

SPPH 301
Understanding the Sociocultural Determinants of the Health of Populations
Fall 2022 – Term 1
Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30-11 AM, FF317
University of British Columbia

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Office hours: TBD

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Course summary: SPPH 301 introduces you to key concepts in the research and applied field of the *Social Determinants of Health*. It shifts your perspective from a traditional model of health in which germs and individual choices cause health and disease, to a socially determined model in which health is determined by the conditions people grew up in and live in. You will learn about key findings, applications, current debates, challenges, and remaining questions in social determinants of health research. You can expect the weekly class meetings to be interactive, requiring active participation and critical thinking.

Learning objectives:

1. Define key concepts of social determinants of health;
2. Discuss the roles that various social determinants play in shaping health outcomes;
3. Describe the potential mechanisms and pathways through which social factors influence the health of individuals, families, communities and nations;
4. Examine how different social factors contribute to health inequalities; and
5. Compare policies and interventions either proposed or currently in place to address social determinants in population health

Required course readings and videos: There is no required textbook for this course. All course readings and academic videos are available online through the UBC Library (www.library.ubc.ca) and if not, direct links will be provided.

Evaluation

Students have to complete all assignments/course evaluations in order to receive a passing grade.

The grading guidelines at UBC suggest that results in an average class will fall somewhere within the following broad limits:

Grade "A": between 5% and 25% of the class; Grades "A"/"B": combined not over 75% of the class; Grade "F": not over 20% of the class

The average course grade is expected to fall within a B-range (i.e., 68% to 79%). However, there is no grade scaling policy in place (i.e., final grades will not be scaled up/down).

Evaluation in this course will consist of:

Reading reflection (10 x 1%): Posting reading reflections and responses to others' reflections accounts for 10% of your online participation grade (feel free to post more than 10, but you will only receive 10

points, 1 point for each post). When you are reflecting on an assigned reading or video or responding to someone else's reflection, avoid simply summarizing what was said. Instead, discuss what surprised you, where you agree/disagree, how it relates to other concepts you've learned about, and expand by adding your own perspective.

Midterm exam (25%): The mid-term exam is designed to assess your understanding and application of key concepts from social determinants of health that have been covered both in class and in the readings. The exam will be completed in-person during class and will consist of multiple choice and open-ended short answer questions.

Group presentation (25%): In groups of 3, students will give a presentation that includes a description and summary of evidence of a social determinant of health, pathways to health outcomes, and a population-level intervention. Presentations will be roughly 15 with 5 minutes of discussion. Presentation topics need to be approved by the instructor at least 2 weeks before the presentation. Each topic can only be covered once.

Final policy brief paper (40%): The purpose of this assignment is to prepare a policy brief describing the relationship between a determinant of health and health outcomes, and a recommendation for action. Students can choose between 3 predetermined topics.

The paper should follow a standard briefing paper format: issue and background, current situation and rationale for needing change, and the recommended action to modify the determinant or relationship. The paper should not exceed 1,500 words, double spaced (excluding references, figures, tables) and should include at least 5 research papers.

For detailed information on course evaluations, please visit Canvas.

Class Schedule & Required Readings (subject to change)

WEEK 1: Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health

Tues Sept 6th Course overview, syllabus, review of expectations

Thurs Sept 8th Thinking about health, illness and social conditions/contexts: An introduction and overview

Required readings:

1. Bezrushka, S. (2001). Societal hierarchy and the health Olympics. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 164(12), 1701-1703.
2. Cockerham, W.C., Hamby, B.W., & Oates, G.R. (2017). The social determinants of chronic disease. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 52, S5-S12.

Required video material:

Unnatural causes (documentary, available through UBC library) – Episode 1: In sickness and in wealth (56 minutes)

WEEK 2: Social Conditions and Lifespan Development

Tues Sept 13th The SDoH across the life span I

Required readings:

1. Cohen, S., Janicki-Deverts, D., Chen, E., Matthews, K. A. (2010). Childhood socioeconomic status and adult health. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1186, 37-55.
2. Zaccani, J. H. (2004). How to assess epidemiological studies. *Postgraduate Medicine*, 80, 140-147.

Thurs Sept 15th The SDoH across the life span II (**Asynchronous learning**)

Required readings:

1. Maggi, S., Irwin, L., Siddiqi, A., & Hertzman, C. (2010). The social determinants of early childhood development: An overview. *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*, 46, 627-635.

