

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course offers a sociological and gender-analysis approach to analyzing women's health care needs, risks, and issues. Feminist, anti-racist, political economic, critical, and phenomenological perspectives/methodologies are used to critique women's experiences of health and illness in Canada.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:Ends-in-View

In this course, students will examine women's health and health care issues focusing predominantly on Canada but with some attention to international and global issues. Students will go beyond this examination to critically analyze how women's health problems develop, are perceived, and are responded to in contemporary society. The health of women will be analyzed in relation to the context of women's lives and how their health and health care experiences are shaped by socio-cultural factors, social institutions, systems of power and oppression, and social-political policies. Concepts and theories include feminism, norms, ideology, patriarchy, hegemony, discrimination (overt and covert), gender inequality, role, socialization, ethics, power, dominance and subordination, compliance/non-compliance, and empowerment.

Process

Informed class participation is expected; this means that students must have completed the required reading before class. Classes will contain a mixture of lecture, discussion, student presentations, and guest speakers. Lectures will introduce students to topics and relevant concepts and theories. Students will share information and resources that can be useful in understanding and enhancing one's own health and the health of others. The classroom will be structured to promote a democratic, non-hierarchical, and cooperative learning environment in which the voice and experience of students is promoted. Students will demonstrate critical and analytical thinking in writing, reading, and speaking and listening actively in the classroom.

III. TOPICS:

1. The state of women's health: definitions and perceptions of health/illness, women's health status and health practices, differences in morbidity and mortality in relation to gender. Women's life cycle events and roles and their relationship to health. The role of cultural socialization, institutional inequality, socio-cultural assumptions, and ideology.
2. The dynamic intersection of health and socio-cultural factors including gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability status, and sexual orientation
3. Health care from a gender perspective: women's challenges to the health care system; responsiveness and effectiveness of Western biomedicine, the health care system, and health care policy
4. Women and the illness experience: women in interaction with the healthcare system and health care professionals
5. International women's health and human rights: trends, statistics, and issues
6. Gendering in scientific knowledge: the politics of health research and the social construction of knowledge. Feminist inquiry and qualitative methods
7. Analysis of breast cancer as a woman's health issue
8. Women as care givers: health care professionals and unpaid caregivers; women as indigenous healers and midwives, including Canadian First Nations health care cultures
9. Individual and group strategies for personal, political and social change: alternative health care models for women and health activism (the women's health care movement)

IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:

Worcester, N., & Whatley, M.H. (2004). *Women's health: Readings on social, economic, and political issues* (4th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt

There will be a selection of required readings consisting of current and classic articles relevant to women and health.

V. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:

1. Midterm test: consisting of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions
2. Final exam: consisting of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions
3. Student presentations: In small groups, analyze a women's health care issue for presentation in class. A handout must be prepared and distributed to the class. Possible topics:
 - Body image: breast implants; eating disorders; skin and beauty (cosmetic surgery)
 - Menopause; hormone replacement therapy
 - Infertility
 - Hysterectomy
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Pre-menstrual syndrome
 - Contraception
 - Childbirth
 - Women and violence: battering, domestic and family violence, rape
4. Complete one of the following assignments as a formal paper:
 - a. Fieldwork project: Interview a woman who has an illness that is specific to women (or has traditionally affected more women than men). This paper should be a reflection of their experiences with diagnosis and treatment of this particular illness, as well as the ways in which it has affected their lives, both everyday and overall. Using relevant concepts and theories, compare the experience of this woman to what is in the literature. Include information about the incidence, prevalence, morbidity, and mortality (if applicable) of the illness.

OR

- b. Compare and contrast the experience of women as the experience of men in relation to a particular health problem. Include information about diagnosis, treatment, the illness experience, health care policy in Canada, and research. Examples:
 - Sexually transmitted diseases
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Mental illness
 - Substance abuse

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in post-secondary courses:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	4.00
A	80 – 89%	3.00
B	70 - 79%	2.00
C	60 - 69%	1.00
D	50 – 59%	0.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

Note: For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade.

It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

VI. SPECIAL NOTES:

Special Needs:

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your professor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit Room E1101 or call Extension 2703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of Course Outlines:

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in *Student Code of Conduct*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course Outline Amendments:

The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

VIII. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.