Health Care Work and Organizations
SOC 794-VT2

Cindy L. Cain
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Class Meeting – Wednesdays 2:30-5:00
Office Hours – See Calendly scheduler

Description

The study of health care work and organizations was a defining feature of the founding of medical sociology. Today these studies cover a range of organizational settings, are published in a wide variety of outlets, and use multiple theoretical and methodological approaches to develop knowledge. This is a survey course of the variety of ways students may think about the role of work and organizations in their medical sociology projects. At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe multiple approaches to studying health care work and organizations.

- Identify ways that organizations and work matter for a variety of medical sociology topics.

- Synthesize literature to forward students' own medical sociology projects.

Readings

Assigned readings available on Canvas.

Course Format

Readings will be assigned for each class period. Students are expected to review all materials before class. Three times throughout the semester, each student will be a discussion leader and work as part of a group of 2-3 to develop discussion notes and questions. A template for the notes is available on Canvas. Additionally, each student will work with me to define the main deliverable for the course, in accordance with their stage of the program and individual needs. We will meet one-on-one during Week 2 to discuss deliverables and then again in Week 9 to check on progress. Students will present their projects and progress during the final class period and submit the agreed upon deliverable for their final grade.

Assignments and Grading

- Discussion Leader Notes (3 total, 10 points each)   30
- Deliverable Plan and Meeting   10
- Deliverable Check In   10
- Final Presentation   10
- Final Deliverable   40

A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%

Policies

Changes to Course

I reserve the right to make changes to the course as needed. I will inform students of the changes in class and in Canvas (message and announcement).

Intellectual Property

My lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, quizzes, exams, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use. You may not and may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly, whether or not a fee is charged, without my expressed written consent.

DSS Accessibility Statement

Accessible Learning: UAB is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students. If you are a student with a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and you require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures. Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty and staff. If you are registered with Disability Support Services, please contact me to discuss accommodations that may be necessary in this course. If you have a disability but have not contacted Disability Support Services, please call (205) **934-4205** or visit **the DSS website**.

Title IX Statement

In accordance with Title IX, the University of Alabama at Birmingham does not discriminate on the basis of gender in any of its programs or services. The University is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on gender and expects individuals who live, work, teach, and study within this community to contribute positively to the environment and to refrain from behaviors that threaten the freedom or respect that every member of our

community deserves. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources, and supports, please visit the **UAB Title IX webpage**.

Violence Prevention and Response Policy

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is committed to maintaining a safe and secure educational environment and workplace, one which seeks to ensure the well-being and safety of faculty and staff, employees, students and visitors. Violence and threatened violence are prohibited by UAB. Each member of the UAB community has the responsibility to understand, prevent, and respond appropriately to campus/workplace violence. For more information, view the **Violence Prevention and Response Policy**.

Student Academic and Support Services

- **One Stop Student Services** provides a single point of professional integrated service to students. The One Stop serves students who need assistance with academic records, financial aid, registration, student accounting, ONE card, and other related topics.

- **Student Assistance and Support** provides individualized assistance to promote student safety and well-being, collaboration and resilience, personal accountability, and self-advocacy. The Care Team consults and collaborates with campus partners to balance the needs of individual students with those of the overall campus community. **The UAB Care Team** helps find solutions for students experiencing academic, social, and crisis situations including mental health concerns.

- **Disability Support Services** assists students with reaching accommodations for their educational experiences at UAB that ensure that they have equal access to programs, services, and activities at UAB.

- The **Vulcan Materials Academic Success Center** provides tutoring, supplemental instruction, and other services that encourage goal achievement and degree completion.

- The **University Writing Center** offers free writing assistance for all UAB students. Get help at any stage of the writing process and with any type of writing. Students may meet with a tutor in person or via Zoom. Students may also upload a paper for feedback (called eTutoring in the online system). During in-person and Zoom sessions, tutors can help you understand your assignment, develop and organize your ideas, use and cite sources, revise and edit your draft, and more. When you upload a draft for eTutoring, tutors can provide feedback on both big-picture issues and detail-oriented concerns; please note that you must upload a draft and assignment sheet to use eTutoring.