WEEK 3: Position, Place and Health

Tues Sept 20th Socioeconomic status and inequalities

Required readings:

1. Willson, A. E. (2009). 'Fundamental causes' of health inequalities: A comparative analysis of Canada and the United States. *International Sociology*, 24, 93-113.
2. Price, J. H., Khubchandani, J., & Webb, F. (2018). Poverty and health disparities: What can public health professionals do? *Health Promotion Practice*, 12(2), 170-174

Required video material:

- How economic inequality harms societies: [ted.com/talks/Richard_wilkinson_how_economic_inequality_harms_societies/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/Richard_wilkinson_how_economic_inequality_harms_societies/transcript)
- Della: Hurdles to health <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLKpywFD4c>

Thurs Sept 22nd The neighbourhoods we live in
Guest speaker: Dr. Sindana D Ilango (TBC)

Required readings:

1. Raj, C., Hendren, N., & Katz, L.F. (2016). The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *American Economic Review*, 106 (4), 855-902.

Required video material:

- Unnatural causes (documentary, available through UBC library) – Episode 5: Place matters (29 minutes)

WEEK 4: Indigenous Health

Tues Sept 27th Indigenous health and wellbeing
Guest speaker: Dr. Peter Hutchinson

Required readings:

(Forthcoming)

Thurs Sept 29th **No class**

WEEK 5: Gender, Sexuality and Health

Tues Oct 4th Sex and gender differences in health outcomes

Required readings:

1. Mauvais-Jarvis, F., Merz, N.B., Barnes, P.J., Brinton, R.D., Carrero, J-J., DeMeo, D.L., et al. (2020). Sex and gender: modifiers of health, disease and medicine. *Lancet*, 396, 565-582.
2. Quinn, MM., & Smith, P.M. (2018). Gender, work, and health. *Annals of Work Exposures and Health*, 62(4), 389-392.

Optional readings:

1. Butler-Jones, D. (2012). The Chief Public Health Officer's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada, 2012: Influencing Health – The Importance of Sex and Gender. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Thurs Oct 6th Sexual orientation and stigma
Guest speaker: Dr. Travis Salway

Required readings:

1. Hatzenbuehler, M.L., Phelan, J.C., & Link, B.G. (2013). Stigma as a fundamental cause of population health inequalities. *American Journal of Public Health, 103*(5), 813-821.
2. Scheim, A. I., Coleman, T., Lachowsky, N., & Bauer, G. R. (2021). Health care access among transgender and nonbinary people in Canada, 2019: a cross-sectional survey. *CMAJ open, 9*(4), E1213–E1222.

Optional readings:

1. LGBTQIA+ glossary of terms for health care teams: <https://www.lgbtqihealtheducation.org/publication/lgbtqi-glossary-of-terms-for-health-care-teams/>
2. Meet the methods series: “What and who is Two-Spirit?” in health research: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52214.html>

WEEK 6: Systemic Racism and Health Inequities

Tues Oct 11th Racial/ethnic discrimination and health

Required readings:

1. Williams, D.R., & Mohammed, S.A. (2013). Racism and health I: Pathways and scientific evidence. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(8), 1152-1173.
2. Veenstra, G. (2011). Mismatched racial identities, colourism, and health in Toronto and Vancouver. *Social Science & Medicine, 73*(8), 1152-1162.

Optional readings:

1. Challenging racist “British Columbia” 150 years and counting: https://policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2021/02/ccpa-bc_Challenging-Racist-BC.pdf

Required video material:

- How racism makes us sick: <https://www.tedmed.com/talks/show?id=621421>

Thurs Oct 13th Immigration status and health

Required readings:

1. Senthanaar, S., Koehoorn, M., Tamburic, L., Premji, S., Bultmann, U., & McLeod, C.B. (2021). Differences in work disability duration for immigrants and Canadian-born workers in British Columbia, Canada. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18*(22), 11794.
2. Kosny, A., Yanar, B., Begum, M., Al-Khooly, D., Premji, S., Lay, M.A., & Smith, P.M. (2020). Safe employment integration of recent immigrants and refugees. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 21*(3), 807-827.

