

SOCI 345¹ - Sociology of Mental Health

Instructor/Contact details



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Course Description

This course provides a critical overview of the problems of mental health and illness from a sociological perspective. Topics include: the theoretical foundations of the sociology of mental health, the social conditions that influence mental well-being, the experiences and social meanings of mental illness and its treatment, institutionalization and deinstitutionalization, and the social construction of mental disorders.

Course Objectives

The learning objectives are: (1) to become familiar with key sociological concepts and debates concerning the nature of mental illness; (2) to gain a broad understanding of the relationship between mental illness and mental health in relation to various aspects of social structure; (3) to develop insights into the lived experience of mental illness; and (4) to become aware of alternate paradigms for mitigating the impact of mental illness and improving mental health.

Course Pre/Co-requisites

There are no pre-requisites for SOCI 345. Students from outside Sociology and/or the Faculty of Social Science are encouraged to consider taking this course

Required Textbook/Readings

Required readings include journal articles assigned specifically for each week of the course. The readings will be listed in the syllabus and available on Brightspace. It is crucial to do the readings at the beginning of each week so as to keep up with the material we cover in the lectures. The following book is also required: Susanna Kaysen (1994). *Girl, Interrupted*. New York: Vintage Books. The textbook is reasonably inexpensive and can be obtained online or through UVic's bookstore.

Format and evaluation

SOCI 345 will be taught in-person and use Brightspace as learning management tool. The readings, lecture slides and links to video clips will be uploaded on Brightspace as the courses progresses. Evaluation includes exams and one written assignment that is centred on Susanna Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted*.

¹ Please note that this online outline is only intended to give an overall and approximate sense of the course. A detailed course outline will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.