Dale E. Yeatts, Ph.D.   **Sycamore Hall, Suite 288J**
Office hrs: **Phone: 940-565-2238**
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and (preferably) by appointment   **http://www.yeatts.us**

I.   Learning Objectives

A. To understand the U.S. health care system, its organization, financing, and delivery;
B. To understand the historical development of Medical Sociology;
C. To examine the sociological theories being applied to Medical Sociology
D. To gain knowledge of the social factors contributing to health;
E. To gain an expertise within a sub-field of health and aging;
F. To obtain an introduction to grant writing.

II. Learning Components

A. Readings: To help meet the objectives, the following books are required reading. These books are available at the UNT bookstore and also can be purchased from Amazon.com. All are relatively inexpensive.

> Weitz, Rose (2017, seventh or eighth edition). The Sociology of Health, Illness, and Health Care, Boston, MA: Cengage learning. ISBN-978-1-305-58370-2
> Yang, Otto (2012). Guide to Effective Grant Writing, New York, NY: Springer.
> Cockerham, William C. (2021). Sociological Theories of Health and Illness, New York, NY: Routledge.
> Cockerham, William C. (2021, third edition). Social Causes of Health and Disease, Cambridge, MA: Polity Press. ISBN: 13: 978-1-5095-4036-5
> Handouts of published papers focused on various topics may be provided (e.g., the Chinese health care system; Mental Health)

B. Class time: will be focused on the objectives through class discussions, and when it can be arranged professionals speaking to the class, movies, etc.

C. Assignments: These include participation in class discussions, developing discussion questions for each class, and for MA students a research paper, and a revised research paper, and for PhD students a grant proposal and a revised grant proposal.

III. **Course Policies**

A. Class attendance: regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Absences will affect your final grade. Four absences from a three-hour class will reduce the student's grade one letter-grade (no excuses accepted, three absences is one-fifth of the semester, a student should drop the course if missing more than three classes regardless of reason). Each additional three-hour class missed will reduce the grade one additional letter-grade. If you must be late to class or must leave early, please let me know before this occurs.

B. Academic integrity: as the student guidebook points out, academic integrity is required. Plagiarism and cheating will result in failure and a report to the Dean. This includes the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for writing your research paper or grant proposal and any other course assignments turned in.

C. Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior (including continued texting during class) will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. UNT Code of Conduct can be found at: https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012

D. Special Needs: appropriate adjustments and auxiliary aid are available for persons with disabilities. See Dr. Yeatts and/or call 940-565-2456 (TDD access 1-800-735-2989).

E. Cell Phones and texting: please silence phones before coming to class. They should not be heard during class. Student grades will be affected.

F. Grading: final grades will be based on the following:

   1. **Weekly discussion questions** typed (see below for instructions).
      This portion of the grade will also include a class presentation
      by each student of their papers/proposals on December 7…..……..…….. 45%

   2. November 16 **MA Papers/PhD Research Proposals due**….…………... 40%
      - Sept. 28 turn in a one-page outline of paper/proposal
      - Oct. 12 turn in revised outline
      - Oct. 26 informal presentations of outlined papers

   3. December 7 **Revised papers/grant proposals due**; Ph.D. presentations...15%

IV.   Schedule of Class Topics and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (August 24)
A.   Introduction of students and professor to one another
B.   Overview of course including review of student research papers and grant proposals.
C.   Perhaps take a look at a substantive area such as Medicare
D.   For next week have read: Weitz Chapters 1-4 (Be sure to type up discussion questions you have created each week to be used during the class discussions.)

Week 2 (August 31)
A.   Discuss student/Yeatts questions in class (Weitz Chapters 1-4)
B.   For next week have read: Weitz Chapts 5-7 and read the handout by Andrew Weil on Introduction, mental health and the spirit.

Week 3 (September 7)
A.   Discuss Weitz Chapters 5-7 and Andrew Weil handout.
B.   For next week, please read Weitz Chapts 8-10

Week 4 (September 14)
A.   Discuss Weitz Chapters 8-10
B.   For next week read Weitz Chapts 11-13

Week 5 (September 21)
A.   Discussion of Weitz, Chapts 11-13
B.   Possible guest speaker: Dr. Justice Obiora on his dissertation examining alternative medicines (UNT graduate, 2022, I was his major professor)
C.   For next week, students need to turn in (typed) a one page (no more) outline of a proposed library research paper (MA students) or of a grant proposal (PhD students). See below on how to choose a topic.
D.   For next week read Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 1-4

