Sociology is a social science that uses systematic methods of qualitative and quantitative investigation, and critical analysis, to develop a body of knowledge about human social structure and activity, often with the goal of applying such knowledge to improve social welfare. This Selective will explore selected topics in sociology of medicine.

**Instructors**

Dr. S. Van McCrary  
Internet: stephen.mccrary@stonybrookmedicine.edu

**Syllabus**

Sociology is a social science that uses systematic methods of qualitative and quantitative investigation, and critical analysis, to develop a body of knowledge about human social structure and activity, often with the goal of applying such knowledge to improve social welfare. This Selective will explore selected topics in sociology of medicine. Topics include: medical professionalism and training of physicians; the culture of nursing; and institutional structures within medicine. Examples of such institutional structures are the emergence of the modern hospital, and the origins and transformation of the health care delivery and financing system in the United States. To provide a foundation of understanding for students, the course will also briefly explore qualitative methods utilized by sociologists to conduct field work. The format of the Selective will be four 2-hour discussion sessions which will be facilitated by individual (or teams of) students. Careful reading of assigned materials in advance of class discussion is required for all students.

**Educational Objectives**

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe qualitative methods used by sociologists
2. Discuss and compare contemporary cultures of training for physicians and nurses
3. Recognize the origins and evolution of modern hospitals and the US health care system
4. Appraise newly proposed changes to the US health care system based on students’ recognition of the history of the system

**Topics and Dates**

**Week 1 - What do qualitative sociologists do? Tuesday, October 25**

For this week, read Appendix 1, “The Field Worker and the Surgeon,” pp. 193-213.

*Strongly Recommended*—Read ahead in the Bosk book.
**Week 2- Medical Professionalism: Training of Physicians  Wednesday, November 2**


**Week 3- Medical Professionalism: Training of Physicians (part 2)  Tuesday, November 8**

Ongoing discussion of *Forgive and Remember*

Guest Speaker/Discussant: Robert D. Barraco, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.S.

Dr. Barraco is Chief of the Section of Geriatric Trauma Surgery & Critical Care, at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and is a former Chair of the Stony Brook University Hospital Institutional Ethics Committee.

**Week 4-- Wednesday, November 16**

**Part A- Institutional Structures: The Modern Hospital**


**Part B- Medical Professionalism: Culture of Nursing**


Parikh, Rahul. “Do Doctors and Nurses Hate Each Other?” Salon.com; May 30, 2011


**Evaluation**

1. Attendance at all discussion sessions is mandatory
2. Each student will facilitate one discussion session
3. All students will participate regularly in discussions in which they are not facilitating
4. Each student will write a 3-4 page essay reflecting on the most influential aspects of sociology to the student’s anticipated future field of medical practice (due on the last day of class for the Selective).

**Class Size**

10 (maximum)
6 (minimum)

**Last updated: 5/25/2016**