

It is felt that this multi-pronged approach will serve the real purpose of education and inculcate a true sense of civic engagement and participation with the community. The proposed theme for this semester is a focus on poverty, homelessness and its associations with mental health problems. In essence, this class will attempt to provide a concrete understanding of health issues faced by the target population by applying the experiential learning approach through data application and pedagogy.

Within this framework you will identify specific research, the findings of which may provide a better understanding of the causes and problems faced by the homeless people; and perhaps offer suggestions for change. Working closely together in a controlled environment will help form bonds within the class, encourage peer teaching, and raise the level of social awareness and may engender a spirit of commitment to giving back to the community.

The overall goal of the project is to train Tougaloo student to be active participants in their communities by enhancing their sense of civic responsibility and to promote an awareness of mental and social issues by presenting their findings at different forums.

To accomplish this objective the class will be divided into groups of 3-4 students. The group will be asked to research on a specific issue using multiple sources: Journal articles, Internet sources, CDC data and other public health data sources.

The specific objectives are:

1. Establish the prevalence rates of homelessness.
2. Generate hypotheses from the data bank
3. Conduct literature review
4. Identify the causes
5. Relate theories to data.
6. Develop an action plan based on the findings.
7. Conduct a research project on a designated issue and
8. Communicate findings and recommendations to the Tougaloo Community, professional organizations and the outside community in an outreach effort.

Since this is a theme-based course, (health care, coping with stress and pain, chronic illness, drug and alcohol abuse, etc.), it is proposed, in essence, to make the real world the classroom. This will aid you in the process of discovering, how both the individual and society, is responsible for health disparities and the quality of life; and that there exists a possibility of taking charge of one's own life and making a difference to the life of others. The exploration will not be merely through lectures, discussions and readings but largely through fieldwork. Collaboration with on site social workers, case managers, counselors and other personnel will provide insight into the practical applications of theory. It will provide insights into the condition of the underprivileged members of society. Heightened sensitivity and awareness is generally instrumental in increasing a spirit of commitment and dedication to caring for society at large. This is the most valuable outcome of any learning experience, though it may not be evidenced in the immediate future.

The progress of each group will be shared with the rest of the class and peer suggestions will be incorporated into the work in progress. This is the major assignment for the class and 50% of the grading for the semester will be allocated to this project.

You will spend the first half of the semester collecting data on, for example prevalence of homelessness in metro Jackson, Mississippi. The extent of substance abuse, mental illnesses, HIV, CVD and other diseases found in this population. You will relate your findings to existing research findings in the nation and devise an action plan/policy recommendations to aid this population

The other 50 % will be thought papers, mid-term exam, participation, and attendance.

CLASS FORMAT

The pedagogical methods used by me in this course include lectures, discussions, and readings. These are ineffective without your active participation! This course works best if you attend all meetings. Each week will focus on one general topic. As this is a theme-based course, the exploration will be not through lectures, discussions and readings only, but also through fieldwork. Tougaloo College expects you to engage in some form of community volunteer work as part of your graduation requirements and for your participation in this project you will obtain **20 hours towards community service.**

CLASS EVALUATION:

I listened and I forgot, I read and I remembered, I did and I understood.

1. GROUP WORK:

At the beginning of the semester the class will be divided into groups of 3-5 students. The group will decide on the issue they wish to focus on. The group leader will be responsible for the performance of the group, ensuring the reading, research and writing is done on time. Each student will conduct a literature review and write an annotated bibliography of 3 articles (50 marks), to be submitted to the group leader. The group will then work together to collect data, administer questionnaires, conduct interviews etc., formulate an action plan (**see objectives, pg. 4**), write a 5-6-page report on their work (50 marks, APA format) and the final exam will be a presentation of the project at the Civic Engagement Forum to the Tougaloo Community (100 points; **50% of the grade**)

2. Individual Work:

- a. Students are responsible for all assigned readings. It is imperative that you keep up to date. Also meaningful participation requires that you read and think about the material before class. You will turn in **3 thought papers (25 points each: best 2 will be counted for the grade) during the semester** that will contribute to the discussion. These papers are to be no less than 2 pages and no more than 3 pages (typed, double-spaced, 1-inch margins. They may take on a variety of forms: your reaction to course readings, the discussion of an article from the suggested readings, or a visit to a number of websites (also provided).

Discuss one or two points presented in the readings for the assigned topic. In the first paragraph present the point(s) you wish to discuss. You may include a brief background of your point (e.g., what the authors assumed). The rest of the paper is devoted to elaborating these points (e.g., why you agree/disagree with the author regarding the utility of the concept; assumptions, consequences, other implications of the findings). The grade will be based on the clarity of the presentation, integration of points from the readings, critical thinking, and insightful and creative thought.

- b. The Mid Term Exam will be multiple choice/short answers for 50 points.

Class Attendance Policy

Tougaloo College believes that its students must learn to take major responsibility for their own education. Tougaloo students are required to attend all of their classes and be responsible for all assigned course material and all material covered in class. When students are absent from class, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor and ascertain what the instructor requires regarding missed material or assignments

GRADING:

You will be graded out of 400 points. The midterm exam is the only formal exam in the semester.