Week 6 (September 28)
A.   Discuss Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 1-4
B.   **Turn in <u>one page outline</u>** of proposed library research paper/grant proposal.
C.   For next week: Read Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 5-7

Week 7 (October 5)
A.   Student outlines of library research papers/proposals will be returned to students with hand-written comments provided so outlines can be revised.
B.   Discuss Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 5-7
C.   For next week: Turn in a revised one-page outline of your paper topic based on the comments on your initial outline.
D.   Read Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 8-10

<u>Week 8</u> (October 12)
A. **Turn in your revised one-page outline**
B. Discuss Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 8-10
C. For next week read Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 11-14

<u>Week 9</u> (October 19)
A. Receive back your revised one-page outline with additional comments
B. Discuss Cockerham Sociological Theories chapters 11-14
C. Be prepared next week to make an informal presentation of your outline followed by class discussion of your topic.
D. We will review the formatting, paper headings, etc., required for student library research papers and for grant proposals
E. We will discuss how PhD presentations might be prepared
F. For next week read Yang book (approximately 90 pages). Develop at least 6 discussion questions for the entire book to be reviewed in class (NOT 3 per chapter).

<u>Week 10</u> (October 26)
A. Discuss Yang book.
B. **Each student will make an informal presentation** to the class about the research paper/grant proposal s/he is working on. Students and I will try to provide constructive criticism and refer the student to any articles/books we can think of so we can help each other to produce high quality papers/proposals
C. For next week read: Cockerham: Social Causes, Chapts 1-3.

<u>Week 11</u> (November 2)
A. Discuss Cockerham: Social Causes Chapts 1-3.
B. For next week: read Cockerham: Social Causes, Chapters 4-7.

<u>Week 12</u> (November 9)
A. Discuss Cockerham: Social Causes, Chapters 4-7.
B. **research paper/grant proposal due next week** (40% of grade). Be sure to read below for the details of what is expected and how to prepare the paper.
C. No reading assignment since you will be finishing up your research papers/grant proposals.

<u>Week 13</u> (November 16)
A. **Turn in first research paper** (40% of grade);
B. I will share some of my research activities (published papers) related to medical sociology. We'll also review some PowerPoint slides I have created on various topics in Medical Sociology which might include Medicare, Medicaid (government health insurance programs for the elderly and poor) and Social Security.

C. I will share some of the comments I have received from journal editors and reviewers of several recent papers submitted for publication (to help students see just what goes on regarding publishing).
D. For next class period (Nov. 30) please read Cockerham: Social Causes, Chapters 8-10 and also Concluding Remarks.

(November 23) No Class: Thanksgiving Week

Week 14 (November 30)
A. Discuss Cockerham: Social Causes, Chapters 8-10 and also Concluding Remarks
B. Students receive their research papers back with hand-written comments (any questions regarding comments on paper?)
C. For next week, turn in revised research paper. Be sure to address all the comments provided (see "Revised Paper" below).
D. No reading assignment so you can focus all your attention on revising your papers.

Week 15 (December 7)
A. **Turn in revised paper**
B. Each student will present their research papers or grant proposals to the class and lead a discussion on their topic (prepare some discussion questions related to your paper that will help spur class discussion)

WEEKLY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (40% of grade)

At least three discussion questions should be typed and provided for each assigned chapter for a given week (three per chapter is the minimum, if you want a high grade you'll do more than this).

While I want to encourage students to provide lots of questions that will stir class discussion, I also don't want students to spend so much time developing questions that it takes away from their time reading the material. Therefore, all the discussion questions provided for a single week should not take more than two single-spaced pages.

The result will be each student turning in multiple discussion questions each week. For example, if we have four assigned chapters for a particular week, this would result in a minimum of 12 discussion questions and preferably more but never more than two single-spaced pages of questions.

The discussion questions should be designed to bring out varying student opinions/ideas on a particular issue(s) reviewed in the readings so that a discussion of ideas is facilitated. The discussion questions should also help demonstrate that you have read the assignments.

When preparing the questions there should be a separate heading for each chapter/article along with the book author so I know which chapter the questions come from. That is, place under each chapter heading the discussion questions related to that chapter. Please also provide the date the questions are due. For example:

August 31, 2023

Weitz, Chapter 1
- Why are there so many different terms used for the same basic concept of health?
- Why isn't more attention given to simple ways of improving health such as taking vitamins?
- How is a person's lifestyle related to their health? How does a person obtain the lifestyle they have? That is, what factors produce a person's lifestyle?

