The University of Western Ontario
School of Health Studies

Health Sciences 3141
Law 5835

Health Advocacy

Fall 2017 – Winter 2018

Instructor: Jacob Shelley
Email: jshelle6@uwo.ca
Office: Room 21, Law Building
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Time: Monday 3:30-6:20
Note: the classroom is booked every week for the duration of the Fall and Winter term for student/group use, but classes will not be held every week. Students will be given a schedule of mandatory classes at the beginning of each term, and will be provided with ample notice of any changes to the course schedule. The classroom will be available for studio time group work, study, and meetings on days there are not scheduled classes.

Classroom: WALS UCC

Course Information:

This course examines the role of advocacy in health in Canada, focusing specifically on public health. Public health is what we, as a society, can do to ensure the health of the people. Advocacy historically has played an important role in public health by mobilizing forces to create evidence-based policy. This course will examine the foundations of public health advocacy and the role of advocacy in the adoption and development of policy. The initial sessions of this course will provide a theoretical foundation of health advocacy before branching out to more specific topics in health advocacy. In order to foster deeper engagement with advocacy, the topics taught in this course will then be practically applied through a group project. The group project will require students to develop and implement an advocacy campaign on a contemporary public health issue. This will give students the opportunity to engage with their community, specifically policy makers and public health professionals to decide on a worthy project. Another important aspect of the group projects is peer dynamics. This course will focus on team building and will facilitate peer-to-peer interactions. The course instructor and various visiting lecturers will continue to introduce additional aspects of advocacy throughout the course, such as interaction with and mobilization of media, evaluation of advocacy campaigns, and the presentation of examples of successful and unsuccessful advocacy campaigns. In addition to predetermined topics, the nature of the advocacy campaigns undertaken by the group will inform some of the topics that will be examined. These topics can then be applied to, integrated with, and expanded upon within the hands-on group
exercises. The course instructor will be available for consultation throughout the development and implementation of the project to provide expertise and materials.

The course design includes lecturer-led tutorials, facilitated sessions with the instructor, and studio classes with a focus on advocacy campaign development. The course will begin with an emphasis on lecturer-led sessions and will gradually incorporate more and more independent group time in the studio space. The group project consists of both individually evaluated work as well as some work graded based on the efforts and results of the entire group.

The course is open to a limited number of law students, who will contribute legal knowledge and research to the advocacy campaign.

**Course Objectives:**
This course aims to provide an understanding of the health advocacy field in Canada and develop skills and competencies expected of a public health advocate, to help shape public policy development and to interpret laws, regulations and policies related to public health. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the theoretical foundations of health advocacy and the role of advocacy in public policy;
2. Be able to develop, implement and evaluate a health advocacy campaign;
3. Identify what makes for an effective health advocacy campaign, and be able to provide reasons for what makes an advocacy campaign successful or unsuccessful using evaluation methods presented in class;
4. Identify a variety of opportunities when it is appropriate to apply advocacy strategies and when not to;
5. List knowledge translation frameworks used in public health, including health advocacy, engagement and mobilization based on current evidence;
6. Understand the societal receptiveness, the political processes and context for shaping public health policy;
7. Recognize and analyze the role health evidence plays in the development of public health policies and advocacy campaigns to address public health issues.
8. Describe and apply methods for effectively communicating and influencing the public agenda, including social media and traditional media; and,
9. Learn how to work in a team environment under time pressures, while developing peer-to-peer learning strategies that can be applied to real world problems.

**Course Materials:**
All required materials, including cases and articles, will be available online. Links will be provided on the course reading list. Some articles will be available online through Western Libraries (https://www.lib.uwo.ca/).
Other recommended readings will be available through course reserves for 2 hr checkout from the library.

The Western Libraries website is an excellent resource which can be used for research and development of the advocacy projects. You can chat online with a librarian through “Ask, Chat with a librarian”, drop by the reference desk, or make an appointment with a subject specific librarian (https://www.lib.uwo.ca/contact/instruction/index.html).

Evaluation:

The assignments in this course are designed to culminate in a full-fledged advocacy campaign. The purpose of the advocacy campaign is to put together a real-life campaign from start to finish. Thus, the project will go through all of the steps of a traditional advocacy campaign, and each stage will be graded accordingly. Students will be assessed on both a group and individual basis.

