Course Description

Individuals diagnosed with mental illness have been documented to have a shortened life expectancy by about 10 years compared to other Americans. And, we know that only 20% of those who need treatment actually get into care. Why is this? One answer is the nature of this health problem itself. However, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that the shame, secrecy, prejudice, and discrimination surrounding mental illness in American society are also at fault. In fact, according to the U.S. Surgeon General, stigma is the biggest obstacle facing individuals, their families, and even research and treatment resources. This course takes on the issue of stigma surrounding mental illness from theoretical, research, and policy perspectives. We will examine the nature of mental illness: whether it is a myth, whether it has increased in the U.S., and how individuals, medical systems, and societies have responded to this problem. We will also examine the lives of people with mental illness, their pathways to care, and what happens after treatment. In this course, we will provide you with a unique sociological lens with which to view the connection of mental illness to science, medicine, the media, and social life. While sociology has a rich history of researching stigma, we will also provide insights from IU faculty with expertise on the brain, communications, film, and marketing. This will provide a solid scientific foundation to help create materials for a real world campaign designed to eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness.

The College Toolbox Project (CTP), an on-going effort in which IU is serving as the national pilot site, is designed to make college campuses more open to talking about the challenges of mental health in college life and the community. As IU students, you will have a unique opportunity to see your efforts translated into programming and policy aimed at your generation and at U.S. colleges. In cooperation with Glenn Close’s Bring Change 2 Mind (BC2M, www.bringchange2mind.org) organization, you will develop campaign materials which will be assessed not only by the instructors, but by Ms. Close and the Executive Director of BC2M. Although not required for the course, you will have an opportunity to take part in an academic competition with the potential for national recognition and rewards.

Please make note of your Undergraduate Assistants’ contact information:

Name and email address:
Ryan DesCamp, rdescamp@umail.iu.edu (Office hours: Tuesday 2:00-3:00pm, SISR Rm. 103)
David Haggerty, dlhagger@umail.iu.edu (Office hours: Thursday 2:30-3:30, SISR Rm. 103)
Neha Sehgal, nsehgal@umail.iu.edu (Office hours: Friday 9:00-10:00, SISR Rm. 103)
Your Group Members:
Name                                          Phone                                          E-mail
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Course Materials and Requirements

This course introduces the sociology of mental health and illness as a foundation for understanding and reducing stigma. There are two classes each week. One class is formal, focusing on lecture material and readings. The second class is informal, running as a workshop for you and your team to develop and work on your campaign for the College Toolbox Project.

While not required, attendance will occasionally be noted for informational purposes. Since exams draw heavily from the material (including visual materials) presented and discussed in class, attendance is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. It is ESSENTIAL that you have a full set of class notes. The lectures contain material that CANNOT be found in the required readings. We know from research that simply getting the notes “after-the-fact” does not maximize learning, nor help scores on exams, nor assist in the ability to provide a sociological analysis on assignments. Just as importantly, exams will cover what is discussed by guest speakers, and material discussed on Workshop days.

Readings will be posted to Oncourse. Assigned readings should be done for the class date assigned. I will provide a guide to the readings for each part of the semester.

The required materials are:

Brother by Elliott Hudson
S101 readings available on Oncourse

Grading will be based on the exams and the final campaign. There will be two equally-weighted exams (50% of the final grade), each covering that section of the course. The campaign is worth 50% of the final grade. Exams will cover material from class and the assigned readings. Exams MUST be taken during the scheduled class. Requests for make-ups are given only in exceptional cases and ONLY if arranged IN ADVANCE. Failure to show up at an exam under any other circumstances will result in a zero. Students may review their graded exams in my office, but may not keep them. Flexibility in grading (for “grace” points and for a trend of improvement) will be explained in class prior to each exam. This flexibility depends on exam forms being returned to me.

For the campaign project, you will work in groups to address the U.S. government’s new “Mental Health” dialogue agenda launched on June 3, 2013 and more specifically, the reduction of stigma in partnership with BC2M. Using a “jigsaw” approach, you will be given both an individual and group grade. Your group may be of any size, with a minimum of two students, one of whom must be a freshman.
Work will be graded on the quality of your critical thinking and your ability to present a sociological analysis. Drawing conclusions based on your opinion will be required, but conclusions must be based on reasoning from scientific evidence. In the campaign, the assessment will depend on how well you connect your final project and policy recommendations to research studies, cases, and sociological theories that provide general evidence or support about how the socio-medical world operates.

Cheating or any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Students are expected to be familiar with their rights and responsibilities as outlined in the Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, & Conduct and abide by the IU Pledge: http://www.indiana.edu/~code/index.shtml. Since this is a large class, a grade based on participation is not feasible. However, classroom participation will be noted and used as supplementary information in borderline cases. In accordance with departmental and university policies, I will not grant incompletes except in extreme cases in which documentation is provided. Please review the Enrollment and Student Academic Information guidelines and deadlines for requesting incompletes, withdrawing from the course, or dropping it entirely are on the Office of the Registrar’s website: http://registrar.indiana.edu/.

I hold office hours twice a week; the co-instructor and undergraduate assistants hold additional office hours. The “Book” (a 3-ring binder that is brought to each class) provides ample space to sign up for office hours during the semester. Its use prevents waiting time and over-crowding. Please sign up at least one class session prior to the day you would like to see me, the co-instructor, or undergraduate assistants. There will be extra sessions of office hours around key points in the semester – for example, just before exams. Please take advantage of these times to meet with your instructors.

