

**UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK – DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**
**SOCI 4264: HEALTHCARE IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT**

Instructor: **Alekhyia (“Baba”) Das** [known mostly as “Baba”]

Email: adas@unb.ca

Office hours & location: to be announced

**Course description**

This course is designed to provide a sociological along with interdisciplinary perspective on health and healthcare in an international context. The focus is on medical care systems and healthcare organizations. A social-scientific understanding of healthcare can explain why different societies have diverse systems for providing medical care as well as how healthcare systems influence divergent outcomes of health status of their population. We will seek explanations in the relationship between healthcare as a system and other systems of society, such as cultural system, political system, economic system, social structure and history. The key question for this course: what all can we tell about a society by observing its healthcare system, and, vice versa? We will discuss: in what ways healthcare is related to social inequality; concept of medical care in a transnational era; compare health problems and associated healthcare provisions in various nations; what features are worldwide and which ones are unique in all healthcare systems. We will analyze how universal standards of health came into place and what role international agencies play in making health a fundamental human right.

**General Instructions**

- Please **check your emails** and **UNB Blackboard system** **regularly** for updates, instructions and information regarding this course.
- Students will NOT be informed individually about changes and notifications. I will assume that if any information is posted on the Blackboard – OR – has been sent through ‘group email’, it has been read and followed by all students.
- Please feel free to ask me if you have any confusion regarding instructions for this course.
- Completion of all course requirements is necessary to pass this course.
- Assignments must conform to the criteria given in this outline – or - written instructions handed out in class - or - put up in ‘UNB Blackboard’ system – or - circulated through emails.
- If you are absent, please make arrangements with classmates to follow up on class notes and instructions.
- Due dates and grades are fixed and non-negotiable. However, I am always open to discussion of your work.
- ALWAYS keep a copy (electronic as well as printed) of your assignments and on a regular basis make back-up copies. I will not entertain excuses such as “hard disk crash”, “pet spoiled the assignment”, “accidentally deleted the file”, etc.
- Students with special needs or situations [*any kind*] should speak to me such that where possible and appropriate, accommodations can be made to meet those needs.
- Students are advised to familiarize themselves with the university regulations concerning plagiarism found in the undergraduate calendar. Please note that the University has very strict policies on plagiarism.
- Please use proper citation procedures and writing styles (e.g.: ‘APA’ or ‘ASA’ style) to write your answers / essay for final term paper. Please consult UNB library for more information on citing resources. Use of resources without proper citation will result in deduction of points.
- **Please feel free to meet me if you have any query or concern.**

## **Course Materials**

- The materials for this course are a combination of readings given in the course outline as well as my lectures in the class.
- All required readings for the course are 'electronic' and are available online [accessible ONLY through the UNB library system]. All resource materials are also available in 'UNB Blackboard'.
- In general, the readings are of three kinds: basic, intermediate and advanced based on the level of complexity.
- Please note that the course deals with a diversity of subjects and issues. Therefore, there is no 'one or two' major readings; instead a combination of assorted smaller readings.
- Also note that my lectures are the framework for this course. Following my lectures is necessary to connect the divergent readings recommended in this course.
- My lectures are based on the readings given in this outline. However, they also consist of information from various other sources which go beyond the scope of the given readings. Please feel free to enquire about the source of any part of my lectures.
- Participants of this course must use the readings given in this course outline. I strongly recommend that students go through the readings before they attend each class. This will greatly help you to understand my lectures.
- The main points of my class lectures will be available in Adobe Portable Document Format ['pdf'] files on 'Blackboard' after each class.
- Students are welcome to use other resources, provided they are 'academic' in nature. Please use materials which are 'valid, reliable, social-scientific and scholarly' or from governmental sources. Non-scholarly/popular sources such as 'wikipedia' or 'blogs' will be considered invalid.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS**

**[A] 06 January & 11, 13 January 2011**

**Themes: Introduction & overview** [health; healthcare; sociology of health & healthcare; system & system theory; healthcare system; healthcare system and other social systems; history of healthcare; systemic perspective, individual perspective; health-seeking behavior; modern/western medical systems; traditional medical systems]

- A1) Thomas, Richard K. 2003. *Society and Health: Sociology for Health Professionals*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Hingham, MA, USA: p 15-33. E BOOK.
- A2) 'Health: Anthropological Aspects'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- A3) 'Health in Developing Countries: Cultural Concerns'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- A4) 'Health Care Systems: Comparative'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- A5) 'Medical Sociology'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- A6) 'Health Care Delivery Systems'. Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online, 2007.

