Course Content: The NIH government report Healthy People 2010 outlined the goal of eradicating reducing and hopefully eradicating health disparities. Racial disparities in health, however, remain pervasive and persistent. A multilevel, macro to microsocial approach to examining health disparities is required in order to address such differences in health outcomes taking into account the upstream and downstream effects of social inequalities that drive health differences. This course is divided into four sections: (1) core medical sociological theories and models; (2) the biology of stress; (3) intersections of race, class, and gender for health; and (4) introduction to genetics and health disparities.

Course Objectives:
Objective 1: Integrate and apply medical sociological models to social processes shaping U.S. health disparities and inequities.
Content will focus on core medical sociological theories that explicate the structural, behavioral, and interpersonal pathways through which social stratification shapes population health outcomes.

Objective #2: Better understand the role of biosocial interactions for chronic disease risk in marginalized populations.
Content will introduce students to the process of how individual stress can serve as a mechanism driving population level inequalities (upstream effects) and the degree to which individual physiological processes are driven by microsocial and macrosocial inequalities (downstream effects).

Objective #3: Better understand how social inequities across race, class, gender, and sexualities correspond with health disparities.
Readings will underscore the intersectional nature of characteristics including race, class, gender, and sexuality shape health risk via biosocial, environmental, and interpersonal processes.

Required Books (Undergraduate and Graduate Students):


Additional Undergraduate and Graduate Readings will be Posted on Blackboard

Class Requirements: This class is organized in a lecture and seminar format. Students are strongly encouraged to attend each class and actively participate in class discussions. Students are also expected to have read ALL of the readings thoroughly and be prepared to discuss them in detail during each class session. Having all of the readings completed will make the class easier and more enjoyable!
Undergraduate Student Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>430</strong></td>
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Descriptions of the tasks are required for successfully completing this course below:

**Exams 1 and 2**: Exams will cover reading material and lecture notes. Exams will be administered via Blackboard and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer/essay. Exams will be restricted to one attempt, however, short answers questions will be provided 3 days prior to the exam early preparation. Students are encouraged to draft short answer responses prior to exam day to upload directly into provided exam fields. Exams are cumulative.

**Participation**: Participation grades will be based on the following short prepared document uploaded prior to class based on the assigned readings for that day. Students will be required to do the following for each reading: 1) draft one or two sentences stating the main point of the article; 2) two questions regarding content and applications to current events in the US or class discussions. For example:

**Krieger Chapter 2 LaVeist Reader- Shades of Difference**

Main point: This chapter discusses the historical controversy surrounding the definition of race in defining medical difference between blacks and whites in the 20th century.

Question:
1) Does religion still play role in defining race differences in disease diagnosis and treatment?
2) I’m not sure I understand the statement that ‘dissimilarity is equivalent to inequality.’ What does this mean?

The purpose here is to demonstrate that you’ve read the articles, but also an opportunity to bring prepared questions to class to share and discuss. Students should come prepared for discussion. If you are unable to come to class, you must still provide you questions prior to class time in order to receive full participation credit. You are also still responsible for all material read and discussed on those days. There will be no make-up for provided for missing assignments.

**Research Paper**: You will be required to develop a 10-page research paper on a health disparities topic (12 point font, double space, 1 inch margins) using APA style references. This paper should cover the existing literature on a particular topic, apply a relevant theoretical frameworks, and integrate their existing knowledge of health disparities based on peer reviewed research. Paper topics are due February 23 and final papers are due Tuesday, May 1. No late papers will be accepted.
Graduate Student Course Requirements

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>430</td>
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Participation/attendance: Graduate students are expected to actively participate in class, encourage and in some cases lead class discussions. Participation grades for graduate students will be based on class discussion and participation on the class discussion board. In some portions of the class, graduate students will be assigned different readings from the undergraduates. You will be required to write a brief paragraph summarizing each of your assigned readings along with 1 or 2 questions or comments regarding those readings. I expect graduate students to actively participate in the discussion thread about the readings, address questions posed in the thread, and come prepared to discuss outstanding comments and issues that emerged. I will set aside the last 15 minutes of each class for additional discussion led by graduate students based on their readings.

