Health Disparities: A biopsychosocial perspective

Course: PSYC 4931-103, Spring 2022

¡Bienvenidos!

We acknowledge that Marquette University is on the traditional homelands of the Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho-Chunk Indian Nations, who have known this land as a relative for millennia and who remain our hosts on it.

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Office hours: Thursday 12:30-1:30 PM (in person, masks required)

Mondays 11-12 PM

Please feel free to suggest another time if these don’t work for you. I can ALWAYS meet by appointment (virtual or in person).

Office hours are for those with questions, who seek advice, want to share and/or provide feedback. Discussion can be about this class and beyond. Come in pairs or come by yourself, bring a friend- office hours are for EVERYONE!

I will attempt to respond to email within 24 hours (by Monday if you send it over the weekend). If you do not receive a reply from me by then, please resend the email.

Required Texts:

LaVeist, T.A., & Isaac, L.A. (Eds). (2012). Race, Ethnicity, and Health: A Public Health Reader, Second Edition. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass ISBN: 0787964131

Bartley, M. (2017) Health Inequality, Second Edition. Wiley. ISBN: 9780745627793.

Posted readings: Primary Research Articles and Reports by CDC and Healthy People 2020

1. **Course Overview, course objectives**

**Course Description**

This course will provide a broad overview of the growing field of the biological underpinnings of health disparities as defined by the CDC (2020) as “preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.” The topics in this course will be diverse and range from historical foundations and the conceptualization of race/ethnicity to stress biology, the social determinants of health and practices and policies that contribute to inequity. The overall framework used for examining these topics will be the biopsychosocial model that incorporates biology, psychology, sociocultural and environmental factors. We will also use a life course perspective focusing on disparities the begin with birth of which the consequences last into adulthood.

In this course we will use an approach called **Team Learning**, a technique that has been shown to result in better learning in a number of studies. You will be working in teams and your grade will be based upon both individual and group performance. Because of the nature of the material and the team learning approach, your experiential involvement is an essential component of your learning, and you are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions.

**Proposed Learning Outcomes:**

* Explain the history, basic principles and theory of health disparities across racial/ethnic groups
* Describe biological bases of health disparities focused on stress biology
* Relate social determinants of health and inequitable policies to health disparities
* Identify and present on relevant racial/ethnic health disparities in surrounding communities
* Improve skills and knowledge of locating, reading, interpreting and summarizing scientific literature in both written and oral formats
* Interact with scholars and community members who focus on health disparities in their work
* read, understand, and summarize primary research articles that are relevant to topics discussed in class
* Be able to apply material to real-world concept beyond memorization of material

1. **Special statement on COVID-19**

The University understands that at this time you may be facing some obstacles that would make it difficult to meet your academic goals. Please use the [Student Resources](https://www.marquette.edu/coronavirus/student-resources.php) page on the [Marquette COVID-19 Response](https://www.marquette.edu/coronavirus/) webpage for information and resources on basic needs such as housing, food, financial aid, and medical and mental health. The webpage also offers information on official University communications, access to technology and student services. Your professors and advisors are also here for you. Visit the [Marquette COVID-19 Communication Page](https://www.marquette.edu/coronavirus/communication.php) regularly as information may have as the semester rolls out.

I am committed to working with students throughout this semester. I encourage you reach me out to me EARLY so we can work together to foster your success. I WANT to help you and the earlier we can make the accommodations, the better. This can be related to COVID, family, personal, work, legal issues or ANYTHING. I am here for you and committed to working with you to explore all options available for accommodation in this course. We can also work closely with [Office of Disability Services](https://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/), if needed.

# **Grading policies, procedures, and philosophy**

1. **Exams.**

The primary mode of assessment for the course will be THREE exams. All three exams will include multiple choice and/or T/F and/or matching, short answer, and short essay questions.

You are allowed one HANDWRITTEN sheet of 8x11 paper for exams. I recommend you LIMIT your notes and ONLY include things you don’t know. Notes should only be used to CHECK your work.

