

**Faculty of Medicine of the University of Rijeka**

**Course: Medical Sociology**

**Course coordinator: Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor**

**Collaborator: Teaching Assistant Gordana Šimunković, MA; Teaching Assistant Ivana Tutić Grokša, MSW**

**Department: Department of Social Sciences and Medical Humanities**

**Study program: Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate University Study of Medicine in English**

**Year: 5st**

**Academic year: 2021/2022**

## **Syllabus**

**Course information (brief course description, general guidelines, location and organisation of instruction, required equipment, instructions regarding class attendance and preparation, students' obligations, etc.):**

The course Medical Sociology is a compulsory course in the fifth year of the Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate University Study of Medicine and consists of 10 hours of lectures and 10 hours of seminars. The course carries 1 ECTS, and is performed at the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities in Medicine, in the premises of the Faculty of Health Studies (code Z) and the Faculty of Medicine (code P), or through the MS Teams platform.

**The content of the course is as follows:**

### **LECTURE TOPICS:**

1. Introduction to the course
2. Theoretical approaches in medical sociology
3. Special topics in medical sociology
4. Social inequalities in health and disease
5. Social factors of health and disease I
6. Social factors of health and disease II
7. Models and social experience of health
8. Professionalization of medical profession
9. Medicalisation of society
10. Pandemics and society

### **SEMINAR TOPICS:**

1. Public policies and health: social and health policy
2. Social determinants of health and disease
3. Socially excluded groups, social capital and health
4. Mental health of medical students and health professionals
5. Physician-patient relationship

### **Teaching:**

Classes are held in the form of lectures and seminars, with a total duration of xx weeks. By completing all teaching activities and taking the final exam, the student acquires 1 ECTS credit.

**Lectures (10 P)** - classic (ex-department / online) lectures with the possibility of involving students and short videos; gathering theoretical knowledge and information based on examples

**Seminars (10 C)** - interactive teaching based on examples through the use of the method of conversation,

work on seminar assignments

**Assigned reading:**

Power point presentations from lectures

**Optional / additional reading:**

1. Michael Haralambos & Martin Holborn (2013) *Sociology : themes and perspectives* (8th edition) (selected chapters), Collins Educational
2. Peter Conrad (2007) *Medicalization of Society – On the Transformation of Human Conditions into Treatable Diseases*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore
3. van Dijk W, Faber MJ, Tanke MA, Jeurissen PP, Westert GP. Medicalisation and overdiagnosis: what society does to medicine. *Int J Health Policy Manag.* 2016; 5(11):619–622. doi:10.15171/ijhpm.2016.121
4. Ivan Illich (1975): *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health*, Calder & Boyars

Selected reading:

[http://www.columbia.edu/itc/hs/pubhealth/rosner/g8965/client\\_edit/readings/week\\_2/illich.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/hs/pubhealth/rosner/g8965/client_edit/readings/week_2/illich.pdf)

**Course teaching plan:**

**List of lectures (with titles and description)**

1. Introduction to the course (society, evolution of social phenomena, origin and development of sociology, history of medical sociology)

Objectives and expected outcome: understanding reasons and development of the concept and phenomena of social life, explain the development of sociology as a science, distinguish the subtypes of (special) sociology, history of medical sociology

2. Theoretical approaches in sociology and their main representatives, methodological approaches, research methods in social sciences

Objectives and expected outcome: defining and differentiating the basic divisions of natural and social sciences, application of social theory in medical topics, recognizing research methods in the social sciences

3. Topics in medical sociology

Objectives and expected outcome: to explain and understand selected topics and concepts (aging, body, mental health, disability, gender, etc.) in a sociological perspective

4. Social inequalities in health and disease

Objectives and expected outcome: explain the causes and extent of social inequalities associated with health and illness experiences

5. Social factors of health and disease I: sex / gender, age, race, class

Objectives and expected outcome: to analyze social impacts on health and disease

6. Social factors of health and disease II: social inequalities, social capital, education, environment and sustainability, energy, climate change

Objectives and expected outcome: to analyze social impacts on health and disease

7. Models and social experience of health

Objectives and expected outcome: to define and distinguish the dominant model of health (biomedical model) from other models, to analyze the model of health and disease, to analyze health from the position of social sciences

8. Professionalization of medical profession

Objectives and expected outcome of the lecture: the main determinants of the professionalization of the profession of physician, relations with other health professions, position and responsibility in society

9. Medicalisation of society

Objectives and expected outcome of the lecture: to define and explain the main reasons and indicators of society medicalization, to analyze differences of medicalization and overdiagnosis, to analyze similarities and differences of evidence bases and alternative medicine, to analyse

application of social media in health related topics, to be familiar with application of AI in health

10. Pandemics and society  
Objectives and expected outcome of the lecture: to analyze main historical features of pandemics in society, to analyze standards of urban living in pandemics (physical distance, masks etc), to reconsider post-pandemics society