MA STUDENT RESEARCH PAPERS

First Research Paper (40% of grade): Each MA student will write a library research paper focused on some aspect of Health and Aging. The **grading of each paper** will be based primarily on how much effort has been put into the paper. Indications of effort will be the number of references/citations used within the paper, thoughtful organization of the paper, use of sub-headings, writing style, thought put into the implications, etc. The references used should be PRIMARILY (at least 80%) from professional peer-reviewed research journals and scholarly books (e.g., Journal of Health and Social Behavior, The Gerontologist, Journal of Health and Aging). No more than 20% of reference citations should be web based and no more than 10% should come from non-professional publications (e.g., the newspaper, Time Magazine). The paper should be no less than 10 double-spaced pages and no more than 15 pages (not including citations). **It should use font size 12 with 1 inch margins.**

When choosing a topic, be sure there are numerous research studies/publications on your topic so that you have literature to review in your research paper/proposal. It would be beneficial to contact me by email or make an appointment to speak with me in order to make sure your topic is "on target" (i.e., will result in you gaining a substantial knowledge of at least one aspect of health and aging).

Each paper should begin with an **Introduction** that informs the reader of the importance of the topic (why the reader should be interested in reading the paper) and what is going to be covered in the paper (usually between 1 and 2 pages). The **body of the paper should be organized into sections** with each section having its own heading. For example, if you were going to argue that there are four major groups of factors that enable a neighborhood to provide residents with good health, you would want to review the existing research on each group of factors (i.e., what research has shown/what experts believe) and, in the process of doing this, have **a separate heading and discussion within your paper for each of the four major groups** and perhaps sub-headings under the headings for the most important factors within a group. Your paper should also have an

implications and conclusions section. This section should discuss the implications of your topic for people's health and also the implications for future research.

Revised Paper (15%): Once obtaining a grade and comments on your first paper, revise the paper and make all the recommended changes that make sense to you. This is similar to when one of your professors submits a paper to a journal for publication and then gets comments back from the journal's reviewers and editor.

If a requested change doesn't make sense to you, please speak with me since I'm not infallible and your confusion may be warranted. Please also note that any thorough review of a research paper (written by a student or faculty member) is likely to result in a wealth of comments/suggested revisions (in your case from me and in my case from a journal editor). So, don't be discouraged by multiple comments/suggestions (I will admit when I get comments back from journal reviewers/the editor, I usually have to let the comments sit on my desk for a few days at least before I finally get up the strength to address the "criticisms" and make the requested revisions).

When you turn in the revised paper, you must also turn in your first paper (with the suggested revisions that you were given) in order to receive credit for the revised paper. Also be sure to follow the same requirements regarding the paper's format. Again, if you have any questions about a particular requested change provided on your first paper, it would be beneficial to meet with me so we can consider it together and, as noted above, in some cases I may agree with you that a change is not needed or a different change would be best. Further, you'll get better clarification of what I had in mind when I wrote the comment.

How to Structure the MA Research Paper

1. Introduction (1 to 2 pages)
   a. <u>Gain the reader's attention/interest</u> by pointing out the importance of the topic. For example, the importance of understanding how neighborhood characteristics affect health.
   b. <u>State the purpose of the paper</u>. For example, to provide a thorough review of the existing scientific studies that have examined the effects of neighborhoods on health in order to better understand how neighborhoods might be changed to improve resident health.
   c. End the introduction with <u>a statement of what is covered in the paper</u>. For example, "Provided below is first a definition of what is meant by "neighborhood." This is followed by a review of four groups of neighborhood factors found to be associate with health. The paper concludes with implications/recommendations that address how neighborhoods could be changed so that the residents' health is improved and with suggestions for future research."
2. Body of paper (10-12 pages)
   For example, you would review each group of neighborhood variables important to health. Use a sub-heading for each group.
3. Implications and Conclusion (1-3 pages)

NSF or NIH DISSERTATION GRANT PROPOSAL

PhD students will write a grant proposal (40% of grade) rather than a research paper and then turn in a revised grant proposal based on comments from me (15%). This will be similar to the sociology Ph.D. dissertation proposal you must write to obtain the Ph.D. It will provide good practice at the least and can be a major step toward your PhD dissertation proposal at best. Iif you choose to do your dissertation research in the area of Medical Sociology, we have three professors focused in this area: myself, Dr. Cynthia Cready, and Dr. Gul Seckin.

