

The Hospital as a Small Society

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Course Listing: Sociology 28030
Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:50
Social Sciences 107
Office: Social Sciences 422
Office hours: Wed 2:30-4:30pm or by appt.

Medicine involves a complex array of organizations and professionals expected to incorporate cutting-edge scientific findings into patient care. These bodies can be seen as *responsively* attending to a member of society unable to participate in its operation. In doing so they *define* what counts as illness, what sequence of treatment it demands, and who is entitled to provide the respective remedy.

The study of the hospital can expose how these custodial and prescriptive processes intersect. In this course we will use it as a site for examining such topics as: how deviance is transformed to “sickness,” how institutions produce insanity, and how medical students manage the uncertainty implicit in interpreting science and performing professionally. As we study the rise – and as some have argued, the fall – of “professional dominance” in 20th century medicine, we will also explore some of the more recent scholarship on its contemporary organization. In doing so we will look at the new bureaucratic and corporate structures that channel physician autonomy through reimbursement restrictions, federal efforts to rationalize care via treatment guidelines, and professional movements around so-called “evidence-based medicine.”

The class will be divided into two parts. The first half will introduce influential perspectives of sociologists researching the professions and organizations of medicine. We will study the seminal texts and compare their theoretical and methodological contributions, examining the assumptions underpinning their arguments. Each of the first five weeks will engage the dominant perspectives on a specific topic. In the second half of the course, we will study how these perspectives empirically relate to the systems of professional and patient control used in the modern hospital. In particular, we will use its internal organization to investigate the contemporary utility of the category of “professional” itself, in light of the multiple workplace pressures upon practitioners who continue to seek legitimacy and authority from principles of science and reason. The study of the hospital’s capacity to recontextualize legal mandates, instill larger social values, and ration care can provide a sense of how healing is choreographed in its most complex environment.

My goals for this course are that you will learn to:

- consider how taken-for-granted medical problems are developed by professionals and organizations.
- analyze how professionals and semi-professionals coordinate work processes.
- interpret the divergent expectations on physicians that lead to work-related difficulties.
- understand the hospital as an environment involving competing interests for governing patient care, and consider how these influences are resolved in the delivery of care.
- evaluate how organizational changes in the evaluation, reimbursement, and training of physicians will influence relationships in the hospital.

Class requirements

- (30%) Five two-page critical summaries/outlines based on a week's reading.
- (25%) A 5-page midterm paper.
- (35%) A 10-page take-home final exam.
- (10%) Active classroom participation.

Required books

Charles Bosk (1979 [2003]) *Forgive and Remember*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press **2nd edition only**

Eliot Freidson (1970 [1988]) *The Profession of Medicine*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Carol Heimer and Lisa Staffen (1998) *For the Sake of the Children*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Erving Goffman (1962) *Asylums*. New York: Penguin Books.

Response papers

Response papers will be due by midnight on the evening before class. Both these papers and the midterm will be graded down one full grade for each day they are late.

Academic dishonesty

I expect you to not submit others' ideas or work as your own. Violations will be handled via the University's Academic Honesty and Plagiarism policy.

Email

I will respond to email between 9-10pm on weekdays.

Your cell phone

Please turn it off before class! Pagers are OK if you are a medical student or resident.

Course Schedule

Wk 1. Introduction

Class A. Introduction to the course.

Class B. The relationship of the hospital to cultivation of medical authority

Starr, Chap 4. The Reconstitution of the Hospital, p. 145-179

Freidson, Chap 6. Patterns of Practice in the Hospital, p. 109-136

Rosenberg, Introduction, p. 3-15

Wk 2. The position of the physician -- classic perspectives

Class A. The custodial role of the physician *vis-à-vis* society

Parsons, Chap 10. Social Structure and Dynamic Process: The case of modern medical practice. p. 428-479

Henderson, Physician and patient as a social system, p. 819 - 823.