**List of seminars with descriptions:**

1. Public policies and health: social and health policy  
Objectives and expected outcome: to define the legislative and institutional framework of certain health and social issues, to promote public interest in legislative advocacy, to argue the need to enact, amend and supplement a certain law in the field of health policy or social policy affecting health, to write a quality policy letter to legislators
2. Social determinants of health and disease  
Objectives and expected outcome: to explain the connection between social inequalities and health, to define social determinants of health, to analyze social causes and consequences of certain diseases
3. Socially excluded groups, social capital and health  
Objectives and expected outcome: to promote the rights of patients and socially excluded groups, to distinguish stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, to explain the positive role of social capital mechanisms in health
4. Mental health of medical students and health professionals  
Objectives and expected outcome: to analyze the protective and risk factors of mental health of medical students and health professionals; promote the protection of the mental health of medical students and health professionals
5. Physician-patient relationship  
Objectives and expected outcome: analyze the doctor-patient relationship, define what is bad news for the patient, plan to communicate bad news to patients

**List of practicals with descriptions:**

The course Medical sociology is held without practicals.

**Students obligations**

Attendance at classes (lectures and seminars) is mandatory in a way that records will be kept with the aim of insight into the minimum attendance of 70%. Attendance will not be scored, but if the student misses more than 30% (7 hours, not days!) he/she is no able to take the final exam.

**The following activity is scored during classes:**

a) writing a policy letter: students are expected to write a one-page policy letter on a topic that is closest to their interests and related to problems they may encounter in their future professional work: the position of the profession, physicians, health professionals, patients, specific disease, treatment procedure, regulation of Croatian health care, health insurance, any social issues that affect health, etc. Since students will write from the role of their future professional expertise, it is expected that the topic choose to be from the field of health or from any other field (eg a social problem such as poverty or an environmental problem such as pollution) that has consequences for health.

At the seminar, students will be explained instructions for creating assignments, criteria for evaluating assignments and present examples of well-done assignments.

**Exam (exam taking, description of written/oral/practical part, point distribution, grading criteria)**

ECTS credit grading system:

Student assessment is carried out according to the current Regulations on Studies of the University of Rijeka (consolidated text), from 5 June 2018.

[https://www.uniri.hr/files/staticki\\_dio/propisi\\_i\\_dokumenti/Pravilnik\\_o\\_studijima\\_Sveucilista\\_u\\_Rijeci\\_procisceni\\_tekst\\_5\\_lipnja\\_2018.pdf](https://www.uniri.hr/files/staticki_dio/propisi_i_dokumenti/Pravilnik_o_studijima_Sveucilista_u_Rijeci_procisceni_tekst_5_lipnja_2018.pdf)

Student work will be evaluated and graded during classes and at the final exam. The student gains points by completing the set tasks and taking the exam.

Of the maximum 50 grade points that can be achieved during the course, the student must collect a minimum of 25 grade points to take the final exam. The exam threshold on the final exam cannot be less than 50% of the successfully passed test. The final grade is the sum of the percentages achieved during classes and in the final exam. Student assessment is performed using the ECTS scale (A, B, C, D and F) and the number system (1-5). Students who collect between 40 and 49.99 points are graded F (unsuccessful) and must re-enroll in the course.

During classes, the following is evaluated:

a) Student seminar papers

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF POINTS</b>
<b>DEADLINE (D)</b>	Submission of the letter by the agreed deadline for submission	<b>5</b>
<b>PAGE PROPOSITIONS (PP)</b>	Margins: 2,5 cm (both sides) = 1 point Line spacing: 1,0 line = 1 point Font Tipe: Times New Roman = 1 point Font size: 12 = 1 point	<b>4</b>
<b>LETTER PROPOSITIONS (LP)</b>	Correct addressing (relevant institution) = 1 point Correct titling (relevant person) = 1 point Presentation and inclusion of return address = 1 point Handwritten signature = 1 point	<b>4</b>
<b>SCOPE OF THE LETTER (SL)</b>	Letter length – letter up to 1 page long = 4 points	<b>2</b>
<b>LETTER STYLE (LS)</b>	Professionalism = 1 point Balancing = 1 point	<b>2</b>
<b>TOPIC (T)</b>	Specificity of the topic (one specific problem) = 4 points Actuality of the topic = 4 points	<b>8</b>
<b>SELECTION OF RECIPIENT (SP)</b>	Relevance of the recipient for the selected issue = 5 points	<b>5</b>
<b>REASON FOR WRITING (RW)</b>	Clarity of motivation for writing a letter = 5 points Advocacy for public interest = 4 points Connecting with experience = 4 points	<b>13</b>
<b>SOURCES (S)</b>	Reference to applicable laws, data and research = 4 points Accuracy of citing laws, data sources and research = 3 points	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>50</b>

a) Final exam (up to 50 points)

The final test brings students a maximum of 50% of the grade, ie 50 points. There are no negative points on the test. All questions from the test will be from the lectures and the handout materials. The test is designed in the form of short questions with the possibility of choosing the correct answer. The exam will be organized through the Merlin platform at a time agreed with the students.

**Possibility of teaching in another language:**

The course is offered in English and Croatian.

