Meeting Time and Place: TTh 2:00-3:30PM, BUR 108

Instructor: Jiwon Jeon, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: T.TH 12:30 - 1:30PM (and by appointment)
Office and Phone: BUR 486 (phone: 471-4825)

Teaching Assistant: David Glisch-Sánchez, MPP
Email Address: glischsanchez@mail.utexas.edu
Office hours: Tues 3:45-5:15PM, Thurs 9:30-11:00A.M.
Office and Phone: Burdine 602 (stair access only, if stairs are a problem please e-mail me beforehand)

Course Description
This course critically examines health status and health care disparities among racial/ethnic minority groups in the United States. We will review the complex relationship between social class (socioeconomic status) and health status, the effect of race/ethnicity on health outcomes and access to healthcare, and specific health issues for major racial/ethnic minority groups in the U.S. The topics include conceptual issues central to understanding how low socioeconomic status leads to poor health, understanding how conscious, unconscious, and institutionalized racial bias affects medical care and health outcomes, and addressing ideas for reducing health disparities among racial/ethnic minorities.

Required Text and Readings:


Additional readings: In addition to above textbooks, other course materials including additional readings will be posted to blackboard each week. Readings should be completed for the week they are assigned.

Course requirements and Exams:
Class activities will include lectures and discussions of various topics. All examinations cover assigned reading materials, topics covered in lectures, and class discussions.

Exams (total 300 points): There will be three in-class exams worth 100 points each. The in-class exams will cover the readings and lecture materials covered prior to that exam. The format of the in-class exams will be multiple-choice, true and false, and short/medium-answer questions. Missed exams will be counted as zero unless arrangements are made in advance. Make-up exams will be given only if a physician’s note or other verifiable document is provided.

Essay (total 100 points): In addition to exams, students will write one short paper designed to assess the understanding of current health status and causes of health disparities among racial/ethnic minorities in the US and the complex relationship between socioeconomic status and race in US health care systems. This paper should be no longer than 5 pages (double spaced) and must returned in person in class. E-mail attachments will not be accepted.
Class Components (total 100 points): The in-class component will be measured by pop quizzes and class participation. There will be 10 pop quizzes given periodically at the instructor’s discretion, based on weekly readings, class discussions, and short-films shown during class. Pop quizzes will be given at the start of class and should last no more than 5 to 10 minutes.

Attendance and Participation Policy
Class attendance will not formally be taken. However, the participation in pop quizzes will be a proxy for attendance and this may influence your final grade. In the event of absence, you will be responsible for all information presented in the class.

Religious Holy Days
If a class or exam must be missed due to a religious holyday, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Academic Integrity
All students are expected to conform to the standards of academic integrity. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth by the University of Texas at Austin.

Academic Accommodations
The University makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any students with a documented disability should contact Services for Student with Disabilities and the instructor about any special needs. More information is available by calling 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641(TTY).

Course Outline and Reading Schedule
The following is a tentative schedule of topics. Changes of dates may occur during the course of the semester and will be announced in advance. Students will be responsible for all changes announced in class or posted on blackboard. Readings should be completed for the week they are assigned.

Week 1: Introduction and Overview
   Barr, chapter 1
   LaViest, chapter 1

Week 2: Health and Health Disparities: Why do we care?
   Barr, chapter 2
   LaViest, chapter 3 & 4

Week 3: Socioeconomic Status and Health: Social determinants of health
   Barr, chapter 3
   LaViest, chapter 8
Week 4: How Low SES Leads to Poor Health: Inequality and stress
Barr, chapter 4

Week 5: Living Conditions & Neighborhood: Health and social capital

Week 6: View Film “Stress: portrait of a killer”

EXAM ONE (September 30, Thursday)

Week 7: Race, Ethnicity, and Health: Race as a social construct and its effect on health
Barr, chapter 5
LaViest, chapter 2

Week 8: Race, Ethnicity, SES and Health: Which is more important?
Barr, chapter 6

Week 9: Theories of Racial/Ethnic differences in Health: Socio-environmental, psychosocial/behavioral, bio-physiological factors
LaViest, chapter 7 & 9
Boardman, J.D. Health Pessimism among black and white adults: the role of interpersonal and institutional maltreatment, *Social Science and Medicine* 2004; 59:2523-2533

October 21: Paper Due

LaViest, chapter 11, 12, 13

Week 11: Specific Health Issues: Hispanics/Latinos
LaViest, chapter 13

Exam Two (November 4, Thursday)
Week 12: Healthcare Reform 2010
The Kaiser Family Foundation. Massachusetts Health Care Reform: Three Years Later, Medicaid and the Uninsured; Kaiser Commission on Key Facts 2009; September

Week 13: Healthcare Disparities and Unequal treatment
LaViest, chapter 6

Week 14: Reducing Health Disparities: Issues and questions
Barr, chapter 7 & 8
LaViest, chapter 14

Week 15: Review and Exam Three (December 2, Thursday)