

MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIETY (SOC 395) – 3 CREDITS
Department of Sociology, St. Francis Xavier University
Fall 2021

*This course acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq/L'nu People. It is important to understand the history of this land and understand our place within this context. Recognizing we are all Treaty People, students are encouraged to learn about the Peace and Friendship Treaties.**

COURSE INFORMATION:

Instructor: Dr. Katie Aubrecht; E: caubrech@stfx.ca; T: 902-867-4845

Office: Nicholson Tower Room 619

Office Hours: Tues. 10am-10:30am, Wed. 10am-10:30am & Thurs. 1pm-2pm AST

Course Meeting Day and Time: Monday, 6:30-9:30pm AST

Course Meeting Location: Mulroney Hall 3022

Students may drop a course, online in Banner, on or before Tues., Nov. 3, 2021

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Description

In this course students will analyze mental health and illness experiences, knowledge, policy, and practices from a sociological perspective. Current and historical medical, legal, and social issues and responses related to mental health and illness will be considered and discussed. Course readings and assignments will examine the social structures and conditions, and cultural values, professional ideologies and institutions of power that shape interpretations and realities of mental health and illness. Concepts analyzed include: capacity, expertise, lived experience, medicalization of behaviour, personhood, psychiatricization, social and structural determinants of mental health inequities, and stigma.

Prerequisites: SOCI 101, 102, 251. Three Credits.

*Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Library has a valuable collection titled "Indigenous Resources – Truth and Reconciliation" accessible at: <https://subjectguides.nsc.ca/indigenousresources/truthandreconciliation>

Course Materials

Required Course Textbook: Rodgers, A. & Pilgrim, D. (2014). *A sociology of mental health and illness*. New York: Open University Press.

Online Reader: Primary source excerpts from influential texts shaping sociological perspectives on mental health and illness will be included in an online course reader that students can access via the course Moodle site.

Accessibility & Accommodations

This classroom will be an anti-oppressive and disability, Mad, and D/deaf positive space (more information on what this means can be accessed using the following link: <https://simmons.libguides.com/anti-oppression/anti-ableism>). I am committed to accessibility and I want to hear from you about how I can enhance the accessibility of the course. Accessibility is a collective project we all have a stake in. One way that accessibility can be supported is through accommodations. St.F.X. supports academic accommodation for students with disabilities so that they may meet the learning objectives of their courses and be given the opportunity to be fairly evaluated on their understanding of course material. The Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning welcomes students with documented disabilities and offers them a student-centered program of support. **If you have a registered accommodation, please let me know.** For more information about access and accommodation please see: http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/

If you are not able to access the course material for technical, financial or any other reasons, please let me know as soon as possible. All you have to say is “I cannot access the material” and we can work together to ensure your access.

Self-Care: Due to the focus of sociological study (social relations/social order/power and inequality), students need to be aware that course readings and/or discussions may contain information that could be potentially disturbing, triggering, and unsettling. If this happens students can identify it in the class discussions and we can talk through it collectively as a class, and/or contact me after class to talk about it and explore appropriate strategies of address. In cases of more intensely felt disquiet you can also obtain peer support (talk to a friend), or seek assistance from resources listed in the STFX academic calendar and included at the end of the syllabus.

Child, Family, Friend and Elder Care: Many students have care responsibilities. If care responsibilities come into conflict with the course schedule, please let me know. I will work with you to explore how you can stay engaged and support your progress.

Teaching Methods

This seminar style course is delivered in-person and supported electronically by a Moodle course-specific webpage and Collaborate online classroom for guest speakers (we may also use Zoom).

I will use a variety of teaching methods in each class, including:

1. Lecture materials that will be archived on Moodle, such as PowerPoint presentation slides.
2. Required and supplementary readings and course materials such as academic publications, reports, websites, blogs, documentary film, news media, YouTube videos, as well as artistic and creative works and guest speakers, posted on Moodle where possible.
3. In-class discussions and collaborative work. Through dialogue we will create a safe and stimulating space where you can creatively engage with the course content, and one another.
4. Individualized in-person and/or virtual meetings during office hours and by appointment.

Expectations of Students

Students are expected to attend all classes. If you are going to be absent for more than one class, you are responsible for contacting me. In the case of a sudden emergency requiring you to be absent for more than five days, you are required to contact the Dean's office. Faculty are required to report to the Dean all unexplained absences in excess of three hours over at least two classes in any term. This not done to be punitive but to ensure you are receiving supports that can help you. Since we only meet once a week, attendance is especially important.

Our criteria for success is engaged, critical and creative dialogue that is informed by the readings. For this to happen, it is expected that students will have read all of the required readings (as they are listed in the schedule), and will engage one another by listening to and responding to one another in respectful ways. A

collective sense of trust, and respect for one another, will be essential to supporting meaningful engagement.

Clear and continuous communication throughout the course is important. I care about your progress. Contact me if you have questions or require clarification around instructions or expectations for assignments using my email caubrech@stfx.ca.

