AS/SOSC 2101.30

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF HEALTH: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

YEAR
FALL 2011

YORK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
Department of Social Science
HEALTH AND SOCIETY PROGRAMME

PROFESSOR
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jlwolff@yorku.ca

S 708 Ross / Tel. 736-5054 ext. 33298
This course explores challenging global Health issues and analyses them from a critical standpoint using the political economy as a theoretical framework. It covers the social, economic and environmental factors of health and discusses the constructions of health definitions and the health–illness process. Special attention is given to the Health Transitions in Industrial Societies, Environmental Health and the Medical Industrial Complex. It provides also introductory notions of the Health Systems in the Western World.

**CONTENT**

- SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS AND THE HEALTH-ILLNESS PROCESS
- CONSTRUCTIONS OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS
- THE BIOMEDICAL MODEL
- THE MEDICAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

**REQUIRED READING MATERIAL**

KIT is sold by York University Book Store (York Lanes).

- **KIT** Social Science 2101.03, The Political Economy of Health: International Perspectives, (2011).

**IMPORTANT BOOK FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL PROJECT:**

PLEASE READ VERY CAREFULLY !!!!

It is your responsibility to follow the course guidelines

ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>DATELINES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ COMPREHENSIVE READING CHART</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Individual work) (1 page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ RESEARCH PROPOSAL (team of two/or individual</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>work): Topic, Goals and Research Objectives</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(1 page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ RESEARCH PROPOSAL (team of two/ or individual</td>
<td>35 %</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>work): Complete work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ DISCUSSION SEMINAR (team of two)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>According to schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Exam Oral (Readings &amp; lectures). You should</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Weeks 11 to 12</td>
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<td>bring your reading notes and KIT). In class or</td>
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<td>under appointment.</td>
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<td>▪ PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Throughout term</td>
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Note1: Additional guidelines for Assignments and exam might be distributed in class.

GRADING SCALE

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<td>0-39</td>
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You will work on a total of 4 readings (from the reading list provided in class) and answer the following:

**What are the main keypoints, arguments, debatable issues and questions for further inquiry, for each reading?**

Fill in your Chart, as in example below. *Recommended to use legal size paper. Landscape format*

**Cover page:** Your name and Course number & Complete Reference (Authors and Titles)

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### Format example for Comprehensive Reading Chart

(This chart is an incomplete example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT Examples</th>
<th>Author 1 NAME</th>
<th>Author 2 NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keypoints /Keywords</strong></td>
<td>Nations organize medical services differently</td>
<td>Wealthy nations have healthcare systems divided into – entrepreneurial, mandated and social welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public vs. Private Systems</td>
<td>Birthrate control (in poor/transitional countries – e.g., China)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anomic vs. Socialized Systems</td>
<td>GNP – gross national product – can determine the quality of healthcare</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health care systems are reliant on rationing, planning and financing to remain solvent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Thesis, main arguments and debatable issues** | Anomic* system or privatized systems allow for discrimination within healthcare by independents (non-regulated selection of qualified patients) | Making hospitals a business that relies on a pay for service basis can place hospitals on the verge of bankruptcy if citizens can no longer afford to pay their hospital bills. |
| | Cost of health care can and usually does, exceed the ability to pay for “top quality” healthcare of poor citizens and poor nations | A mandated system forces employers and employees to pay into a system that they may never use – while those without a job are being completely subsidized by the employed. |

| **Questions for further inquiry.** | Can a middle ground be created between public and private healthcare systems? | Why do the wealthiest nations not offer free healthcare or have a form of mandated healthcare, while others do? |
| | Would government regulations or an industry watchdog prevent discrimination of private healthcare operators? | Will the help of wealthy nations improve healthcare of poor nations – if so, will this help global health and subsequently the health of their own citizens? |
Research proposal (Team of 2 students or individual work)

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: You are doing a Research PROPOSAL related to one or more Readings listed for this course and NOT a Research or Essay.

Work requirements. Please revise carefully the format (below):

The research topic and goals
General Research topics will be discussed in class. (Your goal is the purpose: what you want to achieve)

The research objectives. (PURPOSE AND CONCRETE ISSUES)
(The objectives are the concrete and specific issues you would like to study. Be very specific)

The hypothesis and questions. (YOUR HYPOTHESIS AND QUESTIONS)
(Present a set of relevant questions you would like to work on. These questions should be related to your research objectives. Prepare (3) three hypotheses you would like to test. An hypothesis is a formal research statement to prove right or wrong. Note that a good hypothesis can be proved either right or wrong.)

The rationale/justification of the research objectives and hypothesis. (WHY?)
(Explain why you think that your objectives and hypothesis are interesting and deserve to be tested and why your objectives are important and valid research targets)

The methodology you will use for your work. (HOW?) (WHERE IS THE DATA?)
(Explain how you are going to undertake your work. Indicate, the instruments for collecting data (use of primary or secondary sources), the empirical instruments to be used if applicable, etc.)