Research Paper: You will be expected to write a 15 page research paper (or 20 if empirical) on a topic relevant to this class. You will be required to write a one-page proposal due by February 23 proposing your research question(s) for approval. The proposal should include at least three key peer reviewed journal article references. Details of your research paper assignment will be posted on Blackboard. The final term paper will be due on Tuesday, May 1.

Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97%-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93%-96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90%-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83%-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80%-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77%-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73%-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70%-72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66%-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>61%-65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59%以下</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Schedule of Class Sessions and Reading Assignments

Week 1
Introduction to Health Disparities
1/12- Introductions, overview of syllabus and class requirements
LaVeist and Issac. Ch. 1- Introduction to Health Disparities. (Blackboard)

Section 1- Social Processes and Health Outcomes

Week 2
Social Causation of Health and Theoretical Frameworks
1/19- Cockerham Ch. 1 and 2 (Blackboard)- Social Causation of Health and Disease, Theorizing about Health and Disease
Section 2- The Biology of Stress

Stress and Hormones
1/21- Sapolsky Ch. 1, 2

Week 3
Cardiovascular Reactivity and Metabolism
1/26- Sapolsky 3-5
Intergenerational Transmission, Stress, and Immunity
1/28- Sapolsky 6, 8

Week 4
2/2- Movie: Stress, Portrait of a Killer
Sleep, Psychological Stress
2/4- Sapolsky 11, 13

Week 5
2/9- Exam review
2/11- Exam #1

Week 6
Intersectionality - Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality
2/16- Cockerham Ch. 6
2/18- Sapolsky Ch. 17, LaVeist Ch. 22
Graduate Readings- Williams 2012- Miles to Go Before We Sleep

Section 3 - Race, Ethnicity, and Health

Week 7
Latino and African American Health
2/23- LaVeist Ch. 4, 5
Measurement of Race and Why Racial Disparities Exist
2/25- LaVeist 6, 12, 15

Additional readings and graduate readings TBA--

Week 17
Finals Week- Papers Due Tuesday, May 3rd- No exceptions

*The following schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or posted on Black Board. Not knowing about syllabus changes due to class absence is not a legitimate excuse for failures to complete course requirements.
*Staying in the class once the syllabus has been discussed implies consent to conditions set out here.

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, you must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities
(SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration. Please contact the (SSD) office as soon as possible to have them advance the paperwork to the instructor in a timely manner.

**Course Policies and Ethics:** You are encouraged to learn and apply yourself in a way that promotes respect for yourself and others. **Ground rules will be discussed the first day of class.**

**Academic Honesty/Dishonesty:** Students are also expected to conduct themselves with scholarly integrity. Any type of scholastic dishonesty is prohibited. Cheating and plagiarizing are very serious academic offenses. Taking someone else’s work/words and using them as your own is a serious offence. The Office of Graduate Studies has put together a website to help students better understand plagiarism and how to avoid it. If you are ever unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or if you just want a refresher, please take advantage of this resource, which can be found at: [http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/plagiarism.shtml](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/plagiarism.shtml)

*Please turn off cell phones before entering class. Recorders are not allowed unless you have permission from the instructor. Use of laptops and tablets are allowed, but only allowed to access course related documents. Students found to be using technology for other uses will be warned twice before being asked to leave class. This policy also applies to disruptive technology use.*

*Attendance:* I do not have a mandatory attendance policy, however, you are responsible for content discussed in class and covered in the readings. Lecture notes will only be provided on a limited basis.

*Personal Emergencies:* Life happens. In the event of a personal emergency, it is your responsibility to contact me and make arrangements. You are still responsible for your school work. I can be flexible, and am willing to work with a student to complete the course, but it must be done in a timely manner.

UNL academic calendar is on line at: [http://registrar.unl.edu/academic-calendar-2015-2016](http://registrar.unl.edu/academic-calendar-2015-2016)