Course Assignments

Please include your name and student ID number on each document submission. All submissions must be in WORD (PDF not accepted), double spaced, and include page numbers. Pay attention to assignment due dates and instructions before beginning and before submitting assignments.

It is expected that all submitted writing assignments will include **direct references to course material** cited in **ASA or APA formatting**, in addition to the student's own reflections and creative contributions. When describing material from outside of the class, indicate where this information is from, using quotations for direct citations, and/or a reference that shows where you retrieved the information from. When you do use a quotation be sure to introduce it, and explain the meaning of the passage in your own words. Always get the last word!

Assignments must be uploaded via Moodle on or before the due date. **Marks may be deducted at a rate of 5% per calendar day for late assignments. Assignments without a negotiated extension and which are not received within 10 days of the submission date will not be accepted and will receive an automatic grade of zero.** Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR EVALUATED WORK

40% = Demonstrates understanding of course material

20% = Shows meaningful engagement (with readings, lectures, discussions)

20% = Displays critical and creative thinking (takes material in new directions)

20% = Technical aspects (proofread for spelling, grammar, and flow)

Assignment Instructions*

***Additional details will be provided in-class.**

Participation (10 @ 1% = 10%)

- Participation grades are not provided just for attending class. Students must actively contribute to our learning community's collective understanding through questions, comments, connections related to the readings posed in class; or, by submitting an email to me with questions, comments, connections related to the course readings.
- Participation will be graded out of 100 with a value of 1% per class for 10 classes.

Mental Health Journal (5 @ 4% = 20%)

- Students will keep a mental health journal and submit an entry via Moodle for each week of the course for the first five weeks of class, with the first entry due before class on Sept. 13. Each submission is graded out of 100 with a value of 4%.
- Journal entries should be at least one page double-spaced in length and respond to four guiding questions – 1) *What is mental health?* 2) *How do we know mental health?* 3) *How do we 'do' mental health?* 4) *How can mental health be understood as 'social'?*
- Each entry must reference and incorporate the required readings for the week the entry is submitted.
- Journal entries can include reflections, and reference feelings and reactions, include questions, as well as doodles or sketches or links to music, art, poetry, news media, historical texts/stories, maps, or other cultural artefacts.
- Students should not disclose anything they would not want the professor to read; nor should they share personal information about other people. Anything written in the journal will be kept confidential.
- Journal entries will be evaluated on how well the student demonstrates knowledge of a sociological perspective on mental health and comprehension of the required readings.

Mid-Term Exam (20%) – October 18

- The exam will take place in-class during the first part of the class, and will include multiple choice, short and long answer questions related to content covered in the first half of the course up until the day of the exam.

Final Paper Proposal (10%) – November 5

- Students will individually develop and submit a proposal for their final paper. It should present a sociological issue related to mental health and society discussed in the class (example topics provided), a brief summary of background information on the issue, and outline a plan for the paper.
- The proposal should identify two course readings and two peer-reviewed academic articles from outside the class that will be used to examine this issue sociologically in the final paper, explain why they were chosen, and present them in proper ASA/APA formatting in a reference list.
- The proposal should be at least one page double-spaced, with a separate title page.

Final Paper (30%) – December 10

- The final paper will provide an opportunity to apply knowledge gained from the course and independent research to a sociological issue related to mental health and society. In examining the issue sociologically, students should draw on at least three course readings and three peer-reviewed academic articles from outside the course. The inclusion of other non-academic resources in addition to the required minimum academic resources is encouraged.
- The paper must be at least eight pages, double-spaced, with a separate title page and reference page.

Submission of Assignments: Assignments will be submitted and returned through Moodle. All the assignment drop-boxes have the “Submit” icon in front of them. Click on the appropriate assignment link and click on the “upload file” button. Then click on “add” button and browse in your computer and attach the appropriate assignment. Finally click on “save changes”. Make sure your file is in MS WORD format.

Academic Integrity: Everyone in the StFX university community, including faculty and students, is responsible for upholding the values of academic integrity.

Students who engage in plagiarism, cheating, falsification, tampering, impersonating another student or any other form of improper academic conduct will be subject to academic discipline. To learn about your obligations as a student, please refer to section 3.8 of the **StFX Academic Calendar**:

https://www.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/sites/registrars-office/files/2021-08/2021_2022_AcademicCalendar_Aug31.pdf

READING & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (Monday, Sept. 13) : Welcome & Introductions

No required readings, in-class conversation circle, class learning community-building and collective exercise.