Each Ph.D. student will write a grant proposal that responds to the National Science Foundation's (NSF) request for dissertation proposals or responds to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) request for dissertation proposals. Both NSF and NIH fund grant proposals designed to satisfy the PhD dissertation requirement. You should take a look at the NSF (or NIH) proposal guidelines and design your proposal accordingly (it is interesting to note that PhD students who obtain NSF or NIH dissertation grants increase their attractiveness greatly when seeking a tenure-track position once on the job market). NSF and NIH guidelines typically include an introduction (similar to the introduction for the MA research paper), statement of the proposed theory, hypotheses, and/or problem to be investigated, review of relevant literature, the research methods you are proposing to use, and the significance of the proposed research.

In the process of identifying a proposal topic, you can view a description of the NSF dissertation proposal requirements at:

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505118
and
https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18577/nsf18577.pdf

Other means of identifying a topic include conducting an overview of the books we will be reading in class and looking for any topics/issues that appeal to you (e.g., how lifestyle is related to health). You can then do a brief literature review to identify articles that address the topic/issue of interest and take a look at what the research articles have found, what methods they have used, and what you might propose to do that would contribute to the research in the topic area.

NSF's description of topics/issues states: "The NSF Sociology Program supports basic research on all forms of human social organization -- societies, institutions, groups and demography -- and processes of individual and institutional change. The Program encourages theoretically focused empirical investigations aimed at improving the explanation of fundamental social processes. …. The Program supports both original data collections and secondary data analysis that use the full range of quantitative and qualitative methodological tools." **NSF particularly likes the testing and advancement of social theories.**

NIH also solicits dissertation proposals. They provide a variety of potential research proposal topics and demonstrate the kinds of research that is currently desired by NIH. For more information on the NIH request for dissertation proposals you can begin searching from:

https://researchtraining.nih.gov/programs/research-education/r36

One example of an NIH request for proposals states: "The purpose of this FOA [proposal request] is to encourage behavioral and social science research on the causes and solutions to health and disabilities disparities in the U.S. population. Health disparities between, on the one hand, racial/ethnic populations, lower socioeconomic classes, and rural residents and, on the other hand, the overall U.S. population are major public health concerns. Emphasis is placed on research in and among three broad areas of action: 1) public policy, 2) health care, and 3) disease/disability prevention. Particular attention is given to reducing "health gaps" among groups. Applications that utilize an interdisciplinary approach, investigate multiple levels of analysis, incorporate a life-course perspective, and/or employ innovative methods such as systems science or community-based participatory research are particularly encouraged. …The goal is to move beyond documenting the existence of health and disability disparities to addressing causes and solutions." **NIH is very applied oriented**, that is, they care more about research that can be applied to reduce existing health problems (e.g., health disparities between races) and less about "basic research" that may not be immediately applied once completed.

Typical Sections of a Dissertation Proposal

The requirements of most grant proposals include an **introduction** to the proposal that clarifies the specific issue to be investigated, emphasizes why it is important to examine the issue, and concludes with a sentence or two describing what is to come within the proposal. The introduction should create a desire to know more about the issue, be convincing that there is value in funding the research, and it should develop within the reader a desire to continue reading the proposal.

The next section of the proposal is typically a **review of the literature** on the proposed area of study—what do we currently know about the subject and what would be valuable to know that we don't know. It should be organized by sections. So, for example, with regard to the topic of burnout among health workers, there would be a separate section (with a separate heading) within your literature review on each of the major factors reported in the literature to affect burnout. For example, a review of the literature might result in a section on "Effects of Long Hours," another on "Lack of Management Support," another on "Level of Care Intensity," etc. You might also include a section(s) that proposes additional factors you believe to be important to burnout but have not been considered by other researchers or considered only minimally.

Research grant proposals also typically have a separate section describing the **specific research questions to be address or theory and hypotheses to be tested** (NSF generally wants the testing of theories and hypotheses as does UNT Ph.D. dissertation committees). NSF and NIH may specify where these should be located within the proposal or they may not. Sometimes these

questions/hypotheses are provided as a summary at the end of each section of the literature review. For example, if your focus was burnout of health care workers, you might have a section of your literature review titled "Management Support" with a review of the existing studies that have examined its relationship to burnout. You could end this section with a research question that clarifies what you propose to examine (e.g., Does a lack of management support create burnout among health care workers, and if so, under what circumstances?) or an hypothesis to be tested (e.g., Lack of management support causes burnout among health care workers). Another alternative would be to provide these research questions or hypotheses at the end of the literature review as part of a summary of the literature review section.

