

**Discrimination and Health**  
**Spring 2023**  
WST4704– Section 47DH – Class # 29894  
MWF 3 (9:35-10:25am) ; LIT0109 ; 3 Credits  
Dr. Joanna Neville

**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.

**Rationale:** 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)

**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

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:** 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.

**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 articles is essential for success in this course. All of the assessments are based on your understanding of the material presented. Class will be structured around readings. We will structure our discussions around a primarily 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, *Discrimination and Health*, 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:** N/A. *Readings available on Canvas and see listed below.*

#### Course Policies

**Attendance :** Attendance in this course is recommended, but not required. If you choose to access all course content through Canvas, your grade will not be impacted by not attending in-person lectures. I will be in class on the assigned days and times to deliver lectures, interact with students, and facilitate discussion. I would love to see you there, but no part of your calculated grade is based upon attendance. Please see section on Covid-19- do not come to class if you have any symptoms of any illness. You can access content on Canvas. However, throughout the semester, I will choose random class days and take attendance. If you are there, you will receive a bonus credit. If you were present for all bonus credits, you will receive six extra credit points. You can also access content on Canvas.

#### UF POLICY ON MAKING UP MISSED WORK

**Attendance and Make-up Policy:** As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

In the case of an absence due to participation in an official university activity, observance of a religious holiday, performance of a military duty, or any other university-approved absence (e.g., jury duty) which the student knows about in advance, the student is expected to notify the instructor of the conflict before the assignment is due, and if possible, at the start of the semester.

## Assessments:

1. **Response Memos** (5x20=100 points): These (5) response memos help students identify and develop an understanding of the material and develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. They are due no later than the listed time/day. Response Memos should consist of two parts. First, you should work to determine the argument of the pieces, and what strategies/evidence the authors are using to support it. The first paragraph of your memo should *briefly* explicate how the authors convey and support their arguments. Second, you should focus on your analysis and reflections on the article. This means you should create and communicate your own argument about the reading. Each response needs to have a minimum of 500 words and maximum of 800. See the assignment page for rubric. Submit via Canvas. You may receive points off for late memos.
2. **Participation Total: 20 points**  
A) Participation Reflections Discussion Posts (10x2=20 pts): These assignments connect the material to the lived local experiences of students as well as more global ones. You are required to “reflect” or comment on articles or media that correspond to each chapter by posting on the Discussion thread. Your post must be at least 75 words and analyze the topic of that week and how the article intersects with the topic. 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.
3. **Learning Activities: (10x2=20 points.)** Both discrimination in the institution of health as well as health disparities continue to be a pressing problem in American society. Active learning activities aim to show students real-world explanations of health disparities using an active learning framework. More specifically, these in-class activities introduce students to health disparities, critically analyze health disparities and creatively develop policy solutions. See Canvas for more details, and I will discuss in class.
4. **Final Project: (Abstract Submission 10 points and Final Project 50 points)= 60 points** This project will help students synthesize and interpret the material learned throughout the semester. Students will be able to take the knowledge and transform it to their own. This activity is very flexible. I want you to take the areas that we covered and apply it to your field of study or future profession. The areas that we looked at are the following: health/illness, health disparities, and making changes. You will identify an “illness” or aspect of health; then, you will discuss its impacts on populations and why, and lastly, you will offer a solution in the form relevant to your field of study. You must first get your topic approved. See more details on Canvas. The word count minimum is 750 words.

## 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. See attendance policy.

\*\*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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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.uf](http://one.uf) 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 April 14

Schedule	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1: Course Introduction January 9-13	Classes Start		Introduction Posts due before Friday 11:59pm
Week 2 : Part One: What is "health?" "What is illness?" January 16-20	NO CLASS MLK JR Day	Barker (2010)	Discussion Post #1 Due
Week 3: The Body in Health and Illness January 23-27	Corbin (2003)		Response Memo 1 due before 11:59pm
Week 4: The Experience of Health and Illness January 30-February 3	Nowakowski (2019)		Discussion Post #2 Due
Week 5: <b>Part Two: "Who Gets Sick?": Social Context and Health Disparities"</b> February 6-10	Braveman (2011) and Marmot (2005)		Response Memo 2 due before 11:59pm
Week 6: Intersectionality	Bowleg (2012) and Poteat (2021)	Discussion Post #3 Due	Mental Health Day: MidPoint (just about) Check in: No class!