  To make an appointment or get more information, please see the **UWC**

website, email **writingcenter@uab.edu**, or call 205-996-7178. Follow the UWC on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **LinkedIn** for daily news and quick writing tips.

- **UAB Student Health Services** delivers comprehensive, high quality, confidential, primary healthcare to students. Student Health provides testing services and vaccination clinics.

- **Student Counseling Services** offers students a safe place to discuss and resolve issues that interfere with personal and academic goals. UAB has created a new app (available in the App Store and Google Play) called **B Well**, that is designed to easily access resources on mobile devices and build a self-care plan. **Kognito** is a free, interactive simulation-based platform designed to help you talk with someone when you are worried about your mental health.

- **UAB Blazer Kitchen at the Hill Student Center** provides food and basic supplies for any UAB student in need through in-person or online shopping. Students who can are also able to donate food and supplies to assist their peers. To get more information, call 205-975-9509, email **studentoutreach@uab.edu**, or visit the **Student Assistance & Support website.**

- The **Office of Learning Technologies** provides numerous academic technologies and learning resources for students.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Discussion Leader
Week 1 Aug. 27	Introduction to Organizational Theory	Trinidad, Jose Eos. 2025. "Mapping Organizational Theory with SCRIPTS." *Sociology Compass* 19(4):e70059.	N/A
Week 2 Sept. 3	Project Deliverables Planning Individual meetings to discuss ideas for deliverables, set timelines, and get feedback on ideas.		
Week 3 Sept. 10	Organizational Theory meets Health Care Institution	Beckfield, Jason, Sigrun Olafsdottir and Benjamin Sosnaud. 2013. "Healthcare Systems in Comparative Perspective: Classification, Convergence, Institutions, Inequalities, and Five Missed Turns." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:127-46. Bakker, Arnold B., Evangelia Demerouti and Ana Sanz-Vergel. 2023. "Job Demands–Resources Theory: Ten Years Later." Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and *Organizational Behavior* 10(1):25-53. Pescosolido, Bernice. 2025. "Theories of the Rise, Fall, and Contemporary Challenges to the Profession of Medicine." Pp. 157-84 in *Medical Sociology on the Move: New Directions in Theory*. Springer. Stephenson, Amber L., Timothy Hoff, Maike Tietschert, Sara Singer and Thomas D'Aunno. 2022. "Theoretically Speaking: A User's Guide to Theory Exposition in Health Care Management." *Journal of Health Administration Education* 39(1):107-25.	N/A

		Recommended: Acker, Joan. 2006. "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations." *Gender & Society* 20(4):441-64. Lounsbury, Michael, Christopher W.J. Steele, Milo Shaoqing Wang and Madeline Toubiana. 2021. "New Directions in the Study of Institutional Logics: From Tools to Phenomena." *Annual Review of Sociology* 47:261-80. DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter W. Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." *American Sociological Review* 48(2):147-60. Flood, Ann Barry and Mary L. Fennell. 1995. "Through the Lenses of Organizational Sociology: The Role of Organizational Theory and Research in Conceptualizing and Examining Our Health Care System." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* Extra Issue:154-69.	
Week 4 Sept. 17	Professions, Professionals, and Professionalization	Adams, Tracey L. 2015. "Sociology of Professions: International Divergences and Research Directions." *Work, Employment and Society* 29(1):154-65. Chiarello, Elizabeth. 2023. "Trojan Horse Technologies: Smuggling Criminal-Legal Logics into Healthcare Practice." *American Sociological Review* 88(6):1131-60.	Sidney, Kiera, Amber

| | | Trotter, LaTonya. 2019. ""I'm Not a Doctor. I'm a Nurse": Reparative Boundary-Work in Nurse Practitioner Education." *Social Currents* 6(2):105-20.

