WGSS 483/583
4 credits
Meets 4 hours per week
Race, Gender, and Health Justice

Instructor: Dr. Mehra Shirazi
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E-Mail Address: mehra.shirazi@oregonstate.edu
Office Hours:

Course Description: This course focuses on factors associated with disparities in health status and health care. The course explores relationships among individual characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, disability, age, and sexual identity; interpersonal factors such as communication with health care providers, family and social ties, and discrimination; and societal-level factors such as neighborhood and community context, health care organizations, economics, politics and policies and seeks to understand how those factors shape health behaviors, access to health care services, and health status.

Student learning outcomes: As a result of having taken this course, undergraduate/graduate students will be able to:

• Identify and explain areas of health disparities.
• Analyze the ways in which the intersections of gender, race, and class relations intertwine and are expressed in disparate chances for health, illness and well-being as they relate to a specific health problem or disease condition.
• Analyze the interactions among social, cultural, and economic conditions that affect individual risk factors, behaviors, health status, and health disparities.
• Critically assess and examine research about a selected health disparity.
• Employ an intersectional framework to make recommendations for research and policies to address health disparities.

In addition, as a result of having taken this course, graduate students will be able to:

• Characterize and synthesize literature relevant to a specific health issue or disease condition.
• Articulate current health inequities from an intersectional framework.
• Appraise and synthesize the complexities inherent in improving health disparities.

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<th>METHODS OF EVALUATION</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper on topic of choice:</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Annotated Bibliography</td>
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<td>▪ Final version</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Presentation of paper in class:</td>
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<td>▪ Presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>▪ Peer review of colleagues’ presentations</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>PhotoVoice and Reflective Narrative</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>▪ Photo</td>
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<td>▪ Reflective Narrative</td>
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<td>▪ Presentation in Class</td>
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<td>Quizzes or short in-class writings</td>
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<td>Student-led Discussions</td>
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<td>Weekly</td>
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Required Textbooks:

1. Student Conduct: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity, and respect, and to guide the teaching/learning process. Students are expected to refrain from verbal and nonverbal behaviors in the classroom that may be distracting to others, such as, but not limited to: arriving late or leaving early, side conversations, text messaging, surfing the internet, answering e-mail on laptops, or answering cell phones. Students who persistently engage in behaviors that are disruptive to the teaching/learning process may be required to leave the setting.

2. Class Preparation and Participation: Students are expected to arrive on time and attend all classes. In the event that a student is late or will miss class, they should call or e-mail the instructor before the class. A pattern of late arrivals or missed classes will adversely affect the course grade. Students are expected to be prepared for and participate in all class activities and discussions. Assignments turned in late will receive a grade reduction unless pre-arranged with the instructor. Students must show evidence of completion of readings and thoughtful preparation by raising salient questions based on the readings and applying knowledge from the readings when responding to others’ questions. As a learner, students are expected to further their own knowledge while contributing to the learning of others. Class participation that relies on common sense knowledge or that relates personal experiences to the topic are also welcome but do not substitute for informed and analytic discourse on the topic.
CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1
Introduction to the Course
Readings:
- Dill and Zambrana, Chapter 1

Web resources:

Questions to ponder or for class discussion:
1. What do you hope to gain from the course?
2. What does health mean to you?
3. How do the concepts in this course relate to your research interest / topic?

Week 2
Health Disparities, Intersections of Poverty Discourse
Readings:
- Schulz, Part One (Intersectionality and Health)
- Dill and Zambrana, Chapter 3, 4

Questions to ponder:
1. What are health disparities? Do members of marginalized groups always have worse health outcomes? Give some examples of health disparities relevant to a population of your interest.
2. What are the Healthy People 2020 Leading Health Indicators?

Week 3
Constructing Whiteness in Health Research, Income & Poverty
Readings:
- Schulz, Part 2: Race, Gender, Class and Knowledge Production
- Chap 2: Reconstructing the landscape of Health Disparities in Research Pg.21-60, 89-131
- Dill and Zambrana, Chapters, 5,6, 7

Questions to ponder:
1. How do wealth and poverty affect health? Which affects health status more: income at a particular level or disequity in income?
2. What makes up “socioeconomic status”? How is SES measured?
3. What impact does the Federal Poverty Level have on individuals and families?