The opening lecture will draw on the following text, included in the online reader: Allan Horwitz: An overview of sociological perspectives on the definitions, causes and responses to mental health and illness

WEEK 2 (Monday, Sept. 20): Perspectives on Mental Health & Illness

Journal Entry #1 Due

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 1 (pp. 1-20)
- Online reader: Excerpt from Emile Durkheim's *Suicide*

WEEK 3 (Monday, Sept. 27): Social Stratification and Mental Health

Journal Entry #2 Due

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 2 (pp. 21-36)
- Online reader: Elizabeth McGibbon: Oppression and mental health: Pathologizing the outcomes of injustice

WEEK 4 (Monday, Oct. 4): Gender, Sexuality and Mental Health

Journal Entry #3 Due

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 3 (pp. 37-52)

- Online reader: Sex and Gender Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+) in mental health research
- Resources: <https://www.halifaxpride.com/nsresources>

Mid-term exam review

WEEK 5 (Monday, Oct. 11): THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

WEEK 6 (Monday, Oct. 18): Age, Ageing and Mental Health Over the Life Course

Midterm Exam: The mid-term exam will be administered in the first hour of class

Required reading:

- Course textbook: Chapter 5 (pp. 70-86)
- Guest speaker: Celeste Gotell, Health Promotion, Mental Health and Addictions Specialist, Nova Scotia Health; Seniors Action Coalition Lead

WEEK 7 (Monday, Oct. 25): Race and Ethnicity

Journal Entry #4 Due

Required readings:

- Course textbook Chapter 4 (pp. 53-69)
- Online reader: Excerpts from Frantz Fanon: *The wretched of the earth* and *Beyond an African revolution*
- Online reader: Excerpt from Paul Gilroy: *Postcolonial melancholia*

WEEK 8 (Monday, Nov. 1): Decolonizing the Mind

Journal Entry #5 Due

Required reading:

- Online reader: Excerpts from Lee Maracle: *I am woman: A native perspective on sociology and feminism*
- Guest speaker: Andrea Currie, a member of the Métis Nation Manitoba, who works in We'koqma'q First Nation as a community-based clinical therapist

Final Paper Proposal Due: November 5

WEEK 9: FALL STUDY BREAK NOVEMBER 8 – 12 – NO CLASSES

WEEK 10 (Monday, Nov. 15): The Coloniality of Global Mental Health Regimes

Required reading:

- Online reader: Collin King: Whiteness in psychiatry: The madness of European misdiagnoses
- Online reader: China Mills: The global politics of disablement: Assuming impairment and erasing complexity
- Guest speaker: Dr. Shahina Parvin, Postdoctoral Fellow, Brandon University, will share from her PhD research on immigrant women's mental health in Lethbridge, Alberta

WEEK 11 (Monday, Nov. 22): The Organization of Mental Health Work/Mental Health Work and Professions

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 6 (pp. 87-106)
OR
- Course textbook Chapter 7 (pp. 107-123)
- Online reader: Excerpt from Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*

WEEK 12 (Monday, Nov. 29): The Treatment of People with Mental Health Problems

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 8 (pp. 124-145)
OR
- Course textbook Chapter 11 (pp. 180-196)
- Online reader: Excerpt from Erving Goffman: *Asylums*

WEEK 13 (Monday, Dec. 6)

Required reading:

- Course textbook Chapter 12 (pp. 199-219)

Last Class Wrap Up

FINAL PAPER DUE December 10

Statement on Equitable Learning

The StFX student services department strives to maintain an inclusive and welcoming environment. Along with residence and food service, programs are provided to help students develop their capabilities and interests as fully as

possible within the university community. In addition to the services identified below, the student services department works with the students' union to coordinate the first-year orientation program.

Student Success Centre

Location: Angus L. Macdonald library

Phone: (902)867-5221

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/student-success/>

Tramble Rooms Centre for Accessible Learning

Location: Angus L. Macdonald Library, Room 108.

Phone: (902) 867-5349

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/accessible-learning/>

Health and Counselling Centre

Students may book an appointment with the intake nurse by calling 902-867-2263, or by dropping by the Health and Counselling Centre

Location: 3rd Floor of Bloomfield Centre (Room 305).

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/health-and-counselling/>

Financial Aid Office

Location: 204 & 206 Nicholson Tower

Phone: (902) 867-2374 / 2301

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/financial-aid/>

Diversity Engagement Centre

Location: 4th Floor Bloomfield

Phone: (902) 867-3934

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/student-life/diversity-engagement-centre>

Sexual Violence and Assault Prevention

Location: 313D Bloomfield Centre

Phone: 902-867-5601

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/visible-at-x/>

Office of Internationalization

Location: 1st Floor Nicholson Tower

Phone: 902-867-3678

Website: <https://www.stfx.ca/international/office-internationalization>

Wellspring Centre

Location: Wellspring Centre, 2nd Floor Morrison Hall

Phone: (902) 867-5252 or 867-3739

Website: <https://www2.mystfx.ca/wellspring/>

Chaplaincy Services

Location: 403Bloomfield Centre

Phone: (902) 867-2320

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/chaplaincy/Safety and Security>

Location: Physical Plant

Phone: (902) 867-4444

Website: <http://www2.mystfx.ca/security/>

Religious, Spiritual or Cultural Observance

Everyone should feel welcome and encouraged to bring their full selves to the class. Please feel free to speak with me about any religious, spiritual or cultural commemorations or celebrations that you plan to observe during the term.

Copyright and Intellectual Property: These course materials are designed for use in “Mental Health & Society” (SOCl 395) at St.F.X. University and are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.