**Other important information regarding the course:**

**Class attendance**

Attendance at classes is determined by roll call at the beginning of the class. After the roll call, it is possible to participate in the class, but attendance will not be scored. The student is obliged to be present at least 70% of each form of teaching (lectures / seminars), a total of at minimum 7 hours of lectures + 7 hours of seminars. Any finding of concealment of someone's absence or misrepresentation and other similar violations of normal norms of conduct will be sanctioned. Except during consultations and by appointment, teachers are also available by official e-mail. Every communication via e-mail must be signed, we are not obliged to respond to unsigned mail.

**Written works**

Students submit a policy letter in writing by the deadline for submission. Students should keep copies of papers until the obligations on the course are fulfilled.

**Delay and / or non-performance of tasks**

All possible sanctions in terms of delays, non-fulfillment of obligations and the like, are explained in more detail in the description of specific activities.

**Academic honesty**

Students and teachers are expected to respect each other, decency, perform duties and behave responsibly, but also behave equally towards obligations. Both teachers and students should set an example by their behavior. It is of course possible to make omissions, but it is important to understand that this is an omission (and not a wrong intention!). Any form of coercion or discrimination is considered a serious violation of the university academic integrity norms. Documents available to students and teachers: Code of Ethics for Students of the Medical Faculty of the University of Rijeka, Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity, Preservation of Dignity and Promoting the Reputation of the Medical Faculty of the University of Rijeka.

**Contacting teachers**

Probably the most secure form of communication is via official email. The course leader is responsible for general inquiries about the course. If there are specific inquiries about individual seminar assignments, students can contact the assistants directly. The course leader and assistants will acknowledge receipt of the message and respond to any student inquiries. If the student does not receive a response, please do not hesitate to contact us again (in case of failure to send mail). In accordance with the Decree on Personal Data Protection, course lecturers are obliged to respond exclusively to emails sent from the official address (xxx@uniri.hr)

**Informing about the subject**

All information about the course will be available to students during / until the end of the class, and published on Merlin. Any ignorance of the obligations is the sole responsibility of the student. Delays in fulfilling obligations are acceptable, but as a rule carry the loss of certain points (unless otherwise regulated).

Expected general competencies of students when enrolling in the course

No specific competencies are required to enroll in the course, although students are expected to have a basic background and skills in Internet browsing and computer use, and to use English.

### COURSE SCHEDULE (for academic year 2021/2022)

Date	Lectures (time and place)	Seminars (time and place)	
30.3.2022.	P1 (15,15 – 16,00) P2 (16,15 – 17,00) Lecture hall 9		Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor
31.3.2022.		S1 (15,15 – 16,00) S2 (16,15 – 17,00)  MS Teams	Teaching Assistant Gordana Šimunković, MA Associate Professor Aleksandar Džakula, MD, PhD (Guest)
06.04.2022.	P3 (15,15 – 16,00) P4 (16,15 – 17,00) Lecture hall 1		Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor
13.04.2022.	P5 (15,15 – 16,00) P6 (16,15 – 17,00) Lecture hall 1		Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor
19.04.2022.	P7 (15,15 – 16,00) P8 (16,15 – 17,00) Online MS Teams		Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor
20.04.2022.	P9 (15,15 – 16,00) P10 (16,15 – 17,00) Lecture hall 9		Iva Rinčić, PhD, Associate Professor
21.04.2022.		S3 (15,15 – 16,00) S4 (16,15 – 17,00) MS Teams	Teaching Assistant Ivana Tutić Grokša, MSW
26.04.2022.		S5 (8,15 – 9,00) S6 (9,15 – 10,00) MS Teams	Teaching Assistant Ivana Tutić Grokša, MSW
28.04.2022.		S7 (8,15 – 9,00) S8 (9,15 – 10,00) MS Teams	Teaching Assistant Gordana Šimunković, MA Dinko Štajduhar, MD
04.05.2022.		S9 (15,15 – 16,00) S10 (16,15 – 17,00) MS Teams	Teaching Assistant Gordana Šimunković, MA Dinko Štajduhar, MD

### List of lectures and seminars

	Lectures	Number of hours	Place
P1	Introduction to the course	1	Hall 9
P2	Theoretical approaches in medical sociology	1	Hall 9
P3	Special topics in medical sociology	1	Hall 1
P4	Social inequalities in health and disease	1	Hall 1
P5	Social factors of health and disease	1	Hall 1
P6	Social factors of health and disease II	1	Hall 1
P7	Models and social experience of health	1	MS Teams
P8	Professionalisation of medicine	1	MS Teams
P9	Medicalisation of society	1	Hall 9
P10	Pandemics and society	1	Hall 9
	<b>Totala number</b>	<b>10</b>	

	SEMINARI (tema seminara)	Broj sati nastave	Mjesto održavanja
S1 S2	Public policies and health: social and health policy	2	MS Teams
S3 S4	Social determinants of health and disease	2	MS Teams
S5 S6	Socially excluded groups, social capital and health	2	MS Teams
S7 S8	Mental health of medical students and health professionals	2	MS Teams
S9 S10	Physician-patient relationship	2	MS Teams
	<b>Ukupan broj sati seminara</b>	<b>10</b>	

	Final exam (via Merlin)
1.	25.5.2022.
2.	14.6.2022.
3.	6.7.2022.
4.	20.9.2022.