To summarize the point distribution again:

Project work 100 points
Project presentation: 100 points (Final Exam)
Thought papers: 50 points
Mid term Exam: 50 points
Participation: 50 points
Attendance: 50 points
There will be no make up exam.

IMPORTANT

All assignments are to be in the APA format: typed (font 12), double-spaced, with one-inch margins, with a cover page, abstract, introduction (with literature review), methods, results, discussion and policy recommendations, and the reference page.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic work is a serious offense and the student is subject to disciplinary action. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he/she fails to give adequate credit for any ideas or material taken from another source for either oral or written presentation, materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects. Such behavior will result in failure of this course.

PLAGIARISM WILL RESULT IN NO CREDIT FOR THE WORK IN QUESTION

Letter grades will be assigned as follows

A 360 or more points (90% or more)
B 320-359 points (80-89%)
C 280-319 points (70%-79%)
D 240-279 points (60%-69%)
F Below 239 points

STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE COURSE:

At the end of the semester the students will be asked to evaluate the course in keeping with the principles of the college. This is with regard to their expectations of what the course was about and the effectiveness of the instructor in creating an interest in the subject and dissemination of information. Your suggestions on what you consider the best and worst parts of the course and how it can be improved to meet your requirements/expectations are highly valued.

SCHEDULE

Note: The reading assignment is for the date assigned.

Jan 22nd:

Introduction

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. Louis Armstrong: Establishing the prevalence rates of homelessness

AND

Check Your Health Knowledge.

The changing field of health. Emergence of Health Psychology and Health Disparities in the U.S.

Reading Assignment: Chapter 1, pages 2-16, and Chap. 17, pages 480-484.

Research methods in Epidemiology
Reading Assignment: Chapter 2, pages 18-42.

- Jan 29th:** **Theories** of Health-Related Behaviors.
Reading assignment: Chapter 3: pages 46-69.
Adhering to Medical Advice: Theories
Reading assignment: Chapter 4, pages 72-94
Mental Health Models: Defining and measuring Stress
Responses to Stress, Coping Strategies with focus on Social Support
Reading Assignment: Chapter 5, pages 98-128
- Feb 5th:** Social Inequities in Health: Managed Care, Medic Aid.
Reading assignment: PP 8-9; PP.47-55; 62-68 PP. 190-197; Chapter 17,
pages 478-486 & 493; and **your findings**.
Presentation of 1st Thought Paper, (visiting the Web: at least 5 sites)
Proposal of Group Project Paper Due
- Feb 12th:** Health Care: Focus on Mississippi: Urban and Rural Disparities.
Reading Assignment: Go to the Web **and bring articles. Annotated Bibliography Due (3 articles each)**.
- Feb 19th:** Stress and Disease. **Presentation of 2nd Thought paper on CVD/ Diabetes/HIV etc among the homeless due**
Reading assignment: Chapter 6: pages 132-155
- Feb 26th** **NO CLASS: FIELD TRIP.** (This may be on a previous date and the readings will be shifted accordingly)
- Mar 5th** **Mid Term Exam: Chapter 1-6**
Group reports on progress of findings and presentation of Introduction & Methods section.
- Mar 12th** **Mid Term Break. NO CLASS**
- Mar 19th:** Assessment Measures: Anxiety, depression, hostility, daily hassles, self-esteem, coping strategies, hardiness, life events, social support, adherence to medication etc.
Group presentation.
Reading: Chapter 5 and related chapters.
- Mar 26th:** Socio-economic Factors associated with the Homeless, Income, education, gender, ethnicity and family structure. **3rd Thought paper presentation** on these factors.
Readings: pages: 5-7, 48-49, 58-59, 62-63, 83-85, 231-236, 255, 257, 267, 293-295, 359, 482-489.
- Apr 2nd:** Living with Chronic Illness: CVD, Diabetes
Asthma, STDs, HIV/ AIDS, and Alzheimer's disease
Reading assignment: Chapter 11: Pages: 274-302
- Apr 9^h:** **NO CLASS: EASTER**
- Apr 16th:** Related Behavioral Factors: Tobacco use, Alcohol and other Drugs.
Reading assignment: Chapter 13 & 14:339-410

Apr 23rd:	Group Work: <u>Finalize Project presentations</u>
Apr 30th:	Final Exams: Project Presentation (or earlier)
May 7th	Final Exam: Project Presentation (or earlier)

Caveat: PLEASE NOTE: AS THERE ARE FIELD TRIPS AND GUEST SPEAKERS THE ABOVE SCHEDULE IS LIABLE TO CHANGE TO ENABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR THESE. THE READING ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE MET, HOWEVER. THIS IS A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND MAY CHANGE AT THE PROFESSORS DISCRETION.

You are expected to have read each chapter scheduled for the class. We **Only discuss**.

PROPOSED GROUP PROJECTS

1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the homeless in metro Jackson, MS.
2. Chronic illnesses, availability of medical care and adherence to medication among the homeless in metro Jackson, MS.
3. Substance Abuse among the homeless in metro Jackson, MS.
4. Personality Profile of the homeless in metro Jackson, MS (Anxiety, depression and self-esteem)
5. Life events and how the homeless cope in metro Jackson, MS (Life events, scale, daily hassles scale and coping strategies)