**[B] 18, 20 January 2011**

**Themes: Healthcare in Canada**

B1) 'Canada'. CIA Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ca.html>  
Accessed: 02 January 2011.

B2) 'Canada: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/can/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011

B3) 'Canada'. Oxford Companion to Medicine. Oxford Reference Online. 2001.

B4) GEORGET SALIKIS. (1989). THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DECENTRALIZATION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN CANADA. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT, VOL. 4, 293-309.

- ☐ **Documentary:** 'Bitter Medicine: Part 1 & 2'. (1983). Director: Tom Shandel. National film Board of Canada. <http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=14302> Accessed on 02 January 2011.
- I will screen this documentary in class. Students should keenly watch it and note down important arguments as well as points.
  - The screening is an integral part of my lectures.
  - The viewing is a 'social' as well as 'class room' experience and it will be followed by critical discussions.
  - Students are advised to view it in the class, even though they may have seen it before or may plan to view it individually.
  - This documentary is one of the compulsory resources for Final term paper.

**[C] 25, 27 January 2011**

**Themes: Healthcare in the United States of America**

C1) 'United States'. CIA Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> Accessed: 02 January 2011.

C2) 'United States of America: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/usa/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011

C3) 'USA'. Oxford Companion to Medicine. Oxford Reference Online. 2001

C4) Thomas, Richard K. 2003. *Society and Health: Sociology for Health Professionals*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Hingham, MA, USA: p 83-98. E BOOK.

**[D] 01, 03 February 2011**

**Themes: Healthcare system in the United Kingdom**

D1) 'United Kingdom'. CIA Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html> Accessed: 02 January 2011.

D2) 'United Kingdom: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/gbr/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011.

D3) 'Britain'. Oxford Companion to Medicine. Oxford Reference Online. 2001

D4) Usha R. Rout. (2002). *Stress Management for Primary Health Care Professionals*. Springer. 1-16. E BOOK.

**[E] 08, 10 February 2011**

**Theme: Healthcare system in India**

- E1) 'India'. CIA Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>  
Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- E2) 'India: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/ind/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- E3) 'South Asian Studies: Health'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- E4) Peters, David H. Yazbeck, Abdo S. Sharma, Rashmi R. (2002). *Better Health Systems for India's Poor: Findings, Analysis, and Options*. 1-38. World Bank Publications.

**[F] 15, 17 February 2011**

**Theme: Healthcare system in China**

- F1) 'China'. CIA Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>  
Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- F2) 'China: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/chn/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- F3) 'China'. Oxford Companion to Medicine. Oxford Reference Online. 2001.
- F4) 'Fertility Transition: China'. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001.
- F5) Tian, L., Li, J., Zhang, K. & Guest, P. (2007). *Women's status, institutional barriers and reproductive health care: A case study in Yunnan, China*. Health Policy, 84: 284–29.

**[G] 22, 24 February 2011**

**Themes: Healthcare system in Cuba**

- G1) 'Cuba'. CIA Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html>  
Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- G2) 'Cuba: Health Profile'. WHO. <http://www.who.int/countries/cub/en/> Accessed: 02 January 2011.
- G3) Santana S.M. (1987). The Cuban Healthcare System: Responsiveness to Changing Population Needs and Demands. *World Development*; 15 (1): 113-125.
- G4) 'Socialist Medicine'. Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online, 2007.

**[H] 01, 03 March 2011**

**Themes: Movie screening - 'Sicko'. (2007).**

- ☐ 'Sicko'. (2007). Michael Moore. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0386032/> Accessed 02 January 2011.

**[07 – 11 March 2011]: Winter Term Break ('Spring Break')**

**15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31 March & 5, 7 April 2011: Seminar presentations**

- Please update yourself with further instructions on seminar presentations, which will be put on the Blackboard – OR – circulated through email - in future.
- Please thoroughly go through the instructions for seminar presentations as given later in this outline.
- Articles for presentation, assignment of articles to presenters (students) and dates of presentation will be announced shortly.

Last Class: 07 April 2011

### **Final 'take-home' Term paper**

- Please update yourself with further instructions on writing Term Paper, which will be put on the Blackboard – OR - circulated through email - in future
- Please thoroughly go through the instructions for Term Paper as given later in this outline.
- Topic: The subject of presentations and the topic for Term Paper are same. Therefore, the topic will be intensively discussed during seminar presentations. All compulsory materials (6 to 8 articles from e-journals) for writing Term Paper will be presented in the Seminar presentations.
- **Last date for submission – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 [till 4 pm]**

### **EVALUATION**

**Please read the following instructions VERY CAREFULLY; students will be evaluated by the parameters laid down in the following instructions**

