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  
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**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, September 26**

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

*Strongly Recommended*—Begin reading ahead in the Bosk book.
Week 2—Tuesday, October 10
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


Week 3- Cultures of Nursing and Hospitals Tuesday, October 24

Ongoing discussion of nursing and hospital materials.

Guest Speaker/Discussant: Carolyn Santora, MS, RN, NEA-BC, CSHA, CPHQ

Ms. Santora is the Chief Nursing Officer and Chief of Regulatory Affairs for SBU Medical Center and is Co-Chair of the Stony Brook University Hospital Institutional Ethics Committee. She has extensive experience in nursing and hospital management.

Week 4- Medical Professionalism: Training of Physicians Tuesday, November 21


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: 6/09/2017