Anteby, Michel, Curtis K. Chan and Julia DiBenigno. 2016. "Three Lenses on Occupations and Professions in Organizations: Becoming, Doing, and Relating." *Academy of Management Annals* 10(1):183-244. | |
| Week 5
Sept. 24 | Expansion of Care Workplaces | Wu, Tina. 2020. "From Time Sheets to Tablets: Documentation Technology in Frontline Service Sector Managers' Coordination of Home Healthcare Services." *Work and Occupations* 47(3):378-405.

Altomonte, Guillermina. 2020. "Exploiting Ambiguity: A Moral Polysemy Approach to Variation in Economic Practices." *American Sociological Review* 85(1):76-105.

Kaufman, Rebecca, Stefan Timmermans and Aviad Raz. 2023. "Genomic Uncertainty and Genetic Counsellors' Professional Authority." *Sociology of Health & Illness* 45(3):485-502.

Duffy, Mignon, Randy Albelda and Clare Hammonds. 2014. "Counting Care Work: The Empirical and Policy Applications of Care Theory." *Social Problems* 60(2):145-67. | Katie, Amber |

| Week 6 Oct. 1 | Pay, Benefits, and Extrinsic Rewards | Showers, Fumilayo. 2022. "Moving Onward and Upward in a "Dead-End" Job: Extrinsic Motivations and Rewards in Health Care Work." *Sociological Forum* 37(2):443-64.

Frogner, Bianca K. 2018. "The Health Care Job Engine: Where Do They Come from and What Do They Say About Our Future?" *Medical Care Research and Review* 75(2):219-31.

Dill, Janette and Melissa J. Hodges. 2019. "Is Healthcare the New Manufacturing? Industry, Gender, and "Good Jobs" for Low-and Middle-Skill Workers." *Social Science Research* 84:102350.

Jenkins, Tania M. 2023. "Physicians as Shock Absorbers: The System of Structural Factors Driving Burnout and Dissatisfaction in Medicine." *Social Science & Medicine* 337(1):116311. | Sidney, Hannah |
| Week 7 Oct. 8 | Emotions, Affect, and Intrinsic Rewards | Lopez, Steven H. 2006. "Emotional Labor and Organized Emotional Care: Conceptualizing Nursing Home Care Work." *Work and Occupations* 33(2):133-60.

Cottingham, Marci D. and Rebecca J. Erickson. 2020. "The Promise of Emotion Practice: At the Bedside and Beyond." *Work and Occupations* 47(2):173-99.

Wingfield, Adia Harvey. 2021. "The (Un)Managed Heart: Racial Contours of Emotion Work in Gendered Occupations." *Annual Review of Sociology* 47:197-212. | Sidney, Kiera |

		Vinson, Alexandra H. and Kelly Underman. 2020. "Clinical Empathy as Emotional Labor in Medical Work." *Social Science & Medicine* 251:112904.	
Week 8 Oct. 15	Leadership and Power	Mcgivern, Gerry, Graeme Currie, Ewan Ferlie, Louise Fitzgerald And Justin Waring. 2015. "Hybrid Manager–Professionals' Identity Work: The Maintenance and Hybridization of Medical Professionalism in Managerial Contexts." *Public Administration* 93(2):412-32. Batt, Rosemary, John Kallas and Eileen Appelbaum. 2020. "Path Dependency Versus Social Unionism in Healthcare: Bringing Employers Back In." *Work and Occupations* 47(3):406-36. van de Ruit, Catherine and Charles L. Bosk. 2021. "Surgical Patient Safety Officers in the United States: Negotiating Contradictions between Compliance and Workplace Transformation." *Work and Occupations* 48(1):3-39.	Joseph, Hannah, Ashleigh
Week 9 Oct. 22	Project Deliverable Check In Individual meetings to review progress on deliverables, adjust goals or timelines, and get feedback.		
Week 10 Oct. 29	Gendered Organizations and Health Care	Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender & Society* 4(2):139-58.	Kiera, Obrenka, Amber

