

WST 4704
DISCRIMINATION AND HEALTH

Fall 2021
class number 27819

Tuesday period 5-6, 11:45 a.m.-1:40 p.m.; Thursday periods 6, 12:50-1:40 p.m.
Tuesday CSE A101, Thursday CSE E220 (face to face)

Professor: Nilüfer Akalın

Office: Ustler Hall 205 (note, the half of the office hours will be on Zoom and the rest will be in person)

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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 9.40 – 10:40 a.m.

In this class we will study discrimination and health, primarily in the U.S., from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (e.g., women's studies, public health, psychology). The course is organized into three broad sections. The first explores mechanisms by which discrimination “gets under the skin” to affect health behaviors and health outcomes. The second dives deep into the influence of discrimination on maternal mortality. The third emphasizes routes to eliminating discrimination and improving health. Within each of these sections we will focus on a variety of types of discrimination, including those based on race, sex, social class, and sexual orientation/gender identity. Because these categories do not influence people in isolation, we will examine the intersection of oppressions whenever possible in our analysis.
(WST: SS/G&S; HDS Minor: Tier 1/Category B)

Content Warning: we will be tackling hard topics in this class, looking directly at material related to oppression, COVID-19 and other illnesses, and untimely death. My aim is that we will do so in a way that is educational, empowering, and hopeful. However, I acknowledge that some people may not have the bandwidth to tackle these topics at this moment in time. If that is the case for you, I urge you to consult with me and/or choose a different class instead.

DISCLAIMER

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly in class and via Canvas, are not unusual and should be expected.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- List and discuss physical and mental health challenges and disparities faced by populations targeted by discrimination (e.g., racial & ethnic minorities, women, LGBT people, poor people).
- Analyze how social and environmental factors create, contribute to, and exacerbate health challenges for people targeted by discrimination.
- Evaluate how multiple systems of power and oppression interlock to shape individuals' experience of the world and impact their health.

ADDITIONAL COURSE AND UF POLICIES

COVID-19 and Masks

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences emphasizes that, in light of CDC recommendations, **face coverings, though not required, are expected in all UF facilities, including your classrooms.** Regardless of vaccination status, mask usage is a responsible and vital way of preventing transmission of COVID-19. Faculty may also ask for mask usage in their offices during one-on-one meetings (with a provision for remote office hour meetings as an alternative).

Course technology

All participants are required to access course materials on Canvas via [e-learning](#). Additionally, I expect you to check your UF email daily for any updates I send out.

Attendance and make-up work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online [catalog](#).

Attendance is not required, but it is very strongly recommended. Among other benefits, you will perform better on written assignments if you have attended the class. In addition to attending class, please come prepared to engage with the material and to participate in the class discussion. This means you should do the readings assigned for that day *before* you attend class.

Late policy

You may not receive extensions on work in the class or take make-up exams, except in the most extraordinary circumstances (in which you will need documentation from the Dean's Office or Health Services). **Work which is turned in late for any other reason will lose five percent of its points for each day that it is late.** The "day late" begins immediately after the time the assignment is due.

Cell phone and laptop/tablet policy

Please turn off all cell phones before the beginning of each class. Even when phones are on vibrate, they disturb you and others around you. Texting, social media use, checking email, or any use of devices other than to access readings, take notes, or conduct approved research during class is not acceptable.

Netiquette and communication courtesy

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy during, before, and after class, in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats.

Academic etiquette

Respect for opinions voiced in class is essential and I expect everyone to treat each other professionally. In order for us to learn from each other, we have to allow each other to make mistakes, and to offer unpopular positions for debate. However, name-calling, other forms of verbal harassment, sexual harassment and microaggressions will not be tolerated and will result in being asked to leave the class.

UF Academic Integrity

This course will subscribe to the University of Florida Student Honor Code. A central part of the UF Honor Code is the Honor Pledge: *“The Honor Pledge: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by Students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”* Further information about the UF Honor Code and guidelines for Academic Honesty are here. In this course, plagiarism or cheating of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in failing the course and other disciplinary action. In all instances, you must do your own work. There is no excuse for plagiarism, or for submitting another's work, ideas, or wording as your own. This includes using direct quotes from online sources without citation or submitting a paper you bought but did not write. Ignorance is not an excuse. Please be aware that there are various anti-plagiarism techniques available for use by University of Florida faculty that enables faculty members to determine if research papers have been plagiarized. There is a difference between plagiarism and collaboration. Collaboration, for purposes of this class, is the act of discussing ideas with classmates, debating issues, and examining readings from the class together so that each of you arrives at your own independent thought. Collaboration in this class is encouraged.

