York University Faculty of Health
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Graduate Program in Health

Fall 2016 – GS/HLTH 6210 (3.0) The Political Economy of Health Inequities

Professor Dennis Raphael
Tuesdays, 11:30 – 2:30 PM, VH 1018
Office Hours: Mondays 10-1, Tuesdays 10-11:30
Rm. 418 HNES Building
email: draphael@yorku.ca

Course Description:
This course considers how the political and economic forces that shape the distribution of wealth, influence, and power within wealthy developed nations such as Canada create health inequities. The course focuses on three key areas related to the presence of health inequities: the economic system, the political system, and the ability of citizens to shape public policy.

Course Objectives are to learn about:
1. Basic principles of identifying and studying health inequities.
2. The current state of knowledge and research in the political economy of health inequities.
3. To identify and research an issue, and then publish a paper on the political economy of health inequities.

Required Course Text (available from bookstore)

Required Additional Readings
Provided to you each week through York University Libraries.

Evaluation
Students will be required to produce three papers focused on some aspect of the political economy of health inequities that will culminate with an article being submitted to a refereed journal. The structure and content of these assignments will be discussed in class over the course of the term. Each student will also be responsible for presenting a critical overview of one week’s readings and assessed for class participation.

Class presentation and engagement on issues raised by readings 25% Over course
Statement of Problem and Literature Review (up to 10 pages) 25% Due October 18
Completed Paper (up to 20 pages) 25% Due November 8
Paper Prepared for Journal Submission (3500-8000 words) 25% Due November 29
Accommodation: Any student who requires accommodation due to a disability is encouraged to inform me.

Course Assignments

Class presentation (15%)
Select one week of readings. Do not simply summarize the readings. We all will have read them! Prepare no more than a 20 minute presentation of:
a) key points and issues identified in the readings; b) your take on the implications for understanding and researching health policy and equity issues; and c) a few questions for the group.

Class engagement (10%)
For each reading over the term identify:
a) a point or idea that you think is especially important for understanding and improving health equity. Be prepared to explain why this is the case.
b) an issue that you would like further elaboration upon during the class.

Course papers
1. Select an issue for your papers. If you have difficulty selecting a topic, approach the professor for assistance.
2. Conduct a literature search of relevant policy documents, reports, or academic and professional journals pertaining to the topic that you have identified in #1. Identify at least 10-15 relevant sources. An issue can be expressed as a dilemma, conundrum, question or series of questions or simple statement of purpose.
3. Consider preparing your papers by discussing some/all of the following:
a. Introduction to the issue (e.g. problem, dilemma, concern); include a thesis statement in your introduction
b. Why it is an issue; the history (how the issue evolved); and how it captured your interest.
c. What are the implications for the public and policy makers?
d. Summary (your conclusions, new insights, pulling the paper together).

All students are expected to identify an issue and be prepared at some point to discuss it and present findings to the class. This should include an analysis of how these findings fit into the course findings to date.

General Note: Assignments are penalized 5% for every day late (including weekends).

Structure for Course Paper Assignments
All papers use 12 font Times Roman lettering with 1.5 line spacing, and 1" (2.54 cm) page margins. Refer to authors (e.g., Rioux, 2002; Government of Canada, 2008, etc.) using APA (2010) referencing. Carefully prepare what you are going to write before you write it. Then edit it. Use spell and grammar check. Insert page numbers and use a stapler.
**Evaluation Criteria for Course Paper Assignments**

a) Substance: paper addresses the essential elements related to your topic and issue; ideas are supported by examples where appropriate, course concepts and evidence (i.e., literature) provided; demonstrates critical thinking (i.e., sound conceptualizing, interpreting and analysis-synthesis.

b) Originality: creative integration of own ideas with those of other authors; unique interpretation of ideas.

c) Clarity: logical flow of ideas; grammatically correct sentences and paragraph structure, APA format.

d) Progression of analytic and written literacy skills: constructive use of instructor feedback regarding analyses and format of paper; increased understanding of key course concepts.

**Use of TurnItIn:**

Turnitin is web-based software which scans submitted works for similarity to material in public websites, academic journals, papers purchased from an essay mill, etc., and to essays and assignments concurrently or previously submitted to Turnitin, which are stored in a database. An 'originality report' is then provided to the instructor, who remains responsible for determining any breach of academic honesty.

You are required to submit your essays into TurnItIn

Login information:
Class ID: 12819172
Enrolment Password: inequity

You will create your own user profile using the class enrolment wizard. Additional instructions are available at this link.