- 1] TWO seminar presentation: [2 seminars X 25% each =] 50%
- 2] ONE 'take-home' term paper: 40 %
- 3] Class participation [class attendance; participation during seminar presentations; interaction in class]:10 %

#### **1] Seminar presentation**

- Please update yourself with further instructions on seminar presentations, which will be put on the Blackboard – OR - circulated through email - in future.
- Each student will do **TWO** seminar presentations.
- The presentation will be 'traditional' in character (VERBAL ONLY). Presenters CANNOT use visual aids (such as Over Head Projection).
- The main reading for the presentation will be one article from an e-journal.
- Articles for presentation, assignment of articles to presenters (students) and dates of presentation will be announced shortly.
- Articles (from e-journals subscribed by UNB Library system) for the presentations will be uploaded on the Blackboard.
- The subject for presentations is: critical examination of healthcare systems of the above-given SIX nations.
- At least 3 journal articles each [for Canada, USA, UK, India, China & Cuba] will be presented.
- Please try to use theoretical concepts which are discussed in the classes as well as from readings referred in the course outline.
- I encourage students to use other relevant readings from UNB library system as well as take a critical and innovative interpretation of the article.
- Please focus on the core argument(s) of the article; details such as numerical data can be skipped (unless you are trying to make a point through them). You may also skip sections such as 'methodology' or 'sample selection' [unless it is extremely important for explaining the article].
- The presentation should have a brief introduction, a 'body' comprising of the core argument(s) and other essential points, conclusion, and followed by your remarks.
- As we progress through the course, I will provide more details regarding the content of your presentations as well as how to present.
- It will be the student's responsibility to facilitate a discussion among the audience after his/her presentation. This is a part of the evaluation of the presentation.
- There are points for style of presentation, audience engagement, eye contact, clarity of speaking, preciseness of expression and timing.

- I will inform about the time limit of each presentation subsequently. Please update yourself.
- Please practice to speak within the given time limit. There will be other speakers after you who have to present within class hours. If you do not speak within the allotted time, the subsequent speakers will not have enough time to talk.
- Points will be deducted if the allotted time is significantly overshoot and I will be forced to halt the presentation.
- Please time your presentation while practicing. I strongly suggest you read it out before someone/audience and watch over the time.
- Students who are not presenting (audience) should read the articles being presented beforehand. It will help you to understand the presentation properly as well as enable you to ask questions to the presenter. This is the minimal reward an audience can give to all the hard work of the presenter. This involvement will also add to your points for 'participation in classes'-aspect of your final grades.
- Students who are presenting for the first time or are hesitant about public speaking or have any other form of apprehension about presentations, **please feel free to meet me.**

## 2] Term Paper

- I will provide detailed instructions about the final Term Paper shortly.
- Please update yourself with further instructions on term paper, which will be put on the Blackboard OR - circulated through email in future
- Each student will submit ONE final term paper.
- You have to drop your completed term paper in my mail box (labeled as "Das") at the administrative office of the Department of Sociology (Room 20: Tilley Hall, 13 MacAulay Lane; Fredericton, NB Canada E3B 5A3).
- Please drop your term papers during regular office hours of the university; otherwise you will not be able to access the mail box since the office will be closed. Term Papers dropped anywhere else apart from the designated spot will not be considered.
- Those of you who will be out of station; they can send me their term paper via postal service or courier at the above given address (Department of Sociology).
- **I will NOT accept term papers sent through email.**
- Subject for Term paper [please remember that the following are 'tentative' instructions. Please update yourself with the final instructions which will be circulated in future]: critically compare and contrast the healthcare systems taking one country [from: Canada or USA or UK] and one country [from India or China or Cuba].
- The compulsory resources for the term paper essay are the journal articles for the respective country presented in the seminar. Through presentations and class room discussions, we will analyze all major arguments and points for writing the Term Paper.
- The readings in the course out line (for each nation) are also compulsory resources for the respective countries.

## 3] Participation

- Participation in class is an extremely important part of the course. I would like the course to be interactive rather than instructional. For this goal, everyone's critical involvement is vital.
- Please feel free to ask me any question, clarify any doubt or discuss anything that pertains to this course. Please remember: ***there are no stupid questions*** in social sciences.
- Please make yourself thoroughly familiar with the study materials.
- Participation is also crucial in the discussions following the students' presentations. Please read the articles which will be presented and ask as many questions as you can.
- Please remember there is ***NO 'one correct-answer'*** in social sciences.
- **Please feel free to contact me if you have any kind of query or concern. Please do not hesitate.**

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**Alekhya "Baba" Das** [Instructor]

[Department of Sociology - & - International Development Studies (IDS) Program (Faculty of Arts)]