The tests will be 75 minutes long. The exam grades will be posted on-line (not discussed in class). You will need to check D2L. If you don’t like your score COME TO OFFICE HOURS (see above). I will happily go over the exam with you and can provide tips for studying and for future exams.

1. **Health Disparities Research Paper assignment (3 parts)**

**Part 1: Library Video.**

Please watch the posted Library Videos and answer the prompts by class by end of second week (see syllabus). These videos will detail how to use library resources to complete the following Journal article assignments.

**Part 2: Annotated Bibliography**

Turn in an annotated bibliography for a literature review for your chosen health disparity as well as one-page detailing your personal interest in the topic.

**Part 3: Research Paper.**

Write a research paper on your chosen health disparity. This will include 1) detail for your personal interests in the topic, 2) literature review, 3) propose study addressing disparity, 3) potential policy recommendations. More detailed rubric to follow.

1. **Maternal and infant mortality assignment.** Prepare a report on the maternal/infant mortality rates for the area/city/state/region/country where you were born, within five years of your birth as well as current rates within the last 5 years. Next, compare/contrast the information about maternal and infant mortality from your birthplace, past and present, with the rates for Milwaukee, and particularly for marginalized and communities of color. Detailed rubric to follow.
2. **Mini-Test/Quiz:** During 6 weeks, there will be a quiz consisting of 10 multiple-choice items. You will complete the MTs twice; once individually, and once as a member of your assigned team. Each student has an individual MT average and a team MT average. Your team MT average can be adjusted up or down based upon the evaluation you receive from your peers in the team, as described below. Then the two MT averages are combined to yield a single MT average by weighting the individual average ⅔ and the team average ⅓. A double-sided 3x5 handwritten notecard can be used on all tests.

***THE MT WILL BE ON THE READING FOR THAT DAY AND THAT DAY ONLY!!!***

1. **GROUP In class Assignments:** During most weeks there be group IN class assignments that you will complete and submit. Groups are used to foster collaboration and encourage peer interactions. However, please have your individual names on them, otherwise it is hard to assign credit. You have to be IN class in order to receive the points for these assignments. Makeups will not be granted- you will be allowed to miss ONE in class assignment.
2. **Peer evaluation:** Each student will rate all the other members of his or her team at the middle and end of the course. The middle of the course rating will be used for feedback purposes only. The peer evaluation score for each student will be the average number of points she or he receives from the members of the team at the end of the semester. The following procedure will be used:

* If there are 5 members of a group, then each person has 40 points to distribute among the four members he or she is to rate, for an average of 10 points per person.
* **But**, raters must differentiate some in their ratings. This means that each rater must give at least one score of 11 or higher – with a maximum of 15 – and at least one score of 9 or lower. Each person’s peer evaluation score will be the average of the ratings given by teammates.
* The peer evaluation score will be used to modify each individual’s team MT score. This is how it will work. If a student gets an average score of 10 from her team members, then she will receive all the possible points of the team. If she receives an average of 9, she will receive only 90% of the possible team score. If she receives an average of 11, she will receive 110% of the possible team score.

**Note:** The major determinant of peer evaluation scores is attendance at and preparation for class. Nevertheless, I reserve the right to over-rule a peer evaluation score if it appears there will be a miscarriage of justice.

## *Assignments and Grading: total points*

Library Video Responses 5 points 5

Annotated Bibliography 20 points 20

In class Assignments 10 points 20

Quizzes (6) 10 points each 60

Exams (2) 100 points each 100

Maternal mortality assignment 20 points 20

Research Paper 50 points each 50

Total points 275

1. **Grading philosophy.** When I assign you a grade, I am going on record with an important assertion – one that may well be used by grad schools, employers, etc. - about the extent to which I am convinced that you have learned the material. Therefore, you must really UNDERSTAND the material to get an A or B, because an A or B means that you have demonstrated a very thorough understanding of all the course matter. So set realistic expectations for yourself and prepare to work hard.

