racial features: Asian-American women and cosmetic surgery." In <i>The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, appearance, and behavior</i> . Ed. Rose Weitz.	
SEX EDUCATION		
October 3	Fields, Jessica. 2008. "Introduction: Asking More of Sex Education" from <i>Risky Lessons; Sex Education and Social Inequality</i> . New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.	
October 5	Chapter 5 "embattled knowledge" from <i>Risky Lessons; Sex Education and Social Inequality</i> . New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.	
REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE		
October 10	Soinger, Rickie. 2013. <i>Reproductive Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know</i> Oxford: Oxford University Press. P.66-87	
October 12	Smith, Andrea. 2005. "Beyond pro-choice versus pro-life: Women of color and reproductive justice." <i>NWSA journal</i> 17 (1) : 119-140.	
October 17	Study session	
October 19	Mid-term	
MENSTRUATION AND MENOPAUSE		
October 24	Chrisler, Joan and Jennifer Gorman. 2015. "The Medicalization of women's moods: premenstrual syndrome and premenstrual dysphoric disorder" chapter 4 in <i>The Wrong Prescription for Women: How Medicine and Media Create a Need for Treatments, Drugs, and Surgery</i> (edited by by Maureen C. McHugh, , Joan C. Chrisler, , Maureen C. McHugh, , and Joan C. Chrisler)	
October 26	Dillaway, Heather E. 2005. "Menopause Is the "Good Old": Women's Thoughts About Reproductive Aging." <i>Gender and Society</i> 19(3):398-417.	
October 31	"Menopause and Sexuality: Resisting Representations of the Abject Asexual Woman" (2015) chapter 6 in <i>The Wrong Prescription for Women: How Medicine and Media Create a Need for Treatments, Drugs, and Surgery</i> (edited by by Maureen C. McHugh, , Joan C. Chrisler, , Maureen C. McHugh, , and Joan C. Chrisler)	
MAKING BABIES		
November 2	Inhorn, M. and Birenbaum-Crmeli- D. 2008. "Assisted reproductive technologies and culture change." <i>Annual</i>	

	<i>Review of Anthropology</i> . 37:177-196.	
November 7	Brakman, Sarah-Vaughan; Scholz, Sally J. 2006. "Adoption, ART, and a Re-Conception of the Maternal Body: Toward Embodied Maternity" <i>Hypatia</i> , 21(2): 54-73.	
PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH		
November 9	Seelhoff, Cheryl Lindsey 2006. "Radical feminism and the politics of pregnancy and birth" <i>Off Our Backs</i> . 36 (1): 42-45. Young, D. 2008. "Home Birth in the United States: Action and Reaction" <i>Birth</i> 35:4 pp. 263-265	
November 14	Beckett, Katherine. 2005. "Choosing caesarean: feminism and the politics of childbirth in the United States." <i>Feminist Theory</i> 6 (3): 251-275.	
November 16	Oparah, Julia Chinyere with Black Women Birthing Justice 2016. "Beyond coercion and malign neglect: black women and the struggle for birthing justice." In <i>Birthing Justice: Black Women, Pregnancy, and Childbirth</i> . New York: Routledge	
November 28		
FETAL QUALITY CONTROL		
November 21	Asch, Adrienne. 2003. "Disability equality and prenatal testing: contradictory or compatible?" <i>Florida State Law Review</i> 30 (2): 315-42.	
November 28	McLaughlin, Janice. 2003. "Screening Networks: shared agendas in feminist and disability movement challenges to antenatal screening and abortion." <i>Disability & Society</i> 18 (3): 297-210	
CARE WORK		
November 30	Nakano Glenn, E. <i>Forced to Care</i> Harvard University Press. "creating a caring society"	
December 5	Glenn "Neoliberalism and globalization"	
December 7	Discussing the final exam	

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) of Sociology Department

1. Students will be able to evaluate sociological theories and use them to analyze and understand aspects of the social world.
2. Students will be able to collect, analyze, and interpret data, and draw valid conclusions from their analyses.
3. Students will have clear and effective verbal and written communication skills.

In this class,

1. Students will acquire skills in applying concepts related to sociology of health and medicine and feminist studies.

2. Students will master critical analytic skills utilizing concepts and theories of sociology of medicine, body, and gender.
3. Students will hone their oral communication skills through class discussions. Students will enhance their writing skill through essay components of the exams and other written assignments.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) of the Women's Studies Department

1. Analyze notions of women and femininity, as well as men and masculinity, taking into account race, sexuality, class, and nation.
2. Apply key concepts in Women's Studies, including the social construction of gender; sexuality/gender connections; intersections among gender, race, class, colonialism, and other vectors of power; identity; and social stratification.
3. Explore "real world" feminist issues.
4. Understand the nexus of gender, ethnicity, and colonialism in the Pacific-Asia context.
5. Apply critical thinking skills through oral and written assignments so that you learn to think analytically and to build increasingly sophisticated arguments.
6. Write well.
7. Communicate well orally.
8. Use interdisciplinary skills and perspectives.

In this class,

- 1 and 2. These are important concepts that will be discussed in the readings as well as in lecture. Writing assignments will also encourage you to apply these concepts and critically examine policies, cultures, and ideologies. In fact, you will be surprised how health issues serve as an excellent lens through which we can examine how social, cultural, economic, and political powers in the contemporary society.
3. The course encourages you to use theoretical and conceptual tools learned in class to apply to the real world situation.
4. In the writing assignments, you are highly encouraged to examine issues in Asia-Pacific, and how these power relations operate in its specific context.
- 5 and 6. Significant proportion of the grade is based on the essay questions in the exams.
7. Each class will have discussion sections and your participation is very important. Cheat sheets should also help you organize your thoughts about the materials before coming to class so that you can fully participate in class discussion.
8. This course is inherently interdisciplinary. Readings are chosen from a variety of disciplines, from sociology, anthropology, history, law, to popular readings. We will examine medical sciences and so-called "hard" sciences with the tools from these diverse disciplines.