Class B. The prescriptive capacity of the physician

Freidson, Part 1. The Formal Organization of a Profession. p. 3-69

Wk 3. Becoming a physician

Class A. Learning the values

Merton et al., Some Preliminaries to a Sociology of Medical Education, p. 2-77

Fox, Chap 4. Training for uncertainty. p. 207-41

Class B. Learning the practice

Becker and Geer, The Fate of Idealism in Medical School, p. 50-56.

Hughes, Chapter 9. The Making of a Physician, p. 116-131.

Light, Uncertainty and Control in Professional Training, p. 310-22

Bosk, Occupational Rituals in Patient Management p. 71-76

Wk 4. Understanding professional organization – the case of medicalization

Class A. Professional dominance and disease determination

Hughes, Chap 6. Licence and Mandate p. 77-88

Freidson, Illness as Social Deviance. p. 203-223

Class B. The expansion of medicalization

Conrad, The Medicalization of Society, p. 3-19, 146-164

Clarke, Bio-medicalization, p. 161–194

Wk 5. The influence of the organization I. -- Does the hospital make you sicker?

Class A. Goffman, Chap 1. On the characteristics of total institutions, p. 1-124,

Class B. Goffman, Chap 3. The Underlife of a Public Institution, 171-318

Wk 6. The influence of the organization II. -- Can the hospital make you more responsible?

Class A. Heimer and Staffen

Chap 1. Why we need a sociology of responsibility, p. 1-37

Chap 2. Life in two neonatal intensive care units, p. 38-77.

Class B. Heimer and Staffen

Chap 4. Responsibility as a joint enterprise: The role of the state in the NICU and the home, p. 137.

Chap 8. Responsible individuals in an organizational world, p. 327-373

Wk 7. Being a patient in the specialized hospital

Class A. Life in the intensive care unit

Anspach, Chap 1. The dilemmas and their dimensions, p. 1-24

Chap 3. Predicting the future, p. 55-84.

Class B. Life in the emergency room

Roth, Some Contingencies of the Moral Evaluation and Control of Clientele: The Case of the Hospital Emergency Service p. 839-856.

Dodier and Camus, Openness and Specialisation: Dealing with Patients in a Hospital Emergency Service, p. 413-444

Wk 8. Professional self-control among elite academic surgeons

Class A. Errors and surveillance as social control

Bosk, Chap 2. Error, rank, and responsibility, p. 35-70

Chap 3. Routine surveillance as social control, p. 71-110

Class B. Attending authority and moral control

Bosk, Chap 4. The legitimation of attending authority, p. 111-146

Chap 5. Climbing the pyramid: professional control and moral identity, p. 147-66

Wk 9. Recently-pursued controls on physician autonomy

Class A. Evidence-based medicine

Sackett & Rosenberg, The need for evidence-based medicine. p. 620-624.

Timmermans and Angell, Evidence-Based Medicine, Clinical Uncertainty, and Learning to Doctor p. 342-359.

Armstrong, Clinical Autonomy, Individual and Collective: The Problem of Changing Doctors' Behavior, p. 1771-1777

Class B. "Impure" elements in medicine: Informed consent, ethics boards

Katz, The Silent World of Doctor and Patient. p. TBD

Maynard, Interaction and Asymmetry in Clinical Discourse. p. 448-495.

Wk 10. Organizational and professional change

Class A. The technologized hospital

Saunders, CT Suite: Visual Apprenticeship in the Age of the Mechanical Viewbox, p. 1-20.

Barley, The Alignment of Technology and Structure through Roles and Networks, p. TBD.

Abbott, The future of professions: occupation and expertise in the age of organization, p. 17-42.

Class B. Recent changes in the organizations structuring medical care and training

Casalino, Physicians and Corporations: A Corporate Transformation of American Medicine? p. 869-84.

Medical Professionalism Project, Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium. p. 243-46.

Michels, Medical Education and Managed Care. p. 359-61.

Scott, The Old Order Changeth: The Evolving World of Health Care Organizations," p. 23-43

Provisional bibliography (including, but not limited to, cites above)

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