Another section required by Requests for Proposals (RFPs; sometimes called Requests for Applications or RFAs) is: "**Proposed Research Methods.**" Our class is not a social research methods class so I'm not expecting you to provide a "polished" methods section to your proposal. However, it would be great if you could give it your best shot (i.e., give it a try). You can refer to your assigned book: Guide to Effective Grant Writing as well as the discussion below to help obtain direction.

Within this broad section you should have sub-sections beginning with the heading: "Overview of Proposed Research Methods." This section should provide a brief summary of the Proposed Research Methods section and how it will allow for the testing of the hypotheses or investigation of the problems presented. This should be followed by a section titled "Data Collection Procedures." If you are proposing to collect your own data, you should provide a description of how the data would be collected including a description of (1) the population to be sampled, (2) the questionnaire(s) and sampling techniques if these are to be used and (3) any qualitative data collection and analysis techniques if these are to be used. If you intend to use an existing data set, you should describe the data set, including how the data were collected and any sampling techniques that were used by those who collected the data.

Another sub-section of the methods section should be "Variables to be Measured." This section should provide not only a definition of the variables but a description of how they are to be measured. If a questionnaire is proposed then sample questions for variables would be expected, particularly regarding the most important variables such as the dependent variables. The variables you present should measure the concepts in the hypotheses and allow for the testing of the hypotheses. If an existing data set is proposed, then you should point out some (or all) of the variables in the data set that you are proposing to use.

Finally, a sub-section titled "Analytical Techniques to be Used" should be provided. It should discuss how the data would be analyzed once they are collected. Here again, our class is not a statistics class, but give it your best effort. For example, this might include a discussion of how t-tests would be used to examine the research questions or test the hypotheses; and similarly how regression analysis would be used if you propose to use it. Other possible techniques might include using software to analyze qualitative data, hierarchical linear modeling, discriminate analysis, or any other techniques that you believe are appropriate.

One last section typically required within the grant proposal is **Requested Budget.** The NSF and NIH dissertation grant proposals typically allow up to $16,000. So you could provide a brief review of what money you would need. For example, funds for salary (maybe pay for yourself during the summer), travel, computer software, and to enticement people to participate in your study (e.g., 30 participants * $50 each = $1,500).

The length of the introduction-literature review-methods sections should be roughly 20 double-spaced pages. I**n this case you will ignore the page limits provided by the NSF or NIH guidelines where they typically expect 15 single-spaced pages**.

The **grading of each dissertation grant proposal** will be based on how much effort has been put into preparing, researching, and writing the proposal. This follows the same criteria as for the MA research papers (see above).

Re-Write of Grant Proposal (15%): Once obtaining comments on your proposal, revise the proposal and make all the changes that make sense to you (similar to that described for the MA research papers). **When you turn in the revised proposal, you must also turn in your original proposal that shows the comments from me. A**gain, as described for the MA research papers (see above).

Helpful Hints for Writing Papers (both MA research papers and PHD proposals)

1. Rarely make editorial/opinion statements except in the conclusion section. All statements should be reporting what you have found in the literature about your topic. Ideally, don't write: "Towns and cities take for granted the rivers they build around." Instead, use a citiation such as: Smith (2015) has pointed out that "towns and cities take for granted…"
2. Use citations liberally but use quotes sparingly.
3. Here is a personal quirk of mine: when reporting previous research use past tense. "Jones (2014) reported that…" Not, "Jones (2014) reports…". The reason for this is that Jones may no longer even believe what they reported in the past so to say "Jones reports" or "Jones argues that" is inaccurate and may be false (not all researchers follow this practice but it makes the most sense to me).
4. Include page numbers.
5. Write the paper as if the reader knows nothing about the topic (have you ever heard of KISS—keep it simple stupid). This is what you would do if you were going to submit the paper to a journal and this is the group you want to influence. Typically, don't use jargon but, if you need to use jargon, define all jargon that is used prior to using it (examples of jargon include nonrenewable energy, geomorphology, non-point source pollution).
6. When quoting, you must provide not only the author and date of the publication but also the page number where the quote can be found.
7. Within the text, you should rarely use a researchers/authors first name. For example, you would state: "Smith (2015) has reported…" Not, "John Smith (2015) has reported…"

***If our class is moved on line, we will keep everything as it is currently planned but have our classes through zoom (meeting id: 9403800009). Students who log in to the class and <u>are visible</u> will receive credit for attendance.