Week 4
Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Disparities
Online Class
Schulz, Part Four: Structuring Health Care
- Chap 10:From Conspiracy Theories to Clinical Trials Pg.289-313
- Dill and Zambrana, Chapter 10, 11

START THINKING/PLANNING/ACTING FOR PHOTOVOICE ASSIGNMENT
START THINKING ABOUT A TOPIC FOR YOUR PAPER FOR NEXT WEEK
**Week 5**

**Intersections of Race, Gender and SES:** Early Education and Public Engagement

Readings:

**Schulz:** Part Three: The Social Context of Health and Illness, pgs. 131-228

Dill and Zambrana, Chapters 8, 9

**BRING TOPIC IDEAS FOR PAPER TO CLASS**

**WORKSHOP AT THE LIBRARY - Autzen classroom**

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**Week 6**

**Disrupting Inequality**

Readings:

**Schulz:** Chap 12: Resistance and Resilience, pg. 345-371

Chap13: Intersections of Race, Class and Gender in PH interventions, pg. 371-394

Chap14: Movement Grounded Theory, pg. 394-425

Dill and Zambrana, Chapter 12

**BE PREPARED TO SHARE PHOTOVOICE ASSIGNMENT AND REFLECTIVE NARRATIVE WITH CLASS – BRING A HARD COPY OF YOUR REFLECTIVE NARRATIVE AND PHOTO FOR DR. SHIRAZI TO CLASS**

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**Week 7**

**The Biopolitics of Breast Cancer**

Readings:

Part I. Breast Cancer In Two Regimes, pg. 51-105
Part II. Cultures of Detection in the Bay Area, pg. 131-199

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY IN CLASS**

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**Week 8**

**The Biopolitics of Breast Cancer**

Readings:

Part III. From Private Stigma to Public Actions, pg. 229-295

Movie: TBD

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**Week 9**

**Reproductive Justice and Women of Color**

Movie: La Operacion

Readings:

Matters of Choice (read this short book about Puerto Rican Women’s Struggle for Reproductive Rights)

**SEE BLACKBOARD FOR INTERVIEWS WITH THE AUTHOR AND INFORMATION ABOUT FORCED STERILIZATION AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE**

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**Week 10**

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS & PEER REVIEW**

**FINAL PAPER – Sunday of week 10 by 11 pm**

**LATE PAPERS ARE NOT ACCEPTED**
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Student-led Discussions:** Starting from week 2 students will be responsible for taking the lead in class discussion on assigned chapters from the readings. This will include providing other students with a 2 page summary (12 font size, single spaced) of the chapter(s) as well as leading a high level discussion of the theme covered in the chapter(s). You may make use of discussion questions, audio-visual materials, outside research, or other creative exercises, and activities. Student-led discussions CANNOT be rescheduled. If you fail to attend your presentation, you will receive a zero for this assignment.

2. **Quizzes or short in-class Writings.** Students are required to complete short quizzes about the weekly readings or write short responses in response to questions posed and discussed in class.

3. **PhotoVoice and Reflective Narrative Assignment:** Do you have a story you want to share with others about barriers to healthy living? Do you want to share a story about creating positive change in your neighborhood? In this assignment you will use Photovoice (refer to blackboard for more info on Photovoice) to capture your stories. A wide-range of topics can be covered, including: community violence, housing, access to health care, mental health needs, disability, environmental issues, etc. What issues are important to you? Your task is to take multiple photographs of events, places or objects that reflect any of these issues of YOUR choice that are of interest or importance to you. You will select ONE photo for further discussion with your classmates.

   For the photograph of your choice you will write a one page narrative (reflective piece) according to the Reflective Narrative instructions (see below). Next, add your photo to the discussion board forum with the reflective narrative (see below).

   *To add your photo and text, follow these steps: Add Thread; Right click in text box; Click Image; in the window that opens, Click Browse My Computer; Find the photo you want to add; Click Insert. Then add your text.*

   If you choose to use portrait photography, always obtain consent from the person prior to taking your picture. If you need a camera, you can check one out through Student Media Services.

   Reflective Narratives Instructions: Please note the narratives have to concur with the following criteria: a) caption describing the photograph, b) max 450 words, font 12, ONE page only.

   The following general questions may help as a guide: What do you see here? What is really happening? Why did this situation happen? How does this relate to my/our lives? What can I/we do about it? What change(s), if any, could I propose? BE PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR PHOTO AND REFLECTIVE NARRATIVE WITH CLASS ON WEEK 6.

4. **Annotated Bibliography:** Each student should be prepared to present and discuss the tentative topic for their paper in class on Week 5. Students will receive feedback in class regarding the topic and ideas for potential narrowing of the topic, starting annotated bibliography, and also publication outlets of final paper for graduate students. An Annotated Bibliography (due week 7) is a list of citations to articles, books, chapters, and documents. Each citation is followed by the annotation, which is a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Annotated Bibliographies are different
from Abstracts in that Abstracts are the purely descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles. Annotations are descriptive and critical; they expose the author's (your) point of view.

Please note that an annotation includes three pieces:

• A summary of the work you are citing. For example: What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say?

• An assessment of the work’s usefulness to you. For example: How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is it this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source? What are its limitations? Did it use innovative or interesting methods? What is the background or authority of the author(s)? Are the author’s (s’) conclusions appropriate?

• Your reflections on how the work fits into your topic. For example: Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your paper? Has it changed how you think about your topic? How does this work clarify or relate to your topic?

