

WST2322 (class # 17356)
Introduction to Health Disparities

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
8:30am - 9:20am ET

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Olivia Adams

Teaching Assistant (TA): Ms. Alexandria Gibson

Office hours: Dr. Adams - Mondays 10am to 12pm or by appointment | Ms. Gibson - TBD

Please note: Office location (including Zoom links if applicable), instructor email, TA email, instructor phone contact, and TA phone contact are provided on the course Canvas page.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Course Description

The goal of this course is to examine the multifaceted issue of health disparities based upon race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, education, sexuality, disability, physical and mental health, geography and other factors (D). Related issues include social determinants of health, cultural competency, health literacy, advocacy, social justice and health equity. This course invites students to analyze these core concepts within specific health disparities contexts tied to both the United States at large and the state of Florida in particular. This course engages with texts that describe the historical and political circumstances surrounding health disparities in the United States, including the medical and insurance system, historical changes in the economic systems of the United States, and social forces that impact availability and accessibility of healthcare, particularly for historically marginalized groups (S and D). This course also examines present-day research programs and community organization efforts to reduce barriers to healthcare access and challenge healthcare disparities, particularly at the community level.

Course Designations

WST: SS/G&S, HESJ; GenEd: S, D; HDS Minor: Core

This course holds the diversity (D) and social and behavioral sciences (S) general education subject area designations. [Click here](#) for more information on these designations and their objectives.

Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. Students will identify, describe, and explain core concepts and theories related to the study of health disparities in the United States, including the social determinants of health, intersectionality, implicit bias, minority stress theory, cultural competency and humility, and health literacy. Students will also understand these concepts through the lens of multiple and intersecting identity categories, including gender identity, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, class, and disability. Students will examine these concepts by engaging with published research studies, interviews, and video essays that situate these concepts within specific healthcare barriers faced by people throughout the United States (D and S/content – assessed through reading reflections, midterm).
2. Students will apply their understanding of the social determinants of health and related concepts to health disparities in the state of Florida by collaborating with their classmates to identify existing community health organizations and create health information flyers that demonstrate the values of intersectional and culturally sensitive approaches to solving existing health disparities (D and S/critical thinking – assessed through group projects, written assignments, and class discussion).
3. Students will identify specific health disparities of personal interest and develop effective and creative presentations that link on-the-ground realities of healthcare access with systematic and historical policies and norms that both create and perpetuate health disparities today, with special attention to the differing experiences of accessing healthcare for people in historically underserved and marginalized groups. (D and S/communication – assessed through final project and group project/activities).

COURSE MATERIALS

- There are no required texts for this course
- All assigned materials are available through the course Canvas page
- Materials and Supplies Fees: n/a

ASSESSMENT AND GRADES**Graded Course Activities**

Note: Additional assignment details are provided on the course Canvas page.

Reading Reflections = 200 points

Brief (100-200 word) reflections on required weekly readings and videos.

Syllabus Quiz = 50 points

Multiple choice quiz assessing student knowledge of the syllabus policies.

Stories Assignment = 100 points

Extended (200-300 word) reflection assignment in which students engage with materials from a Florida-based health organization and make connections to fundamental course topics.

Midterm = 200 points

Test with multiple choice and short answer questions that assesses student understanding of fundamental course topics.

Health Flyer Project & Evaluations = 150 points

Group project in which students assess health Information flyers based on fundamental course principles -- includes a 3-4 page written report.

Final Project Proposal = 100 points

An outline or draft of the individual final project (see below).

Final Project = 200 points

An open-ended (e.g., multiple submission formats, including PowerPoint with voiceover, a website, a podcast, a video, etc.) individual final project in which students choose a health disparities topic to research and produce a final report that summarizes, analyzes, and connects the chosen topic to various fundamental course topics.

Grading Scale and Policies

Please see the grading scale for this course listed below. At the end of the semester, final grades will be determined by this chart. [Click here](#) for more information about the UF grading policy.

Please note: A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Letter Grade	Points
A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87

B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
S	<59

COURSE CALENDAR

Please Note: This calendar is subject to change for pedagogical or logistical reasons. To the extent possible, students will be notified in advance of any such changes.

Additional information about assignments, readings, and other course content can be found on the course Canvas page.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/PROJECT
Jan 7-13	Introduction: Health + Disparities	Reading Reflection
Jan 14-20	Social Determinants of Health, Pt. 1	Reading Reflection Syllabus Quiz due by 11:59pm on Jan 19
Jan 21-27	Social Determinants of Health, Pt. 2	Reading Reflection
Jan 28-Feb 3	Intersectionality and Health Disparities	Reading Reflection <i>Stories</i> Assignment due by 11:59pm on Jan 28
Feb 4-10	Bias and Healthcare	Reading Reflection
Feb 11-17	Minority Stress Theory	Reading Reflection
Feb 18-24	Cultural Competency and Cultural Humility	Reading Reflection
Feb 25-Mar 2	Health Literacy and Language	Reading Reflection
Mar 3-9	Patient-Provider Communication and Concordance	Midterm due by 11:59pm on Mar 8
Mar 10-16	Spring Break – No Class or Assignments	
Mar 17-23	Rural Health Disparities	Reading Reflection
Mar 24-30	Age and Health Disparities	Reading Reflection
Mar 31-Apr 6	Disability and Health Disparities	Health Flyer Project due by 11:59pm on Mar 31

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/PROJECT
		Health Flyer Project Evaluations due by 11:59pm on Apr 1
Apr 7-13	Mental Health Disparities	Final Project Outline due by 11:59pm on Apr 7
Apr 14-20	Reproductive Health Disparities	Reading Reflection
Apr 21-27	TBD – Students’ Choice Deep Dive	None
Apr 28-May 4	Finals Week	Final Project due by 11:59pm on Apr 29

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Attendance and make-ups

To accommodate the realities of a post-COVID-19 world, attendance is recommended but not required. **Students should refrain from attending class when sick and should otherwise make every effort to attend class in-person.** Missing class will not impact student grades in terms of attendance itself, but students will find that attending class regularly will provide time for questions, feedback, and other course engagement that they may miss if they do not attend. Additionally, while course content including readings and course lecture notes will be provided via the course Canvas page, **some course activities and their accompanying materials will only be available in-person.** These activities will typically take place on Wednesdays and/or Fridays.

Late Assignments

Assignments will be considered late if they are submitted after the assignment due date. 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted each day of lateness, and any assignments that are more than 5 days late will receive a 0. Exceptions will be made that align with the broader UF grading and absence policies. These exceptions may include make-up work where applicable.

Please note: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, [found here](#).

Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course 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 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/>.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

The university's honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc. suggested wording:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the 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." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See more here: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TA in this class.

In-Class Recording Policy

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 guest 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.

Additional Campus Resources

For a list of additional campus resources, see section C 5 here:

https://syllabus.ufl.edu/media/syllabusufledu/syllabi_policy_09_09_2022.pdf

The Office for Accessibility and Gender Equity <https://titleix.ufl.edu/>

UMatter: <https://umatter.ufl.edu/>

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

Hitchcock Field & Fork Pantry: <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>

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)