

Soci 419.05, Technoscience and Biomedicalization, Winter 2015

Instructor: Dr. Ariel Ducey

Office Hours: by appointment

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www.soci.ucalgary.ca

Course Overview

This course considers the terms “technoscience” and “biomedicalization” and what they allow us to see and understand in contemporary practices of medicine and health care. First we will examine various approaches social scientists have taken to the study of science and medicine, and in particular scientific and medical *knowledge*. The terms technoscience and biomedicalization both suggest that social scientists should and must critically examine scientific and medical knowledge, a research agenda that has been controversial, as will become evident when we briefly consider the so-called “science wars” of the mid-1990s. In the latter parts of the course will take up specific practices in health care and medicine that could be considered examples of technoscience or biomedicalization: genetics in medicine, and the role of pharmaceuticals in changes to subjectivity and social order. Along the way, we will have the opportunity to discuss the following themes and issues (among others):

- What it can mean to say science or medicine is “socially constructed” and the value of that phrase
- The reasons many social scientists have advocated a more critical appraisal of scientific and medical knowledge and practices
- The difference between traditional histories of science and medicine, and those by scholars in the sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK) and science and technology studies (STS)
- How distinctions are made between healthy/ill, normal/abnormal
- The implications of some recent developments in health care and medicine for personal identity and subject positions
- The impact of economic interests on how genetic research and pharmaceuticals are taken up in contemporary medicine
- The implications of contemporary biomedicine and technoscience for various forms of inequality and suffering

Readings

- 1) There are three books for this course, available in the University of Calgary bookstore:
 - a) Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University of Chicago Press.
 - b) Katz Rothman, Barbara. *The Book of Life*, Beacon Press, 2001. [Also available in hardcover as *Genetic Maps and Human Imaginations*, Norton, 1998].
 - c) Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deirdre English. *Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness*. City University of New York, Feminist Press, 1973.
- 2) There is also a coursepack available from the UofC bookstore.

- 3) Finally, links to some required readings will be posted on D2L. (These readings are accessible through the UofC library; reading and downloading the articles will require that students be logged into their UofC IT account, probably at a university computer.)

Readings will average 75 pages a week; less in some weeks, more in others. Carefully examine the course schedule and plan your reading schedule accordingly. Readings must be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned. You must bring the assigned reading with you to class.

I may add or omit some readings during the semester as needed, or make some adjustments to the order and schedule. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class. In the event of absence, class members are responsible for finding out about such changes from classmates.

Reading summaries

Students are responsible for summarizing five readings over the course of the semester. Three of the readings will be (randomly) assigned to you, and you may select the other two. These summaries should be typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 300 words. The summaries should be exactly that—they should succinctly capture the author's argument in your own words, with a few well-chosen quotes for support. At the end of the semester, the summary sheet for which you received the lowest grade will be dropped (but students are still required to complete five summaries).

In order to receive a grade for the summary, students must include, in a separate paragraph or section, a personal reflection on the reading: what was your experience doing this reading? What did you find most thought-provoking or challenging? What would you like to see discussed in class? This personal reflection does not have to be long but it should be done conscientiously. The personal reflection is not part of the grade for the summary.

I may discuss and/or distribute the summary sheets in class (with your names and the personal reflection removed), so that we may use them as the basis for respectful but open discussion of what makes a good summary as well as for refining our understanding of the readings.

The summaries do not need to include formal citations or notes. However, students must use quotes when copying someone's exact words, *and* provide page numbers for quotes or references to specific points and ideas in the reading. Always include your name and date on the summary.

The summaries must be emailed to me (aducey@ucalgary.ca; use the subject heading "419 Summary") **no later than 12 p.m. the day before they are due.**

Exams

There are three exams for this course: two mid-terms and a final (due February 12, March 26, and April 21). All are take-home exams and will include short answer and essay questions. The final take-home exam will be cumulative (it will cover materials from the entire semester).