| | | Brewer, Alexandra, Melissa Osborne, Anna S. Mueller, Daniel M. O'Connor, Arjun Dayal and Vineet M. Arora. 2020. "Who Gets the Benefit of the Doubt? Performance Evaluations, Medical Errors, and the Production of Gender Inequality in Emergency Medical Education." *American Sociological Review* 85(2):247-70.

Cottingham, Marci D. 2014. "Recruiting Men, Constructing Manhood: How Health Care Organizations Mobilize Masculinities as Nursing Recruitment Strategy." *Gender & Society* 28(1):133-56.

Baines, Donna and Pat Armstrong. 2019. "Non-Job Work/Unpaid Caring: Gendered Industrial Relations in Long-Term Care." *Gender, Work & Organization* 26(7):934-47. | |
| Week 11
Nov. 5 | Racialized Organizations and Health Care | Ray, Victor. 2019. "A Theory of Racialized Organizations." *American Sociological Review* 84(1):26-53.

Dobbin, Frank and Alexandra Kalev. 2021. "The Civil Rights Revolution at Work: What Went Wrong." *Annual Review of Sociology* 47(Volume 47, 2021):281-303.

Wingfield, Adia Harvey and Koji Chavez. 2020. "Getting in, Getting Hired, Getting Sideways Looks: Organizational Hierarchy and Perceptions of Racial Discrimination." *American Sociological Review* 85(1):31-57. | Hannah, Obrenka |

		Dill, Janette and Mignon Duffy. 2022. "Structural Racism and Black Women's Employment in the Us Health Care Sector: Study Examines Structural Racism and Black Women's Employment in the Us Health Care Sector." *Health Affairs* 41(2):265-72.	
Week 12 Nov. 12	Team-Based Work	Mitchell, Rebecca and Brendan Boyle. 2021. "Professional Faultlines and Interprofessional Differentiation in Multidisciplinary Team Innovation: The Moderating Role of Inclusive Leadership." *Health Care Management Review* 46(4):332-40. Woodhead, Charlotte, Nkasi Stoll, Hannah Harwood, TIDES Study Team, Obrey Alexis and Stephani L. Hatch. 2022. ""They Created a Team of Almost Entirely the People Who Work and Are Like Them": A Qualitative Study of Organisational Culture and Racialised Inequalities among Healthcare Staff." *Sociology of Health & Illness* 44(2):267-89. Cain, Cindy L. 2019. "Agency and Change in Healthcare Organizations: Workers' Attempts to Navigate Multiple Logics in Hospice Care." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 60(1):3-17.	Joseph, Ashleigh
Week 13 Nov. 19	Changing Health Care Organizations	VanHeuvelen, Jane S. and Matthew K. Grace. 2020. "Occupational Heterogeneity in Healthcare Workers' Misgivings About Organizational Change." *Work and Occupations* 47(3):280-313.	Joseph, Obrenka, Ashleigh

| | | Kellogg, Katherine C. 2014. "Brokerage Professions and Implementing Reform in an Age of Experts." *American Sociological Review* 79(5):912-41.

Cain, Cindy L., Caty Taborda and Monica Frazer. 2021. "Creating "Risky" New Roles in Healthcare: Identities, Boundary-Making, and Skilling under Rationalization and Consumer Demand." *Work and Occupations* 48(3):353-85.

Vinson, Alexandra H. 2021. "Culture as Infrastructure in Learning Health Systems." *Learning Health Systems* 5(3):e10267. | |
| Week 14
Dec. 3 | Presentations

15 minute presentations to the whole class. Discuss goals of project, progress toward deliverables, challenges faced, and next steps.

Final deliverables due Dec. 10. | |