**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**

**Department of Sociology**

**SOC 5700/6601: Health and Aging**

**Fall, 2021, Mondays 6:00-8:45  
 Auditorium Building Rm 201 or Sociology Conference Room**

**Dale E. Yeatts, Ph.D. Sycamore Hall, Suite 288J**

**Office hrs: Phone: 940-565-2238**

**Wednesday: 2:30-3:30 email: yeatts@unt.edu**

**and (preferably) by appointment http://www.yeatts.us**

**I.** **Learning Objectives**

A. To understand the historical development of medicine;

B. To gain knowledge of the social factors contributing to health;

C. To gain knowledge of the global differences in health and medicine;

D. To understand the U.S. health care system including its organization, financing, and delivery; To understand the influences of technology and bioethics;

E. To become aware of the alternative medical techniques and medicine available;

F. To gain an expertise within a sub-field of health and aging.

G. To obtain an introduction to grant writing

**II. Learning Components**

1. 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 except the Weitz book. So, I recommend purchasing the older sixth edition of the Weitz book.

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

Cockerham, William C. (2021, third edition). Social Causes of Health and Disease, Cambridge, MA: Polity Press. ISBN: 13: 978-1-5095-4036-5

Yang, Otto (2005). Guide to Effective Grant Writing, New York, NY: Springer. ISBN: 0-306-48664-4

Irving, Paul (2014). The Upside of Aging: How Long Life Is Changing the World of Health, Work, Innovation, Policy and Purpose. Hoboken, NJ.

ISBN: 978-1-118-69203-5

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.

1. Assignments: These include participation in class discussions, developing discussion questions for each class, a research paper, and for PhD students a presentation of their grant proposals.

**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 (more than 5 absences will be an F). Two tardies to class or leaving class early will equal one absence. (Please don’t take this class if you would need to be routinely late or leave routinely early)

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.

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. The UNT Code of Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

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 Ph.D. students, this portion of the grade will also

include a class presentation of their research papers Nov 29…………….. 45%

2. Nov 15 **MA Papers/PhD Research Proposals due**......…….…………... 40%

* Sept. 27 turn in a one-page outline of paper/proposal
* Oct 11 turn in revised outline
* Oct 25 informal presentations
* Nov 8 Ph.D. students provide Dr. Yeatts with two published papers related to their grant proposal topic

3. Nov 29 **Revised papers/grant proposals due**; Ph.D. presentations…....…15%

**IV.** **Schedule of Class Topics and Reading Assignments**

Week 1 (August 23)

A. Introduction of students and professor to one another

B. Overview of course including review of student research papers and grant proposals.

C. Perhaps watch some of DVD “Foodmatters”

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 30)

A. Discuss student/Yeatts questions in class (Weitz Chapters 1-4)

B. For next week have read: Weitz Chapts 5-7 and **email your questions to Dr. Yeatts** since class will not meet next week. Normally you will bring questions to class each week—see Weekly Discussions below.

Week 3 (September 6)

1. Labor Day on Monday so class will not meet.
2. For next week, please read Weitz Chapts 8-10 (as noted below, create at least two discussion questions per chapter).

Week 4 (September 13)

A. Discuss Weitz Chapters 5-10

B. For next week read Weitz Chapts 11-13

Week 5 (September 20)

1. Discussion of Weitz, Chapts 11-13
2. Guest speaker: Justice Obiora on his dissertation examining alternative medicines

B. 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). 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).

C. For next week read Cockerham chapters 1-3

Week 6 (September 27)

A. Discuss Cockerham chapters 1-3

B. **Turn in one page outline** of proposed library research paper/grant proposal.

C. For next week: Read Cockerham chapters 4-8

Week 7 (October 4)

A. Student outlines of library research papers/proposals will be returned to students with hand-written comments provided by Dr. Yeatts so outlines can be revised.

B. Discuss Cockerham chapters 4-8

C. For next week: Turn in a revised one-page outline of your paper topic based on Dr. Yeatts’ comments on your initial outline.

D. Read Cockerham chapters 9-10 and Concluding Remarks (treat as a third chapter)

Week 8 (October 11)

A. **Turn in your revised one-page outline**

B. Discuss Cockerham chapters 9-10 and Concluding Remarks (treat as a third chapter)

C. For next week read Yang book (approximately 90 pages). Develop at least 7 discussion questions to be reviewed in class.

Week 9 (October 18)

A. Receive back your revised one-page outline with additional comments from Dr. Yeatts.

B. Discuss Yang book

C. Be prepared next week to make a 5 – 10 minute informal presentation of your outline. Students/Dr. Yeatts will comment on each student’s outline.

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

(no readings for next week, spend your time firming up your outline, identifying articles for your research paper/grant proposal, perhaps begin writing introduction).