Grading Scale: In percentage of final points

A = 92 -100 %

A- = 90 -91 %

B+ = 88- 89%

B = 82 - 87%

B- = 80 -81 %

C+ = 78-79%

C = 70 - 79 %

D = 60 - 69 %

1. **Academic honesty**. All written work and oral presentation assignments must be original work. All ideas/material that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. In 2006, the university approved an Academic Honesty Policy that is now applicable to all courses: [https://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#academichonestypolicy](https://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#academichonestypolicy%20)

The Bulletin serves, in effect, as the University’s contract with its students. Accordingly, we are obligated to adhere to the protocol described in this new policy. Acts of academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited, to the following:

* Copying material from a Web page and submitting it as one’s own work.
* Quoting extensively from a document without making proper references to the source.
* Copying answers from the quiz or examination paper of another student.
* Plagiarizing (submitting the work of another as one’s own ideas) or falsifying materials or information used in the completion of any assignment, which is graded or evaluated as the student’s individual effort.
* Intentionally interfering with any person’s scholastic work (e.g., by damaging or stealing laboratory experiments, computer files or library materials).
* Submitting the same work for more than one course without the consent of the instructors of each course in which the work is submitted.
* Using another student’s clicker in class or handing your clicker to another student to have them answer for you.

In addition to the statement above, no student is allowed to post instructor-generated information from this course on study share sites that include but are not limited to: Course Hero, StudyMode, papercamp, etc. This includes study guides, lecture slides, and quiz questions. Alternatively, students are not restricted from posting their own study materials and notes.

Be VERY careful here. Quotes are NOT acceptable in your JAR articles and if you can’t reword an article/ don’t understand it- CHOOSE ANOTHER ONE!

**I. Accommodations and differently abled students.** If you are in need of accommodations, please let the Instructor know as soon as able. A formal letter will be required for documenting accommodations and all accommodations must be approved through the [Office of Disability Services](https://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/). If you think you need an accommodation during this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Information on how to request accommodations can be found at <https://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/accommodations.php>or (414) 288-1645. Every effort will be made to ensure all students experience an equitable learning environment.

**J. Classroom Climate Statement.** I would like to acknowledge that we are all individuals with multiple sociocultural identities that intersect and shape our worldview through the lens of privilege and oppression. My commitment to you as your instructor is to minimize systemic forces of oppression within the classroom such as ableism, classism, racism, sexism, transphobia and heterosexism in efforts to create a safe learning environment for all of us. I ask that you also join me in this commitment to foster respect for on another, enhance solidarity and build community.

**K. Technology Supports.** To be successful in this course, you will need to have foundational experience with D2L, the University’s Learning Management System. If you’re not familiar with these technologies, review the [D2L](https://www.marquette.edu/its/help/d2l/d2l-student.shtml) [Student Help resources](https://www.marquette.edu/its/help/d2l/d2l-student.shtml) as there will be synchronous online exams (D2L).

I recommend you also visit the [Technology for Remote Learning webpage](https://www.marquette.edu/remote-learning/) for information on the technology you will need to be successful. For general questions about technology, contact the ITS Help Desk at [helpdesk@mu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mu.edu) or 414-288-7799.

**L. Writing Supports.** The Ott Memorial Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations for all writers, working on any project, at any stage of the writing process. Marquette's writing center is a place for all writers who care about their writing, because every writer can benefit from conversation with an interested, knowledgeable peer. Writing center tutors can help you brainstorm ideas, revise a rough draft, or fine-tune a final draft. You can schedule a 30- or 60-minute appointment in advance (288-5542 or [www.marquette.edu/writing-center](http://www.marquette.edu/writing-center)), but walk-ins (in 240 Raynor or our other satellite locations) are also welcome. The Ott Memorial Writing Center also offers free workshops and hosts writing retreats.

**M. Reading and lecture material.** You are responsible for both book and lecture material. KEEP UP with reading, if not you will fall behind and I’d like everyone to be successful. Sometimes you will need to read and re-read a section several times before you grasp the major point(s) of that section, and you must really PRACTICE the language of health disparities and biopsychology if you expect to use it properly.

