Community Health 188:  
Race, Ethnicity and Health  
Spring 2017

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Lectures:  Monday, 1:30-4:00pm  
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Course Description

Despite advances in medicine, education, and technology, racial and ethnic minorities in the United States carry an unequal burden of chronic disease and have higher mortality rates compared to their white counterparts. The causes of these inequities are thought to reflect a complex interaction of social, situational, and structural influences. This course is designed to review theories and research that describe the multiple pathways by which race and ethnicity influence health and produce disparate health outcomes. During the course of the semester, students will critically examine the health status of major racial/ethnic minority groups in the United States. Attention will be focused on the patterned ways in which the health of these groups is embedded in the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts and arrangements of U.S. society. Students will also explore community based approaches for addressing health inequity, including health care inequities. Topics covered include the meaning and measurement of race/ethnicity, the historic uses of minorities in medical research, the ways in which socioecological factors currently influence health and healthcare, how acculturation and migration affect health, and an examination of the ideas for reducing health disparities among racial/ethnic minorities.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

• Describe how race and ethnicity have been defined and conceptualized in the U.S.
• Discuss how race/ethnicity both directly and indirectly influence health
• Critique at least three pathways by which race and ethnicity can impact health
• Explain how race/ethnicity interact with acculturation to affect health
• Be conversant on strategies that address health and health care disparities
Required Texts and Readings

Readings are available through Trunk.

Recommended materials:


Assignments and Class Participation

Grading Overview

Class participation 20% of grade
  Attendance-5%
  Class discussion-10%
  Article presentation-5%

Documentary Reflection paper 10% of grade

Oral Presentation Blitz 15% of grade

Proposal 10% of grade
Outline of paper 10% of grade
First draft of paper 10% of grade
Final paper 25% of grade

Class participation (20% of grade):

Attendance is required. Students who will be absent from class due to a religious holiday, travel with a university-affiliated team or group, or because of unavoidable circumstances, should speak with the instructor during the first day of class or as soon as possible thereafter, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please note that airline schedules are not considered unavoidable conflicts. You are expected to come to class prepared and ready to actively participate in class discussions, having done the required readings for the week that day. Attendance will count for 5% of your total grade.

During the semester, we will engage in in-depth discussions. You are expected to participate during these discussions by sharing your critical analyses of the readings and participating in group activities. Read and critically evaluate the assigned readings for each week by Monday’s class meeting. You must bring one question that you wish to pose to your classmates for discussion. This aspect of class discussion will count for 10% of your grade. Moreover, you are required to sign up as a facilitator for one of the classes in the semester, where you will bring one article (empirical or theoretical) that complements the readings for the given week. You will present an article to the class and facilitate the group discussions. As noted above, the paper presentation will count for 5% of your grade.
Documentary Reflection Paper (10% of grade)
There will be opportunities in class to watch documentaries and webinars that provide content knowledge about the causes and consequences of existing racial/ethnic inequities in the United States. You are required to write one reflection paper (2-pages) immediately after watching one documentary (any of your choosing) and submit a hard copy to the instructor at the next class meeting.

Oral presentation Blitz (4/23/18; 25% of grade): At the end of the semester, you will each prepare a five-minute presentation outlining the key points of your final paper. The purpose of these presentations is to help you prepare an “elevator speech” of your final paper. These presentations should be concise and to the point, another key characteristic of academic writing. The presentation will consist of the following:
Introduction of an existing racial/ethnic health disparity (Slide 1, 1-minute)
Brief discussion of the potential causes for the disparity (must be based on the readings or literature; Slide 2, 1-minute)
A brief description of an intervention to help reduce the disparity (must be based on the readings or literature; Slide 3, 1-minute).
Question and Answer (Slide 4, 1-minute)