Week 10 (October 25)

A. **Each student will make an informal presentation** to the class about the research paper/grant proposal s/he is working on. Students and Dr. Yeatts 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

B. For next week read: Irving Introduction (treat as chapter) and Chapts 1-5.

Week 11 (November 1)

A. Discuss Irving Introduction (treat as chapter) and Chapts 1-5.

B. For next week: read Irving chapters 6-11

Week 12 (November 8)

A. Discuss Irving chapters 6-11

B. For next week: each Ph.D. student will turn in two published papers that provide an overview of their grant proposal topic. Dr. Yeatts will then make copies of one of the two for all the students in the class so students will have some familiarity with each Ph.D. student’s grant proposal topic.

C. **research paper/grant proposal due** (40% of grade). Be sure to read below for the details of what is expected and how to prepare the paper.

D. No reading assignment since you will be finishing up your research papers/grant proposals. Dr. Yeatts will share some of his research activities and perhaps we’ll watch a relevant video and discuss it.

Week 13 (November 15)

1. **Turn in first research paper** (40% of grade);
2. Each Ph.D. student **turn in two published papers** that provide an overview of her/his topic. Dr. Yeatts will have copies made for all students

B. Dr. Yeatts will share some of his research activities including comments from reviewers of a recent paper submitted for publication (to help students see just what goes on regarding publishing) and perhaps we’ll watch a relevant video and discuss it.

C. For next week Irving chapters 12-16

Week 14 (November 22)

1. Discuss Irving chapters 12-16
2. Students receive their research papers back with hand-written comments from Dr. Yeatts (any questions regarding comments on paper?)
3. One published paper for each PhD student topic will be handed out to students

D. For next week, turn in revised research paper. Be sure to address all the comments provided by Dr. Yeatts (see “Revised Paper” below).

E. For next week have read published papers related to Ph.D. topics

Week 15 (November 29)

A. **Turn in revised paper**

B. PhD students will present their grant proposals to the class and lead a discussion on their topic (students will have read at least one article on the topic)

**WEEKLY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (40% of grade)**

At least two discussion questions should be developed for each chapter of the reading assignments for a given week (two per chapter is the minimum, if you want a high grade you’ll do more than this). The discussion questions cannot be more than two single-spaced pages or you will lose points. Use comic sans font (easier for me to read). This will result in each student developing multiple discussion questions each week. So, for example, six assigned chapters 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. It is limited to two pages because otherwise some students devote more time to developing questions which can take away from the time spent reading the chapters.

**IMPORTANT DETAILS**: There should be a separate heading for each chapter/article along with the book author so I can tell from which chapter the questions come. Under each chapter heading should be the discussion questions related to the heading. For example:

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?

**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., American Sociological Review, The Gerontologist, Journal of Health and Aging). No more than 10% 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 comic sans font, size 12 with 1” margins on top, bottom, and right side and 1 ½ “ margin on the left (you will lose ½ letter grade if the paper does not follow these specifications).

Selection of a topic for your paper is discussed below in the section titled: PhD Student Research Proposals. Please read it carefully before selecting a research paper topic.

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 five 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 within your paper for each major group** 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. The implications section should discuss the implications of current research on your topic.

**Revised Paper** (15%): Once obtaining a grade and comments on your first paper from the professor, revise the paper and make all the recommended changes that make sense to you. This is similar to when a researcher submits a paper for publication in a journal and then gets comments back from reviewers/the editor. If a requested change doesn’t make sense to you, please speak with the professor since the professor is 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 the professor and in my case from a journal editor). So, don’t be discouraged by multiple comments/suggestions (I will admit I usually have to let the paper and comments sit on my desk for a few days before I finally get up the strength to review 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 and discuss it 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.

**How to Structure MA Research Paper**

1, Introduction (1 to 2 pages)

a. Gain the reader’s attention/interest by pointing out the importance of the topic (for example, the importance of understanding how neighborhood characteristics affect health).

b. State the purpose of the paper (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 a statement of what is covered in the paper. 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 recommendations that address how neighborhoods could be changed so that the residents’ health is improved.

2. Body of paper (10-12 pages)

Review each group of neighborhood variables important to health. Use a sub-heading for each group.

3. Implications and Conclusion (1-2 pages)

**PHD STUDENT 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 a dissertation proposal (it’ll provide good practice). 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. You will study the NSF (or NIH) proposal guidelines and design your class proposal accordingly (guidelines provide what the section headings of the proposal should be and what should be included).

The PhD grant proposal should follow the guidelines provided (e.g., the NSF dissertation research guidelines). Such guidelines typically include an introduction and review of the literature on the topic of interest as well as research methods to be used.