The syllabus lists each class meeting, the topic for the day, readings, assignments, exam dates, exam reviews, days that formal class is canceled and special class meetings. While this is not legal document, I consider it as a social contract between and among the students and the instructors in the class. The syllabus, assignments, readings guides, and exam review guides will all be posted to the S101 Resources section on Oncourse.

Requests for individual arrangements regarding classroom accommodations, exams, or other written work need to be directed to the Office of Disability Services for Students and brought to my attention within the first two weeks of the semester in order to provide sufficient time to meet specific needs.

Additional IU Resources to Note:
IU Disability Services for Students: http://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/disability-services-students
IU Herman B. Wells Library: http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageId=310
IU Writing Center: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/

Course Readings and Schedule

January 12: Changing the World: The Sociological Perspective and Transdisciplinary Foundations of Change

January 14: The College Toolbox Project – History, Goals, and Your Role

Reading:
Start Brother
January 19:  No class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 21:  What is Stigma? Basic Types, Terms, Effects, and Research History

Readings:


January 26:  What is the Goal of and History of Efforts to Reduce Stigma?

Readings:


Scheller, C. 2014. ‘Can churches separate mental illness and shame?” *Christianity Today.* 3.31.14


January 28:  Getting Started: Team Formation, the Basic Blueprint, and Early Ideas

Guest Speaker: Elliot Hudson
Assignment Due: Blueprint – 1-page description of team members, focus, initial ideas
Readings:
Finish *Brother*


February 2:  What is Mental Illness? Contemporary & Radical Theories – Public & Professional Battle Lines

Readings:


**February 4: The Cutting Edge of Understanding the Brain: The Connectome**

**Guest Speaker:** Olaf Sporns, Distinguished Professor, Department of Psychology & Brain Sciences

**Reading:**

**February 9: Who Gets Sick? The Epidemiology of Mental Illness**

**Readings:**


**February 11: The Contemporary Landscape of Stigma**

**Readings:**


**February 16: Review for Exam I**

**February 18: Exam I**

**Readings:**


February 25: Workshop – Second Draft of Blueprint Due

March 2: Where Does Stigma Come From? Socialization and the Media

**Readings:**


March 4: Workshop

March 9: Effective Messaging: Theories and Empirical Evidence

**Guest Speaker:** Julia Fox, Professor, Department of Telecommunications

**Readings:**

March 11: Workshop

March 16-20: No Class – Spring Break

March 23: Efforts to Change: Is Change Possible?

**Readings:**


**March 25: Workshop**

**March 30: The History of Treatment for Mental Illness**

**Readings:**


**April 1: Workshop**

**April 6: Making It Personal: Pathways to Treatment**

**Readings:**


**April 8: Workshop**

**April 13: Review for Exam II**

**April 15: Exam II**
April 20: No Class – Attend First Film in “Mental Illness in America” Series at IU Cinema
Mental illness has always been a fascinating subject in film. In turn, films have often shaped how the public comes to understand – or misunderstand – the nature of mental health problems, treatment, and even public policy. This pair of films illustrates both public influence and reaction. They are part of IU’s College Toolbox Project, a four-year effort to improve the cultural climate of “difference” for students and the larger community. They are shown in cooperation with Glenn Close’s organization, Bring Change 2 Mind, whose goal is to end stigma toward mental illness. This series is sponsored by the College Toolbox Project, Union Board, Culture of Care, the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Public Health, the Office of the Provost, and Executive Vice President.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975) Directed by Milos Forman
April 20 – Monday – 7:00 pm
40th Anniversary Screening. Adapted from Ken Kesey’s 1962 novel based on his experience as night staff in a California VA hospital, the film depicts the story of a man who chooses hospitalization instead of jail. Jack Nicholson plays the anti-hero and Louise Fletcher the tyrannical psychiatric nurse who battle issues of power and agency, fueling critiques of the “myth” of mental illness and “asylum” care as a failed social experiment. The film swept the Oscars (Best Picture, Director, Screenplay, Actor, and Actress) and is widely considered, along with the book, to have helped to create the Community Mental Health Movement (2K DCP.133 min. Rated R).

April 22: Dry Run – Your Campaign for the CTP

April 27: The Big Day – 3 Events
- Presenting Your Campaign
- Attend Second Film in “Mental Illness in America” series: Fatal Attraction
- Attend Private Post-Screening Reception

Fatal Attraction (1987) Directed by Adrian Lyne
April 27 – Monday – 7:00 pm
Dan Gallagher (Michael Douglas), a NYC attorney, and his wife Beth (Ann Archer) confront the aftermath of the husband’s affair which turns obsessive and eventually violent when Alex Forrest (Glenn Close) refuses to let go. The highest grossing film of 1987, it raises issues of how the public, the actors, and even the psychiatric consultants for the film saw Alex’s behavior from the perspective of the 1980s. The film garnered multiple Oscar nominations. Glenn Close is scheduled to introduce the film (2K DCP.119 min. Rated R).

April 29: Debrief – Changing the World? Putting Your Campaign into the Real World

Finals Week: May 4-8: No final; you should have worked hard enough by this point!