Final paper (5/7/18 at 5pm; 25% of grade): The overall goal of this assignment is to become an agent of a topic within the area of racial/ethnic health disparities. You are to choose one health status that demonstrates patterns of inequality based on race or ethnicity. Describe the racial/ethnic health disparity using information from reputable sources and discuss the possible causes of these inequalities. You must not speculate on the causes. Rather, the paper must be grounded in theory and scientific evidence (reputable sources must be cited). In the paper, you are to present an overview of one health disparity. Within this context, present the current national or local statistics of the health outcome and discuss how social determinants of health contribute to racial or ethnic differences. You are to offer one intervention (at the individual, community, or policy-level) that may help reduce the disparity. This exercise will allow you to provide a critical analysis of the given literature, develop innovative ways to improve the health and well-being of targeted communities, and offer a thoughtful assessment of the pros and cons of implementing the intervention in the community that you wish to target. The final paper should be no longer than 20 pages (double spaced) and must be submitted in Trunk. You will have an opportunity to receive feedback from the instructor and classmates as the manuscript develops. The process is segmented into four sections.
Further information will be provided in class:
1) 1-page paper proposal (10% of grade)- due 2/12/18
2) 1-page outline of paper (10% of grade)- due 2/26/18
3) 10-page draft of paper (10% of grade)-due 4/2/18
4) 20-page final paper (25% of grade)-due 5/7/18

Notes about assignments
All assignments must be typed, using 12-point font (Arial or Times New Roman), and 1” margins (note that the default in some earlier versions of Word is 1.25”). No handwritten assignments will be accepted. All references and in text citations must use APA format only (pay particular attention to how to cite internet sources). Reference page is not considered part of the page count. Correct use of APA format is part of your grade for written assignments. If you need help with referencing or research, contact a Health Reference Librarian at the Tisch Library. All assignments must be submitted in class on the due date unless otherwise noted. Use reputable sources for your
references, namely books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and credible media sources (Eg., Routers, Associated Press, NY Times, Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor, The Economist). The following are examples of sources that are not acceptable references: Wikipedia, Comcast homepage or some other home page, anything without an author or a date of publication. Written assignments are to be of the strong quality expected at the collegiate level: proofread your work and write in one tense only. You are encouraged to take advantage of the writing support available at the Tufts Academic Resource Center.

Late and Make-up Work: Deadline extensions will not be given for any paper. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. All assignments are due at the start of class unless otherwise specified.

Academic Integrity:
Tufts holds its students strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. The consequences for violations can be severe. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in Tufts’ Academic Integrity handbook. If you ever have a question about the expectations concerning a particular assignment or project in this course, be sure to ask me for clarification. The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized in this class, I must report the situation to the dean.

Student Accessibility:
Tufts University values the diversity of our students, staff, and faculty, recognizing the important contribution each student makes to our unique community. Tufts is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may fully participate in the Tufts experience. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, please contact the Student Accessibility Services office at Accessibility@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539 to make an appointment with an SAS representative to determine appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Cell Phone/ Electronic Devices:
The use of laptops is allowed in the classroom. However, we expect laptops will be used solely for course-related activities while in class. Students violating this policy will be asked to discontinue use of their laptop. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted in the classroom. Please keep them off during class time.

Basic Needs Security:
Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Student Affairs Office for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so.
 UNIT #1: DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS, SITUATING RACE, ETHNICITY AND HEALTH IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND LEARNING ABOUT KEY INEQUITIES IN HEALTH

Week 1 1/22/18
Introduction
Review of the syllabus
Expectations and Goals

Week 2 1/29/18
Race and Health: Historical and Social Context

Week 3--2/5/18-
Socioeconomic Status and Health

Week 4--2/12/18- 1-page paper proposal
Racial/Ethnic Variations in Health

**Guest speaker:** Kasim Ortiz, University of New Mexico

**Week 5--2/22/18**

**Racial/Ethnic Variations in Health--Continued**


**UNIT #2: EXPLAINING RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN HEALTH**

**Week 6--2/26/18**

**1-page outline of paper due**

**Institutional Discrimination and its Health Consequences**


**Week 7--3/5/18**

**Interpersonal Discrimination and its Health Consequences**


Week 8--3/12/18

Racism in our Culture and its Effects on Medical Care


Guest speaker: Anti-Racism Collaborative

Week 9--3/19/17- SPRING BREAK

Week 10--3/26/18

Early Childhood Experiences and Health


UNIT #3: INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

Week 11--4/2/18- 10-page draft of paper due

Individual-level interventions


**Guest speaker:** Regina De Los Santos, Brooklyn College Mental Health Counseling Program

**Week 12--4/9/18**  
**System-level interventions**


**Guest speaker:** Cat Goughnour, Radix Consulting Group, LLC

**Week 13--4/16/17-NO CLASS**

**Week 14--4/23/18**  
**Oral presentation Blitz**  
**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Week 14--4/30/18**  
**Considering other levels of analysis**


**Wrap-up**  
**Guest speaker:** TBA

5/7/18  
**Final paper due**