In the process of identifying a topic and research method(s), you can view a description of the NSF dissertation proposal requirements at:

<https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505118>

The synopsis of this grant proposal request 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. Included is research on organizations and organizational behavior, population dynamics, social movements, social groups, labor force participation, stratification and mobility, family, social networks, socialization, gender roles, and the sociology of science and technology. The Program supports both original data collections and secondary data analysis that use the full range of quantitative and qualitative methodological tools. Theoretically grounded projects that offer methodological innovations and improvements for data collection and analysis are also welcomed.

Another funding organization: A recent request for dissertation grant proposals, that is related to medical sociology, was recently released by the National Institute on Health. This provides a variety of potential research proposal topics and demonstrates the kinds of medical sociology 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 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.

Thus, these requests for proposals provide examples of topics you could choose for your research proposal (or for MA students, the research paper).

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 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.

The literature review should also include the specific research questions you intend to address or theory and hypotheses you intend to test (NSF generally wants the testing of theories and hypotheses as does UNT Ph.D. dissertation committees). These might be presented at the end of each section that is included within the broader review of the literature section. 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?) or an hypothesis to be tested (e.g., Lack of management support causes burnout among health care workers). An 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.

The final section required by most RFPs is: “**Proposed Research Methods.**” 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. 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 techniques if these are to be used. If you intend to use an existing data set, you should describe how the data were collected and any sampling techniques that were used. Another 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 each variable would be expected (unless there are an abundance of them). The variables should measure the concepts in the hypotheses and allow for the testing of the hypotheses. Finally, a section titled “Analytical Techniques to be Used” should be provided. It should discuss how the data would be analyzed once they are collected; 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 intend to use it. Other possible techniques might include hierarchical linear modeling, discriminate analysis, or any other techniques that you believe are appropriate.

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

**PHD STUDENTS ONLY**

If you intend to use this course to help satisfy the course requirements of your Ph.D. concentration, then your paper topic should be focused on your concentration area. For example, if you are using this course to satisfy one of your course requirements for the concentration stratification, then your paper topic would focus on some aspect of health and stratification such as some aspect of women’s health or perhaps some aspect of social class and health. **But, please remember that you must have your advisory committee’s approval in order to count a particular course toward a particular concentration and, happily, most committees are open to your needs.**

The student’s grant proposal will be expected to include the sections required by the NSF or NIH. Therefore, a short appendix to the proposal should be provided (ideally 1-2 pages and no more than 5 pages) that lists in your words, each required section. The expected sections of the NSF/NIH proposal should be provided so that I can determine whether the grant proposal includes the required sections. The **grading of each grant proposal** will be based on how much effort has been put into preparing, researching, and writing the proposal. The proposal should convince the reader of the importance of the research so that the grant money provided would be well spent. Further, indications of effort will be number of appropriate references/citations used, thoughtful organization of paper (e.g., follows the major focuses of the RFP), use of sub-headings, writing style, etc. The references used in the literature review of the proposal should be PRIMARILY (at least 80%) from profession peer-reviewed research journals (e.g., American Sociological Review, The Gerontologist Environmental Psychology) and scholarly books. No more than 10% of reference citations should be web based and no more than 10% should come from non-professional publications (e.g., the newspaper, Time Magazine).

**Re-Write of Grant Proposal** (15%): Once obtaining comments on your proposal from the professor, revise the proposal and make all the changes that make sense to you. If a requested change doesn’t make sense to you, please speak with the professor since the professor is not infallible and your confusion may be warranted. Please also note that any thorough review of a grant proposal (written by a student or faculty member) is likely to result in a wealth of comments/suggested revisions (in your case from the professor and in the professor’s case from journal editors or proposal reviewers). So, don’t be discouraged by multiple comments/suggestions. Know that it is a valuable learning experience to obtain feedback beyond a simple grade.

**When you turn in the revised proposal, you must also turn in your first proposal** (with the suggested comments that you were given) in order to receive credit for the revised proposal. Again, if you have any questions about a particular requested change provided on your first proposal, it would be beneficial to meet with the professor and discuss it and, as noted above, in some cases the professor may agree with you that a change is not needed or a different change would be best.

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

1. Don’t use first or second person in the paper.

2. Don’t make editorial/opinion statements except perhaps in the conclusion. All statements should be reporting what you have found in the literature about your topic. 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…”

3. Use citations liberally but use quotes sparingly.

4. 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 she/he 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).

5. Include page numbers.

6. 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).

7. 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.

8. 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…”

**Covid Related Information**

1. The UNT president encourages students to wear a face covering whenever inside a building.
2. Sanitation wipes will be available.
3. UNTs Student Health Center does Covid testing if you would like to get tested.
4. I do not take off for not attending class until the 4th time a class is missed (equals 4 weeks). **If you can’t come to class for a possible Covid related reason (exposure to it or having it), email me and let me know.**
5. If you are experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or [askSHWC@unt.edu](mailto:askSHWC@unt.edu)) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or [COVID@unt.edu](mailto:COVID@unt.edu) for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

**\*\*\*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 are visible will receive credit for attendance.**