**N. Attendance .** Attendance at every class is extremely important, though I will not take attendance. If you have a family emergency, legal, DACA or immigration-related emergency or anything related to COVID please let me know immediately. I WANT to know so I can help you.

It is your responsibility as a Marquette University student to protect the health and safety of our community in this course. The University has mandated vaccination for all students for the academic year 2021-2022.

COVID-Cheq will be used this Spring 2022, but fully vaccinated students that provide documentation will no longer receive the daily symptom screening survey. Instead, they will receive a daily email providing a green check. You may be required to show your automated green check to show clearance for entry into campus buildings. If you are experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, you must follow the link in the automated email to report symptoms.

* If you are **unvaccinated and are exposed**, let your instructor know and quarantine for the time specified by your healthcare provider or public health department.
* If you are **vaccinated and exposed**, you may continue attending class while closely monitoring for symptoms for 14 days. If you become symptomatic, get tested and follow your healthcare provider’s recommendations for quarantine and/or isolation.

If you test positive for COVID-19, immediately notify your course instructor. The University encourages all students, faculty, and staff to voluntarily disclose COVID-19 related diagnosis, symptoms, or self-quarantine at <https://www.marquette.edu/coronavirus/covid-19-employee-and-student-voluntary-disclosure.php>. The information you provide will be kept confidential in accordance with HIPAA and FERPA guidelines. It will be used to aid in contact tracing.

Please contact your instructor to determine how to make up missed assignments. Instructors are expected to make explore and offer reasonable accommodations. However, it is not always possible for students to make up missed work.

**CLASS MEETING and ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

**Date Lecture Topic Reading & Report Assignments**

*MODULE 1- Introduction*

Jan 18 Introduction & Syllabus

20 Intro to Social and Health Inequity Ch. 1 and 2 (Bartley); Braveman, 2014

25 Conceptualization of Race/Ethnicity Ch. 9 (Bartley), Ch 2 (LaVeist)

27 Biopsychosocial model TBD

**Online-View Library Video (responses DUE 9/13 @ 11:59 PM)**

Feb 1 Racism I Ch 6 and 7 (LaViest)

3 Racism II online readings

8 Acculturation, Immigration, Culture Ch. 4 (Bartley), Chs 11 and 12 (LaViest)

10 Health Disparity Statistics: How To Ch. 3 (Bartley)

15 Disparities in Income, SES Ch. 6, 7 (Bartley)

17 Disparities in Behavior Ch. 4 (Bartley)

22 Theories: SEM, minority stress, weathering TBD

24 Exam #1, Turn in health disparity topic, small list of references

*MODULE 2- Applied Health Disparities: Biology and Study of early life factors*

Mar 1 Biological Bases- Stress I Ch. 5 (pgs 90-94; Bartley), Ch 9 (LaViest)

3 Biological Bases- Stress II

8 Biological Bases- Immune System

10 Biological Bases- Epigenetics Ch. 10 (LaViest)

15 SPRING BREAK

17 NO CLASS

22 Life Course Model I Ch. 10 (Bartley)

24 Life Course Model II Ch. 10 (Bartley)

22 Birth Outcomes Ch. 14 (LaViest)

24 DoHAD, FOAD Barker Hypothesis

29 ACES study Kaiser study

31 Inequitable early life policies

April 5 Review

7 Exam #2; turn in annotated bibliography

12 Community based participatory research Ch 36 (LaViest)

14 EASTER BREAK- NO CLASS

*Module 3: Promoting Health Equity and Reducing Health Disparities*

19 Healthy People 2020 Online CDC readings

21 Healthy People 2020 Online CDC readings

26 Guest speaker- TBD

28 Guest speaker- TBD

May 3 Peer review

5 Peer review

Finals- Paper and Presentations

References

* 1. Braveman, P. (2014). What are health disparities and health equity? We need to be clear. *Public Health Reports, 129*(Suppl 2), 5-8.