Use 10-12 citations published during the past five years related to socio-cultural influences on health or a health disparity. The annotated bibliography will form the basis for the literature review of your final paper. Use APA format for citations, references, and formatting unless you obtain permission from the instructor to use another format.

5. Final Paper: The final paper (and presentation) should describe health disparities based on race/racism, class, and gender/sexism, ableism and the ways in which these forms of inequality interact to condition the health of a particular population as they relate to a specific health problem or disease condition and recommend directions for research and policies. The paper should demonstrate that the student is capable of analyzing a narrow area related to the selected topic.

Graduate Students are required to produce a manuscript suitable for publication in a professional journal relevant to the focus of the student's paper. A sample published paper that could be used as a model will be discussed in class. Graduate Students will be asked to identify an appropriate journal for possible publications of the paper. The paper should be written in accordance with the authorship guidelines for that journal. If a specific journal has not been selected, then APA format should be used.

Suggested outline of the paper
Abstract (max 200-250 words)
Introduction – describe issue and its significance
Definitions of the main concepts / aspects of the issue
Review of the literature on the topic – do not review individuals studies; rather, identify the 4-5 major trends or findings that emerge from the literature and summarize the findings across the studies
Overview / summary of the literature and recommendations for future research
Conclusions

In general, the paper should be approximately 10-12 double-spaced pages, not counting any tables or references. A draft of the paper can be turned into Dr. Shirazi (optional) by Week 9 and you will receive feedback on the draft.
The paper will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Focus**: Is the issue chosen focused enough to be covered adequately within the space of the paper?
- **Organization**: Does the paper’s structure conform to the guidelines of the journal? Is the paper’s structure apparent and easy to follow? [Suggestions: use subheadings to facilitate the organization of the paper]
- **Development**: Does the paper adequately include a (an): abstract that provides a clear overview of the paper, introduction of the topic, synthesis of the literature that presents a convincing argument in support of the writer’s position, summary of findings and reasonable conclusions, and recommendations for research and clinical practice?
- **Sentence structure**: Are sentences well formed and appropriately varied in length and style?
- **Mechanics**: Is the paper generally free of spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors? Are statements appropriately cited and referenced?

6. **Presentation of Final Paper**: Each student will share a PowerPoint presentation of their final research paper during week 10. Your presentation will be evaluated using the presentation rubric

7. **Peer Review**: All students will serve as peer reviewers during individual student presentations. The class will review evaluation criteria during a class prior to the scheduled presentations and students will use these criteria to provide feedback to their colleagues. The presentation rubric is on the last page of your syllabus.

**GRADING**

A  Excellent work. An example for all to follow. Exhibits openness and unusually sharp insight into many sides of an issue. Shows considerable critical thought. Written work is virtually flawless in terms of grammar, spelling, cogency, and content. Performs far above minimum requirements. Exceptionally articulate.

B  Above average. Speaks and writes well. Performs above the minimum requirements. Demonstrates very good understanding of ideas.

C  Speaks and writes in an acceptable manner. Work is satisfactory, average. Meets minimum requirements.

D  Below average work. Minimally acceptable, but unacceptable if this course is required.

F  Unacceptable work. Does not meet minimum requirements

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**Honor Code Policy**
Students are also reminded that they must at all times abide by the OSU Honor Code (please see http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses).

Statement on Academic dishonesty
(a) Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work;
(b) It includes "cheating" (intentional use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, or study aid), "fabrication" (intentional falsification or invention of any information), "assisting in dishonesty" (intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of dishonesty), "tampering" (altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents), and "plagiarism" (intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own);
(c) Academic dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, but will also be referred to the Student Conduct Coordinator for action under these rules.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities
"Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098."

Diversity Statement
The Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program strives to create an affirming climate for all students, including underrepresented and marginalized individuals and groups. Diversity encompasses differences in gender, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, citizenship, religion, socioeconomic background, physical or mental ability, veteran status, and sexual identity and/or orientation.

Religious Holiday Statement
Oregon State University strives to respect all religious practices. If you have religious holidays that are in conflict with any of the requirements of this class, please see me immediately so that we can make alternative arrangements.
PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Presenter’s Name _________________________________
Reviewer’s Name _________________________________

1. Presentation reflected a comprehensive summary of the topic
   
   INCOMPLETE 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE

2. Presenter discussed key implications for practice and research
   
   INCOMPLETE 1 2 3 4 5 COMPLETE

3. Presentation of content was clear and organized
   
   UNCLEAR 1 2 3 4 5 CLEAR

4. Findings were well-articulated
   
   NEEDS 1 2 3 4 5 WELL DONE IMPROVEMENT

5. Slides supported the presentation and were well designed
   
   NEEDS 1 2 3 4 5 WELL DONE IMPROVEMENT

6. Answered questions clearly
   
   UNCLEAR 1 2 3 4 5 CLEAR

STRENGTHS:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Other Comments: