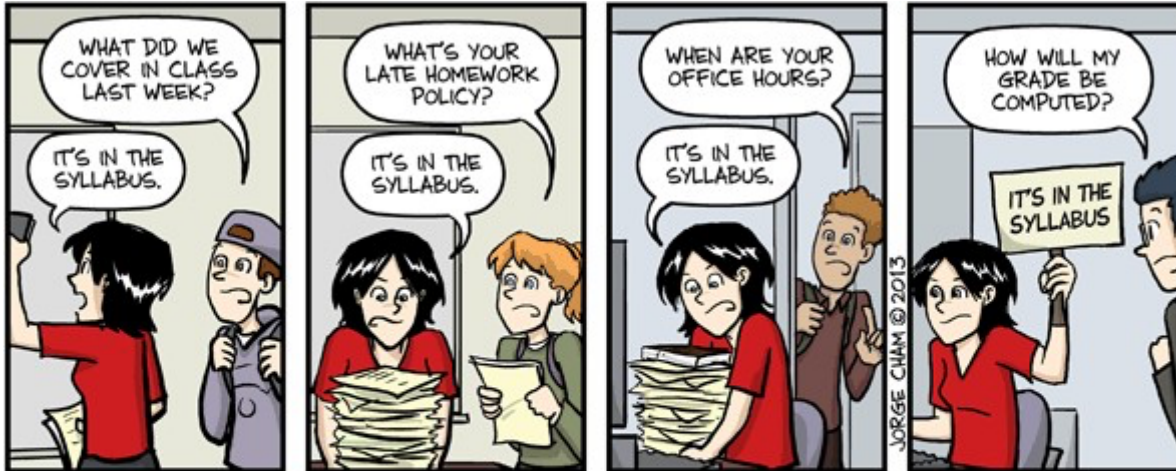


HTS3086: Sociology of Medicine & Health  
Summer 2026  
Georgia Institute of Technology

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Office Hours: by appointment



# IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores notions of illness, health, and health care from a sociological perspective. Students learn about conceptions of health and wellness, the U.S. health insurance system and other health policies in comparative perspective, and health disparities within the U.S. (such as by gender, race/ethnicity, and social class). We will analyze how illness is socially constructed, how health systems operate, and how power, inequality, and culture shape the practice of medicine and access to care.

## I. COURSE MATERIALS

Recommended book: Cockerham, William C. *Medical Sociology*. 15th Edition. Routledge.

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

## II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. **Class Preparation and Participation** (10%)
2. **Exams** (Exam1-20%; Exam2-20%)
3. **Flip Classroom Activities** (Activity1-5%; Activity2-5%)
4. **Final Project** (20%)
5. **Quizzes** (Quiz1-10%; Quiz2-10%)

Total: 100%

Details about the assignments will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas.

### 1. Class Preparation and Participation (10% of final grade)

**Read all assignments before the beginning of each class.** The better prepared you are before class, the more you will get out of the course. Class preparation and participation will be based on your regular contribution to class discussions. During our meetings, we will discuss the readings and have class activities (either by yourself or with other students as a group). To encourage preparation and participation, part of each class meeting will be devoted to students' own reflections of the readings during which students will have a chance to ask questions, answer questions, and share their favorite quotes from the readings in order to facilitate a class discussion of the particular reading/s. Every student (students can also work as a group) needs to contribute to class discussions three times through the semester in order to get 6 points toward their final grade for this part. If you have concerns about your participation, please feel free to email me with questions.

Under certain circumstances (e.g., students who have constantly been late for classes, who have engaged in distracting or disrespectful behaviors), the final grade for class preparation and participation will be assigned at the discretion of the professor.

### 2. Exams (40% of final grade)

There will be *two non-cumulative* exams in this course (see below for dates). The exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. A review session will be held before each exam to help you prepare. Exams will be administered in the classroom via Canvas. Once you begin the exam, you must complete it in one sitting. You will have 70 minutes to complete the exam. You will not be able to save or return to the exam. See Canvas FAQ for more details. A different exam tab will be available for students need academic accommodations (students must contact Office of Disability Services first—see below for instructions).

Makeup tests are not granted automatically but are considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all the relevant circumstances. Permission for a makeup test requires an appropriate, well-documented reason.

### 3. Flip Classroom Activities (10% of final grade)

Throughout the semester, students will complete two flip classroom activities where they take the lead in teaching the assigned readings. Detailed instructions and guidelines are available on Canvas.

### 4. Final Project (20% of final grade)

For the final project, students will write a policy-oriented report that applies sociological concepts to a specific health-related topic discussed during the course. The report should focus on a clearly defined geographic location—such as a country, city, or region—to provide context and depth to the analysis. This assignment encourages you to apply course concepts to real-world health issues across diverse global contexts. Creativity, critical thinking, and evidence-based reasoning will be essential to your success.

Sample topics may include:

- A sociological analysis of how HIV/AIDS has been addressed in the United States
- A comparative report on how a specific disease (e.g., COVID-19, tuberculosis, diabetes) has been handled in both the U.S. and Singapore, using official health reports and academic sources

You are encouraged to explore **any topic related to health and society**—not just diseases. You might focus on healthcare systems, health inequalities, social stigma, mental health, gender and health, or other themes that emerge throughout the course.

Final Presentation (5% of Final Grade; **Due Date:** To be presented during the last two class sessions):

During the last two class sessions, students will present their final project to the class. Presentations should offer a clear summary of the topic, key findings, and sociological insights.

Written Policy Report (15% of Final Grade):

The final report should be 4–6 pages in length, double-spaced, using Times New Roman, 12-point font, with 1-inch margins.

The report should follow a clear academic structure, including:

- Introduction – Present the topic, geographic focus, and key sociological questions.
- Body – Provide analysis supported by theoretical frameworks, empirical evidence, and relevant literature.
- Conclusion – Summarize your main findings and discuss broader implications.

Be sure to proofread for clarity and coherence, and cite all sources using a consistent academic citation style (e.g., APA, ASA).

**Note:** Please feel free to expand on your quiz reflections based on the documentaries we watch and discuss.

### 5. Quizzes (20% of final grade)

Throughout the semester, students will complete two in-class quizzes following assigned documentary viewings. Each quiz will take place immediately after the screening and must be completed by the end of the session.

Format: each quiz will include a mix of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and a brief written reflection (400 words).

Instructions: quizzes will be taken in the classroom; the reflection component will ask you to critically engage with key themes from the film in relation to course concepts. Each quiz counts for 10% of your final grade, for a total of 20%.

## III. IMPORTANT GRADING FACTS

**Calculating Final Grade:** Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows (Grades will *not* be rounded up):

A 90-100
B 80-89
C* 70-79
D 60-69
F 0-59

Remember that an “A” grade is not given for good work that meets all requirements. An “A” grade represents exceptional and outstanding work that EXCEEDS expectations. A grade of “C” represents satisfactory work that meets minimum requirements. Keep this in mind as you interpret your scores.

\*For this course, a 70 is the threshold for a passing grade.

**Grading:** I will try to post all grades within two weeks after the scheduled due dates. Please refrain from asking grade-related questions within the two-week window.

**Re-grading:** All grades are final, and I will not negotiate any grades. If I make a mistake, please show me the missed or incorrectly recorded item within two days of the date that the grade was sent to you, and I will adjust your grade accordingly. If you feel you have been inappropriately evaluated, you must provide a one-page written statement explaining why and citing a number of specific examples that you feel justify your contention within one week of the date that the grade was sent to you. I will then evaluate, consider, and discuss any possible grade change with you. Being unhappy with your grade is not a valid ground for reevaluation.

## IV. POLICIES

**Academic Honesty and Student Integrity:** Academic honesty and student integrity are of fundamental importance and each student’s work MUST be entirely their own. In particular, students must be aware

that material (including ideas, phrases, sentences, etc.) taken from the internet and other sources MUST be placed in quotation marks and appropriately cited if used in any written work turned in for this, or any other class. Also, students will not be allowed to collaborate on work except by the specific permission of the instructor. Failure to cite sources properly may result in a judicial referral being made to the appropriate university officials. The outcome of this action may involve academic and disciplinary sanctions, which could include (but are not limited to) such penalties as receiving no credit for the assignment in question, failing or receiving no credit for the related course, or suspension or dismissal from the Institute. A student that is in doubt about standards of academic honesty (regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions of written work, unacknowledged or unauthorized collaborative effort, false citation or false data) should consult the course instructor immediately.

**A Note on Artificial Intelligence:** As you work on your assignments, it is important to exercise caution when utilizing AI technologies. While artificial intelligence can be a powerful tool for research, analysis, and generating content, it is crucial to ensure that its use aligns with the guidelines and ethical standards set by your instructors and the Institute. Be mindful of the limitations and potential biases of AI systems, as they may not always provide accurate or reliable information. Remember to critically evaluate the output generated by AI, cross-check it with reputable sources, and use it as a supplementary resource rather than a substitute for your own critical thinking and analysis. By maintaining a cautious approach, you can ensure the integrity and originality of your work while harnessing the benefits that AI can offer to enhance your academic pursuits.

**A Note on Diversity and Respect:** All students are expected to treat one another courteously, politely and respectfully. While differing perspectives are inevitable and can help us all learn from one another, all discussions should remain calm, thoughtful, and focused on issues not people. Absolutely no bigotry, hate-talk, or otherwise rude or intolerant behavior or comments will be allowed.

**A Note on Class Etiquette:** You are expected to be polite and respectful to your instructor and fellow students at all times. This includes keeping an open mind and being respectful when someone asks a question or expresses an opinion that differs from yours. This also means arriving to class on time and being attentive during class, so you do not distract others. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated, and I may ask you to leave the classroom. You must turn your cell phones off during class. Computers and tablets will be allowed for note taking on a trial basis. However, if you are using these devices for other purposes, you will lose this privilege. Doing other things, like checking social media or shopping online, is rude and distracting to other people around you. It will also affect your final grade.

**Class Activities:** In addition to reading the course materials in advance, you will occasionally be asked to carry out assignments/exercises before, during, or after class either individually or in small groups. You are responsible for keeping track of whether class activities have been preassigned for upcoming classes.

**Communication with the Professor:** You can reach me by email at [yaqi.yuan@gatech.edu](mailto:yaqi.yuan@gatech.edu). I will check my email regularly from *Monday–Thursday between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM (EST)* and you can expect a response within 24 hours. Please note that emails will be read/replied to only intermittently at any other time. I am generally not available over the weekend. If you have not heard from me within 24-hours during the week (or by Monday afternoon if you contact me over the weekend), do feel free to write again. If it has been only a few hours, or you contacted me at 2 a.m. or on a Saturday—please be patient!

All lectures, PowerPoints, announcements, and updates will be posted to Canvas. Our primary mode of communication will be email and students are responsible to regularly check their email and the course site. Checking your GT email account at least once daily is a requirement of the course. Email is also the best way to reach me. When we communicate over email, you should communicate professionally. While the proliferation of email, texting, and social media give the impression of informality, this is often not appropriate in an academic setting. At GT, you should always practice professional communication:

Emails should begin with a salutation and be signed with your name.

**Please use the course section as your subject line.** For example, for our course, you can use **HTS3086** as your subject line. You should also be mindful of your tone.

If you would like to discuss a substantive issue—i.e., your grade, questions about an assignment, or for clarity regarding a course reading, you should email me and make an appointment.

**Learning Accommodations:** If you are a student with learning needs requiring special accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible at <https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/> or (404) 894-2563, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

**Late Work:** Homework is due at *11:59 PM* (EST) on the due date unless otherwise notified. I will deduct 15% from your final section grade for every 24-hour period (or part thereof) that it is late up to 48 hours beyond the due date/time. I will not accept any assignments after this point except in exceptional situations. In order to apply this policy fairly, I have to apply it strictly. Except under very extraordinary circumstances I will not grant incompletes. All work should be submitted on Canvas.

**Work should not be emailed to me unless you have received explicit permission to do so.**

***NOTE:*** Late submissions may include incorrect file uploads, where the submitted files are unrelated or do not align with the assignment requirements. Additionally, files that cannot be opened or accessed due to compatibility issues or file corruption may also be considered as late submissions. Double-check your submission. It is essential to ensure that the correct files are uploaded and in a format that can be easily accessed and reviewed.

**Sick Policy:** If you are sick, please do not come to class. If you must miss a required assignment, quiz, or exam, visit Stamps Health Services. There you should ask for a document that excuses you from class for a specific period of time. This document is required to make up missed assignments or exams. If you have missed a significant portion of the semester due to illness, it is recommended that you resign from the course.