Student conduct code and sexual harassment

This course also operates under UF's Student Conduct Code. The Student Conduct Code is a set of standards and regulations which describe the rights, privileges, and responsibilities for all currently enrolled students at the University of Florida. For more information, click here. UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more information, see UF policies regarding harassment. Furthermore, in order to make this an effective course for everyone, all participants will be expected to meet the professional standards of integrity expected for members of the Center for Gender, Sexualities, and Women's Studies Research. This means I expect all participants to interact with peers “professionally,” meaning with honesty, ethical behavior, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, and effective communication. Additionally, I expect all course participants will fulfill work obligations in a thoughtful and timely way, and display collegiality and sensitivity to faculty and other students.

UF gender equity

The Office for Accessibility and Gender Equity provides support to anyone affected by sexual or gender-based misconduct, harassment, or discrimination. Please know that both your instructor and TA in this course are considered Officials with Authority who are required to report violations of the gender equity policy. “Title IX is a federal law that requires officials with the authority to take action, to report violations of the gender equity policy. Officials with authority must report these violations to the Title IX Coordinator or their deputies. The obligation to report applies whenever an Official with Authority receives, in the course and scope of employment, information about the alleged misconduct and policy violation. The report must include all information known

to the employee which would be relevant to an investigation or redress of the incident, including whether the alleged victim has expressed a desire for confidentiality.” For further information, including how to make a report, click [here](#). Below are some specialist support services. You might not need them, but you might know someone who does. For specialist support in the aftermath of sexual assault, the Office of Victim Services on campus offer confidential, free support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Office of Victim Services

1515 Museum Road, (352) 392-5648 (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)
(352) 392-1111 (after business hours and on weekends)

Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center 352-264-6760 Monday-Friday,
8:30AM - 5PM, some services available 24/7

Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network 352-377-8255 (24-hour helpline)

Accommodations

The University of Florida is committed to providing equal educational access to students with disabilities. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) collaborates with campus partners to facilitate access and inclusion for Gators with disabilities. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [UF Disability Resource Center](#) (0001 Building 0020-Reid Hall, accessuf@dso.ufl.edu; Voice 352-392-8565; Fax, 352-392-8570) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. Information for students from the DRC is available [here](#). In this course, I am committed to providing equitable education access through reasonable accommodations as outlined in your accommodation letter. Please notify me within the first two weeks of class about any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodation to be unavailable.

Community resources

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The [U Matter, We Care initiative](#) is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor are available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helpful resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the [Counseling and Wellness Center](#). Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1. Here are additional resources:

- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu.
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: For immediate medical care in Gainesville, call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Extra course fees

There are no additional fees for this course.

Academic resources

The following are academic resources that may be helpful for completing this course:

- [E-learning technical support](#) - 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or email to Learning-support@ufl.edu. [Student help FAQs](#)
- [Library support](#) - Ask-a-librarian. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources
- [Teaching Center](#) - Broward Hall, (352) 392-2010 or 392-6420. Study skills workshops, study groups, and tutoring.
- [University Writing Studio](#) - 2215 Turlington Hall, (352) 846-1138, The [UF Writing Program](#) offers all UF students help in the ongoing process of becoming better writers. One-on-one tutoring, online tutoring, and workshops.
- [Career Connections Center](#) - 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Technology resources

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Privacy & accessibility policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Elearning/Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Reading, writing, and study time

Each week the class meetings will include interactive lectures and structured discussion. Before class you should complete the assigned readings and think critically about their application to topic of the day; there are sometimes written assignments to help you reach that goal. Course lecture each week will also include overviews of readings to help students with material. Please note, university courses, in general, are designed such that *every hour in class is expected to be accompanied by at least 3 hours of study outside of class*.

