

Module Specification

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This module specification applies for the academic year 2019-20

Last revised: 2 September 2019 by Nicki Thorogood and Neil Spicer

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Module name	Sociological Approaches to Health
Module code	1803
Module Organisers	Nicki Thorogood and Neil Spicer
Contact email	Nicki.Thorogood@lshtm.ac.uk or Neil.Spicer@lshtm.ac.uk
Home Faculty	Public Health & Policy
Level	Level 7 (postgraduate Masters 'M' level) of the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales & Northern Ireland (FHEQ).
Credit	15 credits
Accreditation	Not currently accredited by any other body
Keywords	Social theory; knowledge production; health inequalities; social and cultural influences on health; equity; gender & health; sociology (including socio-cultural aspects).

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND AUDIENCE

Overall aim	To introduce students to sociological perspectives on health, involving the theoretical and empirical study of social and cultural structures and processes that influence health and illness.
Intended learning outcomes	By the end of this module, students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in sociology as applied to the study of health and illness• Apply these concepts at an empirical level• Demonstrate a critical awareness of the main conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues raised by research in the sociology of health
Target audience	This module is intended for students on all MScs, particularly those with interests in social and cultural influences on health.

CONTENT

Session content	The module is expected to include sessions addressing the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The critical appraisal of how 'knowledge' is produced: an introduction to discourse and semiotic analysis and its application to current issues for public health
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social production of health and ill health: Historical overview of relationships between social organisation and health. Biomedicine and critiques. The impact of social, cultural and psychological processes on health status and access to health services. Understanding the concepts of mental health and illness • Examining inequalities in health: Examination of the research which links social factors such as social class, ethnicity, gender and disability to differential health outcomes. The role of social support and 'social capital'. Conceptual and methodological debates about the literature • Medicine, risk and society: Medicalisation and the role of medicine in society. Conceptions of risk and risk behaviour
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TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Study resources provided or required	Module Information can be found on the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) containing information about each session and key references for the module.
Teaching and learning methods	<p>Twenty sessions spread over nine days provide overviews of the material listed above. These are generally lectures by subject area specialists followed by seminars in which students are encouraged to discuss and explore their own views, ideas and responses to the case studies from the topics covered. Two sessions are run as a whole group workshop on discourse and semiotic analysis.</p> <p>There are also several documentary films shown to support the topics being discussed. The remainder of the time will be spent in private study. Students will be expected to read and discuss relatively large volumes of material. The private study time must therefore be considered an integral part of the module.</p>
Assessment details	<p>Formal assessment is by an individual essay of 1,500 words. One question to be selected from a list of questions based on the lecture/seminar topics.</p> <p>Resit/deferred/new attempts - The task will be to submit a 1,500 word essay taking a different question from the same list (resits and new attempts).</p>
Assessment dates	<p>Assessments will be due no later than 2:00pm on Wednesday 12th February 2020.</p> <p>Resit/deferred/new attempts - The next assessment deadline will be during mid/late September of the current academic year.</p>
Language of study and assessment	English (please see 'English language requirements' below regarding the standard required for entry).

TIMING AND MODE OF STUDY

Duration	5 weeks at 2.5 days per week
Dates	Monday morning to Wednesday afternoon
Timetable slot	Term 2 - slot C1
Mode of Study	The module is taught face-to-face in London. Both full-time and part-time students follow the same schedule.
Learning time	<p>The notional learning time for the module totals 150 hours, consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact time ≈ 40 hours

- Directed self-study ≈ 30 hours
- Self-directed learning ≈ 30 hours
- Assessment, review and revision ≈ 50 hours

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Pre-requisites	It is desirable, but not essential, that students should have taken the Principles of Social Research (1104) module or be able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge.
English language requirements	A strong command of the English language is necessary to benefit from studying the module. Applicants whose first language is not English or whose prior university studies have not been conducted wholly in English must fulfil LSHTM's English language requirements .
Student numbers	15 - 25 (numbers may be capped due to limitations in facilities or staffing)
Student selection	<p>Preference will be given to LSHTM MSc students and LSHTM research degree students. Other applicants meeting the entry criteria will usually be offered a place in the order applications are received, until any cap on numbers is reached. Applicants may be placed on a waiting list and given priority the next time the module is run.</p> <p>Partial Registration (partial participation) by LSHTM research degree students is allowed for this module.</p>