Optional readings:

1. Undercover in temp nation: <https://projects.thestar.com/temp-employment-agencies/>

Required video material:

- Capernaum by Nadine Labaki: The award-winning film Capernaum is available on Netflix and through Criterion-on-demand at the UBC library:
<https://media3-criterionpic-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/htbin/wwform/006?T=MON2717>

WEEK 7: Employment and Health

Tues Oct 18th Precarious employment and health from and intersectionality lens
Guest speaker: Dr. Anita Minh

Required readings:
(Forthcoming)

Thurs Oct 20th **MIDTERM (In person at UBC)**

WEEK 8: Social ties, Social networks and Health / Population Health Interventions

Tues Oct 25th Social ties, social networks and health

Required readings:

1. Minh, A., Ritland, L., Webb, S., Forer, B., Brownell, M., Duku, E., et al. (2022). Does social capital flatten the social gradient in early childhood development? An ecological study of two provinces in Canada. *Social Indicators Research*, 159(2), 549–568.

Optional readings:

1. Ehsan, A., Klaas, H.S., Bastianen, A., & Spini, D. (2019). Social capital and health: A systematic review of systematic reviews. *SSM – Population Health*, 8, 100425.

Thurs Oct 27th Population health interventions (**Asynchronous learning**)

Required readings:

1. Frohlich, K.L., & Potvin, L. (2008). The inequality paradox: The population approach and vulnerable populations. *American Journal of Public Health*, 98, 216-221.
2. Lorenc, T., Petticrew, M., Welch, V., & Tugwell, P. (2013). What types of interventions generate inequalities? Evidence from systematic reviews. *Journal of epidemiology and community health*, 67(2), 190–193.
3. Whitehead, M. (2007). A typology of actions to tackle social inequalities in health. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 61(6), 473–478.

Optional readings:

1. Iovan, S., Lantz, P., & Shapiro S. (2018). “Pay for success” projects: financing interventions that address social determinants of health in 20 countries. *American Journal of Public Health*, 108,1473- 1477.

WEEK 9: Student Presentations

Tues Nov 1st Groups 1-4 present

Thurs Nov 3rd Groups 5-8 present

WEEK 10: Midterm Break (no classes)

Tues Nov 8th
Thurs Nov 10th



WEEK 11: Opioid Epidemic

Tues Nov 15th Social and structural determinants of health among people who use illicit drugs
Guest speaker: Dr. Danya Fast

Required readings:

1. Fast, D. (2021). Going nowhere: Ambivalence about drug treatment during an overdose public health emergency in Vancouver. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 1-17.

Thurs Nov 17th Groups 9-12 present

WEEK 12: Legal Frameworks and the SDoH

Tues Nov 22nd Criminalization, sex work and health
Guest speaker: Dr. Andrea Krüsri (TBC)

Required readings:

(Forthcoming)

Thurs Nov 24th Health and wellbeing in the context of incarceration (**Asynchronous learning**)

Required readings:

1. Martin, R.E., Buxton, J. A., Smith, M., & Hislop, T. G. (2012). The scope of the problem: The health of incarcerated women in BC. *BC Medical Journal*, 54, 502-508.
2. Oliffe, J. L., Hanberg, D., Hannan-Leith, M. N., Bergen, C., & Martin, R. E. (2018). "Do You Want to Go Forward or Do You Want to Go Under?" Men's Mental Health in and Out of Prison. *American Journal of Men's Health*, 1235–1246.

WEEK 13: New Ways of Thinking

Tues Nov 29th Pandemic environments and inequalities in health outcomes
Guest speaker: Dr. Chris McLeod

Required readings:

(Forthcoming)

Thurs Dec 1st Groups 13-16 present

Course Policies

Attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Class will begin promptly at 9:30 am. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from joining, please email the TA. It is expected that students complete the required readings and view video material before each class and be prepared to actively participate in class activities and discussion.

Gender-inclusive and person first language: Please incorporate and use *gender-inclusive* and *person first language* in your oral and written language. Avoid using: the schizophrenic, the homeless, the drug addict, etc. Use: The person who lives in poverty, the persons who suffer from mental illness, the person who uses illicit drugs.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct: Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is a form of academic misconduct. Students need to become familiar with the many different forms that plagiarism can take, including accidental and intentional plagiarism. For more information, please refer to: <http://help.library.ubc.ca/planning-your-research/academic-integrity-plagiarism/>.

Code of conduct: All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes positively to an environment in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusiveness are valued. Instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination, for example, are not tolerated and subject to disciplinary measures. For more on UBC's code of conduct, please refer to: <https://students.ubc.ca/campus-life/student-code-conduct>.

Accessibility needs: We strive to include all students, including those with special learning needs in this course. Please let us know (or have the UBC Disability Resources Center let us know) if you have a special need documented with UBC Disability Resources Center and/or if you need a special accommodation to allow you to fully participate in the course. We adhere to UBC Policy 73: Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. For more information, please refer to: <https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility>.