REQUIRED READINGS

Book

Donoghue, E. (2020). *The pull of the stars*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company. [referred to as PotSin in the weekly schedule; hard copy or ebook is fine]

Articles and other resources (available on Canvas through weekly modules)

Bowleg, L. (2012). The problem with the phrase *women and minorities*: Intersectionality—an important theoretical framework for Public Health. *American Journal of Public Health, 102*, 1267-1273.

Braveman, P. A., et al. (2011). Health disparities and health equity: The issue is justice. *American Journal of Public Health, 101 (S1)*, S149-S155.

Clifton, L. (1987). the lost baby poem. *good woman: poems and a memoir, 1969-1980*. Accessible via [Poetry Foundation](#).

- Creer-Perry, J., et al. (2020). Social and structural determinants of health inequities in maternal health. *Journal of Women's Health*, 1-6.
- DiPlacido, J., & Fallahi, C. R. (2020). Stigma and sexual and gender minority mental health. In E. D. Rothblum (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of sexual and gender minority mental health* (pp. 419-428).
- Donald, C. A., DasGupta, S., Metzl, J. M., & Eckstrand, K. L. (2017). Queer frontiers in medicine: A structural competency approach. *Academic Medicine*, 92 (3), 345-350.
- Douthard, R. A., Martin, I. K., et al. (2020). U.S. maternal mortality within a global context: Historical trends, current state, and future directions. *Journal of Women's Health*, 1-10.
- Feinberg, L. (2001). Trans health crisis: For us it's life or death. *American Journal of Public Health*, 91 (6), 897-900.
- Gravlee, C. C. (2020). Systemic racism, chronic health inequities, and COVID-19: A syndemic in the making? *American Journal of Human Biology*, e23482, 1-8.
- Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2018). Structural stigma and health. In B. Major, J. F. Dovidio, & B. A. Link (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Stigma, Discrimination, and Health* (pp. 105-121). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kapilashrami, A., & Hankivsky, O. (2018). Intersectionality and why it matters to global health. *Lancet*, 391, 2589-2591.
- Latt, S. M., Milner, A., & Kavanagh, A. (2019). Abortion laws reform may reduce maternal mortality: an ecological study in 162 countries. *BMC Women's Health*, 19 (1), 1-9.
- Majmudar, A. (2016) T.S.A. *Dothead*. Accessible via [Poetry Foundation](#).
- Martin, N. (2017, Dec 7). Black mothers keep dying after giving birth. Shalon Irving's story explains why. [NPR](#).
- Marmot, M. (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities. *Lancet*, 365, 1099-1104.
- Meier, S., Sundstrom, B., DeMaria, A. L., & Delay, C. (2019). Beyond a legacy of coercion: Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and social justice. *Women's Reproductive Health*, 6 (1), 17-33.
- Nunez-Smith, M., Curry, L. A., Berg, D., Krumholz, H. M., & Bradley, E. H. (2008). Healthcare workplace conversations on race and the perspectives of physicians of African descent. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 23, 1471-1476.
- Ogunwole, S. M., & Golden, S. H. (2021). Social determinants of health and structural inequities—Root causes of diabetes disparities. *Diabetes Care*, 44, 11-13.
- Poteat, T. (2021). Navigating the storm: How to apply intersectionality to public health in times of crisis. *American Journal of Public Health*, 111 (1), 91-92.

Ross, L. J. (2017). Conceptualizing reproductive justice theory: A manifesto for activism. In L. J. Ross, L. Roberts, E. Derkas, W. Peoples, * P. Bridgewater Toure (Eds.), *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundations, Theory, Practice, Critique* (pp. 170-180 only). New York: Feminist Press.

Taylor, J. K. (2020). Structural racism and maternal health among Black women. *Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics*, 48, 506-514.

Consider adding a (second) major in Women's Studies!

Do you want to learn about issues of diversity, power, equity, and justice and gain the scholarly knowledge and skills to change the world? Adding the Women's Studies major can deepen your critical thinking, analysis, and skills in intersectional feminist approaches to **studying and transforming gender, race, class, sexualities and other systems of power**. The Women's Studies major shows graduate schools and employers that you bring advanced knowledge and skills about diversity and equity issues. The 30-credit Women's Studies major consists of four core courses and six electives. It's simple to combine with another major, and up to 15 credits can double count with another degree (English, Psychology, and Sociology in particular have many courses that can double count). It's also the perfect complement to pre-health studies. Contact undergraduate coordinator Dr. Alyssa Zucker (azucker@ufl.edu) to make an appointment to discuss adding the major.

ASSIGNMENTS

Exams

There will be two take-home exams. You will be asked to write short essays in response to questions that will allow you to demonstrate understanding of course concepts and readings and to apply them to real world issues. There is no cumulative final exam during exam week.

Reading Reflections

There will be eight reading reflections throughout the semester. These assignments will help you understand and reflect on selected readings/video. Completing them will help you prepare to write your take-home essays. More instructions, and specific prompts for the different readings, are on Canvas.

GRADING

Please be aware that the level of effort you put into the class may not correspond to the quality of your work (which is the basis of your grades for assignments). To earn a good grade, you will be expected to do the work and meet the expectations for good quality work outlined in course assignment guidelines and discussed in class. There are 100 points possible in the class.

SUMMARY OF GRADING PERCENTAGE POINTS

Assignment	Point value	Number of assignments	Total points accruable
Exams	20	2	40
Reading Reflections	5	8	40
Participation	20	-	20
Total			100

FINAL GRADE

At the end of the semester, final grades will be determined by the following formula:

94 and more points = A	80-83 points = B-	67-69 points = D+
90-93 points = A-	77-79 points = C+	64-66 points = D
87-89 points = B+	74-76 points = C	60-63 points = D-
84-86 points = B	70-73 points = C-	59 and fewer points = E

In cases where the number of points falls in between letter grades, points will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

IMPORTANT GRADE NOTE

A grade of C- will not qualify for credit toward a major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit. For more information, see “Grades and Grading Policies” at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic	Read/Watch before today's class	Due Today
Part 1: Theoretical Models				
T	8/24	Course Introduction		
R	8/26	Health Disparities	Braveman et al.	
T	8/31	Discussion Social Determinants of Health	Marmot The Social Factors of Health (video)	
R	9/02	Discussion	Ogunwole & Golden	
T	9/07	Discrimination and Mental Health Discrimination and Physical Health Discussion	Gravlee Majmudar	Reading reflection I
R	9/09	No Class - Homecoming		
T	9/14	Intersectionality	Bowleg Poteat	Reading reflection II
R	9/16	Intersectionality II Discussion	Kapilashrami & Hankivsky	
T	9/21	LGBTQ+ discrimination & health Patient perspectives	DiPlacido & Fallahi Feinberg	Reading reflection III
R	9/23	Discussion	Transgender Healthcare Storytime (video)	
T	9/28	Provider perspectives Discussion	Nunez-Smith et al.	
Part 2: Maternal Mortality				
R	9/30	Maternal Mortality (MM) unit overview	Douthard et al.	
T	10/05	Discrimination and MM Discussion	Taylor Martin (audio/print)	Reading reflection IV
R	10/7	Reproductive Justice I	Ross (pp. 170-80 only)	
T	10/12	Reproductive Justice II Discussion	Clifton	
R	10/14	No Class		
T	10/19	Abortion care to reduce MM	Latt et al.	Take-home Exam I
R	10/21		We will watch Trapped	
T	10/26	<i>Trapped</i> discussion		Reading (Movie) Reflection V

	Date	Topic	Read/Watch before today's class	Due Today
R	10/28	Contraception to reduce MM Complications of LARCs and racism	Meier et al.	
T	11/02	Discussion		
R	11/04	PotS Discussion of Red and Brown	Read PotS Red and Brown (1-161)	Reading Reflection VI
T	11/09	PotS Discussion of Blue	Read PotS Blue (163-231)	
R	11/11	No Class- Vetereans Day		
T	11/16	PotS Discussion of Black and PotS Discussion	Read PotS Black (233-291)	Reading Reflection VII
Part 3: Making Changes				
R	11/18	Structural competency	Donald et al.	Reading Reflection VIII
T	11/23	Structural competency	Creer-Perry et al.	
R	11/25	No Class - Thanksgiving		
T	11/30	Discussion		
R	12/02	State/Policy Changes	Hatzenbuehler	Take-home Exam II
T	12/07	Last Day of Classes, wrap up		