An accurate bibliography and data sources. (HOW MUCH I KNOW ALREADY?)
(Compile 12 sources and choose 3 to write a one paragraph annotation that explains why you think this would be a key source to use. Use: APA Style)

Final Comments: (WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE?)
(Write a one page articultated comment, avoiding generalities, on your experience and NOT on the work content. Rembember that you learn more from your mistakes)

NOTE: (7 pages - for individual work and 10 pages for team of two work)
**Research Proposal Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual work</th>
<th>Team work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= 7 pages</td>
<td>= 10 pages</td>
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</table>

Papers should be typed in Arial 12, using 1.5 spacing. Justify (align) **BOTH** left and right margins.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 1</th>
<th>Page 2</th>
<th>Page 3</th>
<th>Page 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The research topic and goal:</td>
<td>The rationale</td>
<td>The rationale</td>
<td>The methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Field and purpose of your study)</td>
<td>(The justification of the research objectives an hypothesis) (You will use bibliographical references for supporting arguments)</td>
<td>(The justification of the research objectives an hypothesis) (You will use bibliographical references for supporting arguments)</td>
<td>(How you will do the work and where you will get the information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Indicate VERY clearly your specific and concrete research objectives)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No generalities</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(Note : 1 additional page for team work)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 5</th>
<th>Page 6</th>
<th>Page 7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An accurate bibliography</td>
<td>Three annotated references</td>
<td>Final Comments :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12 original and academic sources)</td>
<td>(Why these 3 readings are useful for your Research)</td>
<td>What did you learn from your work experience ?</td>
<td>2 additional pages for Rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> Peer review references only. Academic publications.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Be specific and articulated. Write about yourself and not about the content of the work.</td>
<td>1 additional page for Methodology.</td>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I strongly advise students to consult NEUTENS, James &amp; RUBINSON, Laura, Research Techniques for the Health Sciences, Benjamin Cummings, 2002. RESERVE at Scott Library.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6
The **Discussion Seminar: Moderators** (30 minutes). The moderators will do the following:

a) Present a *very brief summary* of the given and scheduled Reading: (Only 5 minutes will be allowed. Longer summaries will be penalized).

b) Bring forward **Questions** for discussion seminar (maximum 20 minutes): determine a number of questions and issues arising from the article and submit to class for open discussion. You will be responsible for the group discussion.

c) Conclude, presenting your points for further inquiry and criticism (5 minutes)

There will be two or three Readings Discussion Seminars scheduled weekly

**Important Notes:**

1. The team will be evaluated according to its capacity to briefly present the work and to stimulate a **rich and dynamic discussion seminar**.

2. The **weekly schedule** of Discussion Seminars will be defined at the beginning of the term and will be determined for the whole duration of the term.

3. I strongly recommend to send yourself your presentation as an attachment in case you have technical problems when reading your memory key.

4. The only material allowed for distribution in class is the list of questions for discussion.

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**PARTICIPATION**

**PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected not only to attend but to truly **participate** in lectures and Discussion Seminars. Participation represents an important **20%** of the final grade. Commitment, preparation and active participation are important ingredients for a shared learning experience. Questions are always welcome.

**Note:** Please do not misunderstand the concepts of **Attendance and Participation**. **Attendance is mandatory.** Students are expected to attend **ALL** lectures, arrive on time and leave at the end of lecture time. However only attending lectures does not mean that you are necessarily an active student and that you will receive a good participation grade.
IMPORTANT:
The use of Notebooks and other electronic equipments is NOT permitted and will be penalized.

Cel phones are obviously not allowed and must be turned off prior to entering classroom.

I wish you a successful year at York. Please remember that I am always available to answer your questions or provide further counsel in your academic work.

Please feel free to drop in at my office at anytime 5 days a week AM or PM or better, to make an appointment.

Office location:

South Ross Building - Office 708 (7th Floor)

Telephone : 736-2100 ext. 33298 (office)
E-mail : jlwolff@yorku.ca
IMPORTANT NOTES:

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY / PLAGIARISM

At the beginning of the reading KIT there is a University policy statement on Academic Dishonesty. Please read the statement very carefully and make sure you are VERY CLEAR about what constitutes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Explanations will be given in class at which time any question you have about it can be raised. The direct insertion of material from literature or electronic sources without paraphrasing or attributing it to the author (including another student paper) constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious offence.

“I didn’t know” or “I didn’t understand” do not constitute mitigating circumstances for the offence, so please be sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism so you do not unwittingly engage in it. The penalty for such academic dishonesty at York normally involves a grade "0" and a confidential note in the student’s file.

Assignments policy

Please make note now of the dates of all assignments, tests and exams. Students who miss an assignment, test or exam must provide a valid medical certificate in order to be eligible for a make-up.

Penalties

Late papers or assignments will be penalized with 5 points off for everyday (including weekends). Assignments will not be accepted after two weeks late.

Withdrawal from the course without academic penalty

Please take notes of the University dates to withdraw from the course without academic penalty. It is your responsibility to follow the regulations, policies and stipulated dates to avoid failing the course.

Any petition for reappraisal of grades should be submitted in writing directly to the instructor.

Note:

It is requested that all students registered in the course attain a York University email account (name@yorku.ca)

A York email account will allow you to access the resources of York’s libraries.
## INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

### Week 1 (September 13)
- Organization
- Logistic
- Course Planning
- Assignments
- Concepts and definitions

## THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF HEALTH

### Week 2 (September 20)
- The Political Economy of Health & Course Planning update


### Week 3 (September 27)


## SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS AND THE HEALTH-ILLNESS PROCESS

### Week 4 (October 4)
- Health patterns
- Social factors of health and illness
- Comparative analysis
- Social class and culture
- Variations in Mortality and Morbidity


### Week 5  
(October 18)


### Week 6  
(October 25)


### CONSTRUCTIONS OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS AND THE BIOMEDICAL MODEL

- Concepts and definitions
- Role of medicine
- Bio-Medical Model
- Health Care Ethics
- Role of technology

### Week 7  
(November 1)


### Week 8  
(November 8)


**Week 9** (November 15)


**THE MEDICAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

- The Pharmaceutical Industry
- Strategies Marketing and Advertising

**Week 10** (November 22)


19) BRODY, Howard (2005). The Company we keep: why physicians should refuse to see pharmaceutical representatives. Annals of Family medicine. 3 (1) 82-85.

**Week 11** (November 29)


**Week 12** (December 6)

Exam Oral (Readings & lectures). You should bring your reading notes and KIT).
In class or under appointment after week 11