Quizzes

On a few occasions, short quizzes will be given in class (they should require no more than 15-20 minutes of class time). The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that students are keeping up with the reading and to find out if there are any areas that I need to review in class or emphasize. The quizzes will be graded, but count for a small portion of the final grade. If you are keeping up with the reading and attending class, the quizzes should not be difficult for you. If you have been keeping up with reading and attending class and you find the quizzes *are* difficult, you should see me to discuss the course and general strategies for approaching the course materials.

Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- 1) Reading Summaries – 25%
- 2) Quizzes – 5%
- 3) Mid-term take-home exams – 20% (each)
- 4) Final take-home exam – 30%

The following scale converts percentage grades to letter grades for this class.

A+ = 95-100	B = 75-79	C- = 55-59
A = 90-94	B- = 70-74	D+ = 50-54
A- = 85-89	C+ = 65-69	D = 45-49
B+ = 80-84	C = 60-64	F = below 45

The following description of letter grades comes from the U of Calgary Calendar:

- A indicates superior performance, excellent mastery of the material.
- B indicates above average performance, good mastery of the material.
- C indicates satisfactory performance, a basic understanding of the material.
- D indicates marginal performance, minimal understanding of the material.
- F indicates unsatisfactory performance.

Instructor Contact Information

I am available by appointment. My office is Room 938, Social Sciences Building. My office phone number is 220-5054, and my email address is aducey@ucalgary.ca.

In general, I prefer that you contact me by email for administrative purposes only. For instance, you may email me to schedule an appointment outside of office hours. Students with substantive questions should come to office hours or schedule an appointment. If you have questions related to grading, readings, or wish to discuss the course in greater depth, see me during office hours or make an appointment.

Emergency evacuations:

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the ICT Food Court.

Deferrals:

If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

Deferred Final Exam Form:

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar-scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar’s Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

http://ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM_0.pdf

Deferred Term Work Form:

Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It’s available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

Ethics Research: Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Written assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Safewalk: The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation: Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, phone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.

Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades:

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.) Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

Course Schedule

CP=course packet; D2L=Desire2Learn online course system

*=dates for which summaries are assigned or can be prepared; summaries are to cover the material assigned for that day

Date	Readings
Jan 13 T	Introduction to the course
Jan 15 Th	Merton, "Normative structure of science" and "Matthew effect in science" (CP)
Jan 20 T	*Kuhn, chapters 1-7
Jan 22 Th	*Kuhn, chapters 8-11
Jan 27 T	*Kuhn, chapters 12-13
Jan 29 Th	*Latour & Woolgar, "The construction of a fact: the case of TRF(H)" (CP)
Feb 3 T	Latour & Woolgar continued
Feb 5 Th	*Berg, "Construction of Medical Disposals" (D2L)
Feb 10 T	*Ehrenreich & English, <i>Complaints and Disorders</i>
Feb 12 Th	TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE (on material through Feb 5) Ehrenreich & English, continued
Feb 24 T	*Excerpts from Gross & Levitt, <i>Higher Superstition</i> (CP) *Proctor, "Nazi Medicine and the Politics of Knowledge" (CP)
Feb 26 Th	*Keller, "Critical silences in scientific discourse: Problems of form and re-form" (CP) *Keller, "A World of Difference"
Mar 3 T	*Clarke et al., "Biomedicalization" (D2L)
Mar 5 Th	*Katz Rothman, section 1 "Mapping the Past"
Mar 10 T	*Katz Rothman, section 2 "Writing the Body"
Mar 12 Th	*Katz Rothman, section 3, "Imagining the Future" Watson, "Good gene, bad gene" (CP)
Mar 17 T	*Rabinow, "Artificiality and Enlightenment" (CP)
Mar 19 Th	*Frank, "Emily's Scars" (D2L)
Mar 24 T	*Foucault, "17 March 1976" (CP)
Mar 26 Th	TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE (on material through Mar 19) Foucault continued
Mar 31 T	*Rose & Novas, "Biological Citizenship" (CP)
Apr 2 Th	*Biehl, "Global pharmaceuticals, AIDS, and citizenship in Brazil" (D2L)
Apr 7 T	Rose & Novas, Biehl, continued
Apr 8 Th	*Cooper, "The Pharmacology of Distributed Experiment" (D2L)
Apr 14 T	Catch-up, review Final Take-Home Exam Due April 21