SOCI 345\(^1\) - 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: Kaysen, Susanna (1994). *Girl, Interrupted*. New York: Vintage Books. The textbook is reasonably inexpensive and can be obtained online or through UVic’s bookstore.

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\(^1\) This online outline is only intended to give an overall and approximate sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.
Format:
SOCI 345 will be taught online using Brightspace, Zoom, and Kaltura. Brightspace is UVic’s new primary Learning Management Tool and it will serve as our ‘home site’ for all course content, i.e., lecture links, videos, outlines, announcements, grades. Zoom is a video conferencing tool which we will use for synchronous office hours. Kaltura is video hosting platform where the lectures will be stored. Kaltura is accessible through Brightspace.

Lectures, Instructional Videos, PowerPoint slides, and YouTube clips. Pre-recorded (asynchronous) lecture video clips will be posted on Brightspace each week. The clips will typically be 10-15 minutes in length. You will need to log onto the course’s Brightspace site, go to the week we are studying and click the appropriate video. The lectures will cover course material, including theoretical perspectives on self and identity, and explain aspects of the assigned readings for the week. Each lecture will include PowerPoint slides that underline and complement the lectures. In addition, students will be provided links to relevant YouTube clips.

Weekly Discussion Forums. After completing the assigned readings and watching the lecture videos, students can post questions on the weekly discussion forum on Brightspace. Students are encouraged to answer or respond to each other’s questions/posts. All posts/discussions will be saved and available for viewing throughout the semester.

Office Hours. Synchronous (live) office hours will be held on Zoom based on the content of weekly forums. The intent of the tutorials is for students to ask questions on the readings and lectures. Students unable to join synchronously due to time zones differences can email any questions they have to the TA and/or the instructor.

Evaluation

3 online quizzes (60%)

Students will complete 3 brief online quizzes each worth 20%. The quizzes will have short answer questions designed to test knowledge from the textbook, reading on Brightspace, and lecture material (incl. videos and guest lectures). A set amount of time will be allocated for completion of the quizzes and students will need to complete the quizzes in the allocated timeframe.

1 essay assignment (40%)

The written assignment consists of a 10 double-spaced typed pages essay worth 40% of the total course grade. The assignment must be referenced using APA style. Information about the APA style is available from the UVic library website. Details on the assignment will be uploaded on Brightspace.