February 13-17			
Week 7: Race, Ethnicity, and Health February 20-24	Bradby and Nazroo (2021)		Discussion Post #4 Due
Week 8: Race, Ethnicity, and Health February 27- March 3	Gallegos and Segrin (2019)	Response Memo 3 due before 11:59pm	
Week 9: Gender, Sexualities and Health March 6-10	Anspach (2010) and Nakagawa and Hart (2019)		Discussion Post #5 Due
Week 10: Spring Break March 13-17	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week 11: Gender, Sexualities and Health March 20-24	Diplacido and Fallah (2021)	Response Memo 4 due before 11:59pm	Learning Activity Due before 11:59pm
Week 12: Health Discrimination and Ability (Ableism) March 27-31	Berger, R. (2013) and Viscardis et. al (2019)		Discussion Post #6 Due
Week 13: Health Discrimination and Mental Illness April 3-7	Weitz (2016) and Kirschner et. al (2020)	Response Memo 5 due before 11:59pm	
Week 14: SES and Health and Work on Abstracts April 10-14	Ross and Mirowsky (2010)	Discussion Post #7 Due	No Class: Work on Abstracts/Projects Project Abstract due before 11:59pm
Week 15: Moving Forward, Making Changes	Metzl and Hansen (2014) and Serchen et al (2021)		Discussion Post #8 Due

April 17-21			
Final Week: April 24-26 and Final Projects due before May 4	Take away posts due	NO CLASS Work on Projects	Project Due before May 4 at 12:30pm

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

Barker, K. K. (2010). The social construction of illness. *Handbook of medical sociology*, 147-162.

Berger, R. J., & Wilbers, L. E. (2013). *Introducing disability studies* (p. 224). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Bradby, H., & Nazroo, J. Y. (2021). Health, ethnicity, and race. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Medical Sociology*, 258-278.

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

Corbin, J. M. (2003). The body in health and illness. *Qualitative health research*, 13(2), 256-267.

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).

Gallegos, M. L., & Segrin, C. (2019). Exploring the mediating role of loneliness in the relationship between spirituality and health: Implications for the Latino health paradox. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 11(3), 308–318.

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.

Kirschner, B., Goetz, M., and Curtin, L. (2022) Mental health stigma among college students: Test of an interactive online intervention, *Journal of American College Health*, 70:6, 1831-1838.

Marmot, M. (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities. *Lancet*, 365, 1099-1104.

Metzl, J. M., & Hansen, H. (2014). Structural competency: Theorizing a new medical engagement with stigma and inequality. *Social Science & Medicine*, 103, 126-133.

McCartney, G., Popham, F., McMaster, R., & Cumbers, A. (2019). Defining health and health inequalities. *Public Health*, 172, 22–30.

Nakagawa, S., & Hart, C. (2019). Where's the Beef? How Masculinity Exacerbates Gender Disparities in Health Behaviors. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 5, 237802311983180.



- Nowakowski, A. C. H., & Sumerau, J. E. (2019). Reframing health and illness: A collaborative autoethnography on the experience of health and illness transformations in the life course. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 41(4), 723–739.
- Okoro, O. N., Hillman, L. A., & Cernasev, A. (2020). “ *We get double slammed!*”: Healthcare experiences of perceived discrimination among low-income African-American women. *Women’s Health*, 16, 174550652095334.
- 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, C. E., & Mirowsky, J. (2010). Why education is the key to socioeconomic differentials in health. *Handbook of medical sociology*, 6, 33-51.
- Serchen, J., Doherty, R., Atiq, O., Hilden, D., & Health and Public Policy Committee of the American College of Physicians. (2021). A comprehensive policy framework to understand and address disparities and discrimination in health and health care: A policy paper from the American College of Physicians. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 174(4), 529-532.
- Viscardis, K., Rice, C., Pileggi, V., Underhill, A., Chandler, E., Changfoot, N., Montgomery, P., & Mykitiuk, R. (2019). Difference Within and Without: Health Care Providers’ Engagement With Disability Arts. *Qualitative Health Research*, 29(9), 1287–1298.
- Weitz, R. (2016). *The sociology of health, illness, and health care: A critical approach*. Cengage learning.