

INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH DISPARITIES

Fall 2022

WST 2322 – Sec 2322/Class # 18094

T 2-3; CSE E121, R 3; FLG 0220, 3 Credits

Instructor: Dr. Joanna Neville (She/her/hers)

Email: jneville@ufl.edu

Phone: You may leave a message OR you may TEXT your question or concern to 352-327-8039. If you leave a message after 8pm, I will answer the next business day. Please make sure to include your name and class.

Office: 205 Ustler Hall

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 or by appointment. *I can meet via Zoom too.

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Oriana Fernandez (She/her)

Email : oriana.fernandez@ufl.edu

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Undergraduate Teaching Assistant: Caroline Davidson

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Rationale: This course introduces the concepts of health disparities, social justice, and health equity. The course will overview ample instances of health disparities captured from different geographies, including the United States. Furthermore, the course will examine historical issues, theories on race, gender, sexuality, immigration status, and ability, and empirical data. The course will shed light on intermingled nature of structural inequalities and how they are reflected in health and healthcare. With this course, the participants will develop a deeper understanding of health disparities, their connection, and intersection with social categories of hierarchy.

In addition, the field of health equity focuses on ensuring that all populations—regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, disability status, geographic origin, and so on—have equal opportunity to achieve and maintain a healthy life. Due to historical and current issues of marginalization, discrimination, and a variety of social determinants of health, many groups do not have the same access to the means necessary to achieve health and well-being. As a result, there are severe and persistent inequities in health status and outcomes seen across populations.

This course is designed to provide an overview of the field, including the origins and context in which health inequities occur, an in-depth look at multiple populations impacted by health inequities, and training in culturally specific methods to improve health equity. Course assignments are intended to advance student skills in a manner that provides them the tools necessary to make a meaningful difference in achieving health equity.

Course Aims, Objectives, and Outcomes: With this course, the participants will develop a deeper understanding of health disparities, their connection, and intersection with social categories of hierarchy. As a sociologist, I will often utilize the social perspective in understanding these concepts. This course will offer empirical, analytical, and theoretical tools to promote health equity through a combination of readings, lectures, reflection, and audio-visual materials. (WST: SS/G&S; HDS Minor: Core)

Students will learn to identify, describe, and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes, or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions. At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes concerning content, communication, and critical thinking: **Content:** Demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the discipline. **Communication:** Communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly

and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. **Critical Thinking:** Analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems

Specific Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students can expect to:

- Describe multiple aspects of the social environment that matter for health and identify the ways they contribute to health disparities.
- Critically evaluate evidence for social determinants of health and identify key gaps in knowledge.
- Apply a theoretical framework to understand one social determinant of health through research experience in a specific topic area.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES: For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk, not me. Here's the help desk contact info: <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 me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up or extension.

1. **REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND ASSESSMENTS:** A careful reading of the textbook is essential for success in this course. All of the assessments are based on your understanding of the material presented in the text. Class will be structured around readings from the text and other outside sources. We will structure our discussions around a sociological perspective, and students are expected to participate in a mature and responsible manner and respect the rights of others and their opinions.
2. **ESTABLISHING A QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:** People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content, which may include images, texts, data, and theories from across the disciplines. This is especially true in courses that deal with provocative or contemporary issues. In this class, *Introduction to Health Disparities*, students will encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, facts, ideas, and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the mission of the University of Florida, which includes the exploration of intellectual boundaries, the creation of new knowledge, and the pursuit of new ideas.

If students have concerns about classroom issues, disagreements, or grades, your first point of contact is me, your instructor. Please see my contact information at the top of this syllabus and on Canvas. I am always available and open to discuss concerns. If the problem cannot be resolved, we will email the next departmental contact: this may be the departmental course coordinator or the department chair. Their contact information can be found on the program's website at <https://wst.ufl.edu/> Email to the departmental contact should include a clear description of your concern and any supporting documents.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: Smalley, K. B., Warren, J. C., & Fernández, M. I. (2020). *Health equity: A solutions-focused approach*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Attendance : Attendance in this course is recommended, but it is not required. You can also access content on Canvas.

Assessments:

1. **Examinations** (100 points): Each exam will assess the basic understandings of three sections, which are the foundation for the course. There are three exams. The exams are NOT cumulative, and each will consist of multiple-choice questions pertaining to lecture, in-class discussion, and course material from the three sections. They will be on Canvas. No additional software is needed.
2. **Case Studies** (5 x 10 = 50 points): These 5 case-study reflection papers help students identify and develop an understanding of health disparities and develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. They are due no later than the listed time/day. Each response needs to have a minimum of 300 words and maximum of 500. See the assignment page on Canvas for rubric. Submit via Canvas. You may receive points off for late projects.
3. **Learning Activity** (20 points): Health disparities continue to be a pressing problem in American society. This activity aims to show students real-world explanations of health disparities using an active learning framework. More specifically, this in-class activity uses google maps to introduce students to health disparities, critically analyze the ways in which geography exacerbates health disparities and creatively develop policy solutions. See Canvas for more details and I will discuss in class.
4. **Participation Total:** (30 points)
A) Participation Reflections Discussion Posts (10x3=30 pts): These discussion posts will help students prepare for discussions. These questions will prompt students to think critically about the chapter material that week. You are required answer at least one of the questions that correspond to each chapter by posting on the discussion thread. Your post must be at least 50 words. The reflections must critically analyze the MATERIAL. Tie it back to the material for that week. They must be posted from the author's account and must be original. ***I will use these posts as a jumping off for our in-class discussions, so be prepared to discuss your post.** All posts will be via Canvas.

Grade Point Totals:

200-185 = A
184-179 = A-
178-173 = B+
172-165 = B
164-159 = B-
158-153 = C+
152-145 = C
144-139 = C-
138-133 = D+
132-125 = D
124-119 = D-
<119 = E

*There MAY be opportunities for bonus points.

**More information about grades and UF's grading policies is available in the Undergraduate Catalog
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies>

5. UNIVERSITY POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

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 in this course is 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.) Phone: (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: 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 via one-on-one tutoring, online tutoring, and workshops.
- Career Connections Center - 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

COVID-19: In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

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.

6. **Tentative Schedule.** *Subject to change by instructor. Last day to withdraw for a “W” is July Nov 21

Schedule	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1: Course Introduction and Introductory Post August 24-26		Classes Start. Submit Introductory Posts on Canvas by Friday, Aug 26 11:59pm
Week 2 : Module One: What is “Health Disparity?” Chapter One: Health Equity: Overview, History, and Key Concepts and Chapter Two: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Health August 29- September 2		Sept 1: Discussion Post #1 Due 9am
Week 3: Learning Activity and Chapter Three: Health Equity Frameworks and Theories September 5-9	Sept 6: Learning Activity Due before 11:59pm	Sept 8: Discussion Post #2 Due 9am
Week 4: Chapter Four: Health Equity Research and Collaboration Approaches and Exam Two on Chapters 1-4 September 12-16	Sept 13 Discussion Post #3 Due 8:15am	Sept 15: Exam One on Chapters 1-4. 30 questions. We will NOT meet in class so that you can take the exam on Canvas.
Week 5: Module Two: Part One: Population Perspectives on Health Equity: Examining Race and Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexualities Chapter Five: African American Health Equity September 19-23		Sept 22: Case Study # 1 Due before 11:59pm
Week 6: Chapter Six: Health Equity in U.S. Latinx Populations September 26-30		Sept 29: Discussion Post #4 Due 9am
Week 7: Chapter Seven: Asian American Health Equity October 3- 7		Oct 6: Case Study # 2 Due before 11:59pm

Week 8: Chapter Eight: American Indian and Alaska Native Health Equity and Chapter Nine: Health Equity for Kānaka 'Ōiwi, the Indigenous People of Hawai'i October 10-14		Oct 13: Discussion Post # 5 Due 9am
Week 9: Chapter Ten: Women's Health Equity and Chapter Eleven: Eliminating Men's Health Disparities October 17-21		Oct 20: Case Study # 3 Due before 11:59pm
Week 10: Chapter Twelve: LGBTQ Health Equity October 24-28	Oct 25: Discussion Post #6 Due 8:15am	Oct 27: Exam Two on Chapters 5-13. 40 questions. We will not meet in class so that you can take the exam on Canvas.
Week 11: Module Two: Part Two: Population Perspectives on Health Equity: Examining Location and Population Chapter Thirteen: Rural, Frontier, and Appalachian Health Equity and Chapter Fifteen: Health Equity in Veteran Populations October 31 – November 4		Nov 3: Case Study # 4 Due 11:59pm
Week 12: Chapter Fourteen: Health Equity in Immigrant and Refugee Populations November 7-11		Nov 10: Discussion Post # 7 Due 9am
Week 13: Chapter Sixteen: Health Equity in Populations with Disabilities and Chapter Seventeen: Achieving Health Equity for Children November 14-18		Nov 17: Case Study # 5 Due before 11:59pm
Week 14: Module Three: The Path Forward: Chapter Eighteen: The Role of Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility in Achieving Health Equity November 21-25	Nov 22: Discussion Post # 8 Due 8:15am	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving
Week 15: The Future of Health Equity November 28-December 2		Take Away Posts Due Before 11:59pm on December 2
Final Week: December 5-7	Dec 6: Exam Three on Chapters 13-18. 30 questions. We will not meet in class so that you can take the exam on Canvas.	