If you do not wish to use TurnItIn, you must let the Course Director know in advance. You will be required to submit written reports on how you completed each of your assignments (required contents below), along with detailed annotated bibliographies. Each report and bibliography must be submitted with your assignment when it is due. You will also email an electronic copy of each report and bibliography (with hyperlinked URLs in it) to the Course Director. You may be asked to take an oral examination for any or all of your written assignments directed at issues of originality.

The written report must contain the following information, as well as anything else you consider useful to the Course Director on the issue of academic integrity:
- A list of the documents and other sources you consulted to understand your topic, along with the dates you first used each of them;
- An explanation of how those documents and sources led you to the other documents and sources you used;
• An explanation of which of the sources you used had the most influence on your understanding of the topic of your assignment, and how you used them.

PLEASE NOTE
If you have a medical or other compelling reason for not submitting an assignment on time, I must be notified PRIOR to the date that the assignment is due. If this is not done, then the 5 percentage points a day penalty will apply without exceptions.

I will not accept assignment weeks after the due date without prior notification. If you are having significant personal issues, make sure you attend the Counselling and Development Centre which is in the Behavioural Sciences Building.

Late Penalty: The assignments received later than the due date will be penalized five points per calendar day. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the course instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor’s or allied health professional’s letter).

Recommended Texts
(PhD students especially are strongly recommended to eventually obtain these texts).


**Recommended Data Bases available through York Libraries:**
sourceoecd  and cansim

**Course Schedule and Required Readings**

1. **September 13. Researching the Political Economy of Health Inequities: Methodologies**
   - Mantoura, P. and Morrison, V. *Policy approaches to reducing health inequalities*. Montreal: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy.

2. **September 20. Scanning the Landscape: Perspectives on the SDOH**


3. September 27. Defining and Assessing Health Inequities
   **Chapter 1: The Importance of Tackling Health Inequalities, Dennis Raphael**

4. October 4. Defining Political Economy
   **Chapter 2: American Experiences, Stephen Bezruchka**

5. October 11. Social Structures and Social Processes
   **Chapter 3: Australian Experiences, Fran Baum, Matt Fisher, and Angela Lawless**
   Tarlov, A. Coburn’s thesis: plausible, but we need more evidence and better measures, 993-995.
   Hertzman, C. Social change, market forces and health, 1007-1008.
   Coburn, D. A brief response, 1009-1010
6. October 18. Social Inequality and Social Exclusion
Chapter 4: British and Northern Irish Experiences, Katherine Smith and Clare Bambra


7. October 25. Welfare States I: Research Addressing Health Inequities
Chapter 5: Canadian Experiences, Dennis Raphael


8. November 1. Welfare States II: Political Traditions and Health Inequities
Chapter 6: Finnish Experiences, Juha Mikkonen


Chapter 7: Norwegian Experiences, Elisabeth Fosse


10. November 15. Canada I: Health Inequities

Chapter 8: Swedish Experiences, Mona C. Backhans and Bo Burstrom

Health Council of Canada (2010). *Stepping it up: Moving the focus from health care in Canada to a healthier Canada*. Toronto: Author.


*(skim executive summaries)*


First Report: Population Health Policy: International Perspectives
Second Report: Maternal Health and Early Childhood Development in Cuba
Third Report: Population Health Policy: Federal, Provincial and Territorial Perspectives
Fourth Report: Population Health Policy: Issues and Options
Fifth Report: A Healthy, Productive Canada: A Determinant of Health Approach

11. November 22. Canada II: Barriers to Addressing Health Inequities

Chapter 9: An Analysis of International Experiences in Tackling Health Inequalities, Dennis Raphael.


**Recommended**


**Chapter 10: Applying the Lessons from International Experiences, Toba Bryant**


(read abstracts)


1. Introduction to the Special Issue, T. Bryant & D. Raphael
3. Stolen Sisters, Second Class Citizens, Poor Health: The Legacy of Colonization in Canada, Wendee Kubik, Carrie Bourassa and Mary Hampton
4. Existing on a Boundary: The Delivery of Socially Uninsured Health Services to Aboriginal Groups in Canada, Carlos R. Quiñonez and Josée G. Lavoie
5. Primary Care and Equity in Health: The Importance to Effectiveness and Equity of Responsiveness to Peoples’ Needs, Barbara Starfield
6. The Elephant in the Room: The Invisibility of Poverty in Research on Type 2 Diabetes, Claudia Chaufan and Rose Weitz

7. Welfare State Regimes and the Political Economy of Health, Clare Bambra
Social Inequalities, Public Policy, and Health, Toba Bryant

8. Reducing Social and Health Inequalities Requires Building Social and Political Movements, Dennis Raphael