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<th>Participation</th>
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<td>This course is structured to encourage ongoing engagement with the material. Attendance and ongoing participation is required. Students will be assessed on their participation in class, including effort put into class activities and discussions as well as group work. The students will complete a self-evaluation of their deserved participation grade with a 1-paragraph explanation of why they deserve said mark.</td>
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<th>Advocacy Project Brief</th>
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<td>Students are expected to identify an issue they contend should be the focus of the group advocacy campaign. Students will individually prepare a 2-page brief on a relevant public health issue (could be local, regional, provincial, or federal). In this brief students will describe the issue, what is currently being done to deal with this issue, any existing policy that is working for or against this issue, and what needs to be done that could form the basis of an advocacy campaign. Specific instructions will be provided in class, in addition to guidelines for the brief itself (length, formatting, etc).</td>
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<td>To be submitted to OWL by October 2nd, 2017.</td>
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<td>Each policy brief will be submitted on OWL and will be used as readings for class on Monday, October 16th. In this class, the groups will choose the focus of their advocacy campaign for the remainder of the term from the briefs submitted. Effort will be made to reach a consensus, but if necessary, will be determined by voting. (Note: the number of issues and the size of groups working on these issues will be determined by the class size.)</td>
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<th>Advocacy Project Position Paper</th>
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<td>Groups will prepare a paper which outlines their position on the particular matter that they have chosen as their topic for the advocacy campaign. Students will work with their advocacy group and prepare position paper on their advocacy campaign. Specific guidance will be provided in class on the structure and format of this report, as well as examples of existing advocacy position papers from local, provincial and national advocacy organizations. Further instructions will be provided in class (e.g., guidelines for the brief itself, length, formatting, etc).</td>
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<td>To be submitted to OWL on November 27th, 2017.</td>
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### Media Package and Media Release

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| Each group of students will develop a media package and execute a media release for their advocacy campaign based on the media training offered in the fall term. There will be a series of discrete tasks associated with the media package to make up the 20%. It will culminate in a media release that will be a public event (note: media will be invited). Materials from the media package may be submit for consideration in media outlets.
| Further details will be provided in class. 
| To be completed between **January 29\textsuperscript{nd}, 2018** and **February 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2018** |

### Advocacy Campaign Portfolio & Presentation

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| Each group will be required to submit a full portfolio of their advocacy campaign. This will include documents produced throughout the term (which may be updated/revised after initial submission). The portfolio will contain all of the necessary documents for executing a successful advocacy campaign. There will be some required documents, but groups may include additional items. Specific instructions will be provided in class early in the fall term, and these materials will be under development throughout the year.
| Reports are to be submitted by **March 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2018** and is worth 25%.
| Each group will make a public presentation about their advocacy campaign.
| Presentations will be conducted on **March 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2018** and is worth 10% |

### Oral Examination (Exit Interview)

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<td>During the final weeks of class students will individually conduct an oral examination that will also serve the purpose of an exit interview. Students will be able to sign up at their convenience and will have all questions by <strong>March 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2018</strong></td>
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### Evaluation Policies:

- There will be a 10% penalty per day for late assignments;
- If an assignment more than five days late, it will not be marked, and the student will receive a mark of zero;
- Failure to participate in any in-class assignments will result in a mark of zero for that exercise;
- For group assignments, students will have an opportunity to discuss the participation of group members with the instructor, who reserves the right to modify a student’s grade accordingly (each group member will have an equal opportunity to speak with the instructor);
- The University’s policy on plagiarism will be strictly enforced; and
- All of the above is subject to the University’s policy on academic accommodations.

### Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices will be permitted during class time, except during student presentations.

### Acknowledgements

The course instructor would like to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Louis Hugo Francescutti and Dr. Les Hagen to the planning and execution of this course. Their expertise in the area of public health policy-advocacy, their experience in planning and teaching a similar course at the University of Alberta, and their willingness to share their resources, materials, expertise and experiences has been incredibly helpful. Portions of this course outline have been adapted from their course (SPH 523 – Advocacy for
Public Health), taught at the University of Alberta. Dr. Hagen will be visiting to speak to the class in early fall, sharing three capacities: his expertise in health advocacy; a discussion of the group project accomplishments at the U of A; and personal accomplishments in the form of a case study on advocacy for tobacco control.

**ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS**

**Student Code of Conduct**

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf).

**English Proficiency for the Assignment of Grades**

Visit the website [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/english.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/english.pdf)

**Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences**

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg117.html](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg117.html)

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

Documentation is required for non-medical absences where the course work missed is more than 10% of the overall grade. Students may contact their Faculty Academic Counselling Office for what documentation is needed.

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Academic Counselling Office of the student’s Faculty of registration. For BHSc students, you may go to the School of Health Studies Office in HSB room 222.
**Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Additionally,

1. All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

2. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

**Support Services**

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/
2. Student Health – http://www.uwo.ca/health/services/students/index.html
3. Registrar’s Office -- http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/
4. Ombuds Office -- http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/