



**Course Syllabus
HS 3050b
Health-Related Quality of Life
Winter 2010**

Lecture: Thursdays from 10:30 – 1:20 p.m.
Location: Biological & Geological Sciences 0153
Instructor Dr. Philip C. Doyle

Office: Elborn College, Rm. 2518, Ext. 88942
Office Hours: Monday 8:30 -10:30 a.m., Thursday 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., or by appointment
Email: pdoyle@uwo.ca
Course TAs: Agnes Dzioba (adzioba@uwo.ca) and Catherine Bornbaum (cbornba@uwo.ca)
Office Hours: [AD]Monday 10:30 – 12:30 [CB] Thursday 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Description of Course

This course provides instruction related to comprehensive issues that underlie the conceptualization, definition, and measurement of what is termed “*health related quality of life*” (HRQOL) or *quality of life* (QOL). Understanding concepts specific to HRQOL serves to form an essential and fundamental construct in the health sciences. Exposure to these concepts offers the student interested in health sciences a broader vision of health, functioning, and well-being, and ultimately how these constructs are interpreted within the context of illness and disease. The course is designed to introduce the student to comprehensive issues underlying HRQOL, its measurement and utility as an outcomes metric, and the broad application of HRQOL in health care. The course is designed to be of value to a wide range of student interests.

Requirements

In order to provide the most comprehensive level of instruction, class attendance is mandatory. There will be two midterm examinations and a final examination. These exams will be comprised of multiple choice and several short answer questions. Each midterm examination accounts for 30% of your final grade; the final examination accounts for 40%. The content of examinations will be facilitated through lecture material and assigned readings, and in some instances the experience of the student. Because the material to be presented is additive, you may view the second midterm and final examinations to be “cumulative” in that one piece of information builds on another.

Note: Use of any type of electronic device will not be permitted during either midterm exam or for the final examination.

Evaluation Summary

Midterm examination #1	=	30%
Midterm examination #2	=	30%
Final Examination	=	40%

Additional Comments

This course is designed to provide students with an introductory, albeit a rather comprehensive exposure to the concept of HRQOL. However, the course also seeks to provide detailed exposure to the multidimensionality of HRQOL as a concept related to functioning and disability in both health and disease. For this reason, class participation is strongly encouraged, different opinions are welcomed, questions should be asked, and active but informed thinking is essential. As a concept, QOL exists in both healthy and non-healthy people. QOL as a concept knows no boundary and is not a selective process to age, gender, ethnic or cultural background, sexual orientation, etc. Keeping this in mind as we proceed through the course will be of substantial benefit as you seek to gain further knowledge concerning this important consequence of human functioning.

Plagiarism Statement, Student Behavior, and Related Information

Students must produce any written assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and a proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic format for plagiarism checking.

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 Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

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>

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

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. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate academic counsellors (the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy [<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/general/privacy.pdf>]. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean's Office (Academic Counsellor) in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty.

Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

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 Counseling office in a timely manner.

Documentation from Family Physicians and Walk-In Clinics

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:

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>. Hard copies are available from Academic Counselling in the Faculties.

Documentation from Student Health Services

Students obtaining documentation from Student Health Services should sign a “release of information.” This form authorizes Student Health Services to provide information to the student's home Faculty Academic Counsellors. Release of information forms are available from, and can be arranged through, the student's home Faculty Academic Counselling service.

Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them, or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that his/her ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities was seriously affected.

Grading & Appeals

Final grades are submitted electronically using marking software (available at <http://www.uwo.ca/its/software/markex.html>). Final grades are due one week after the final examination. For courses without a final examination, marks are due one week after the last scheduled day of classes. All final grades must be approved by the Director before an instructor can release them to students. Appeals may be pursued in accordance with the guidelines established by the University of Western Ontario.

Rounding of Grades (for example, bumping a 79% to 80%)

This is a practice students sometimes request. **The practice will not occur here.** The edges of this course are clear and sharp. The mark attained is the mark you achieved and the mark assigned; there is no rounding to the next grade level. Please don't ask me to do this for you. It degrades my experience as your professor and your experience as a student. We both have an appreciation of high standards.

Reading List:

Required Text:

Ablon, M. (1998). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.
 Didion, J.(2005). *A Year of Magical Thinking*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Additional Readings: Approximately 6-8 articles will be placed on WEB-CT for reading during the term. A list with the full citation and the order that these articles are to be read in will be provided in Week 2 (by January 10, 2010). All will be provided as pdf versions for ease of use.

Some things you might consider reading at some point:

Cohen, R.M. (2005). *Blindsided: A Reluctant Memoire*. New York, NY: Perennial Harper Collins.
 Fraser, K. (2003). *The Voice Gallery: Travels with a Glass Throat*. Victoria, BC: Thomas Allen Publishing.
 Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on a Spoiled Identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
 Sontag, S. (1988). *AIDS and its Metaphors*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.
 Sontag, S. (1983). *Illness as Metaphor*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.

Additional Curiosities and Item of Interest

I also often post pieces on WebCT that I believe might be of interest to some students. These pieces are typically short essays, opinion pieces, or related entities that have been written by authors who represent diverse backgrounds and experience. These readings are not mandatory, but there for those who seek to obtain additional and more varied information and perspectives on particular topics that overlay with our interests in HRQOL. For those of you who read one or more of these items, should you ever wish to discuss them, let me know and I would be happy to meet with you and talk about them.



Topical Outline of Weekly Lectures

Health-Related Quality of Life HS 3050b Fall 2010

Date of Class

Sept. 16

Topic(s) de Jour

Introductory meeting, some class rules, and the general design and structure of the course. Maybe I can help you figure out why you took this course?

Why I Teach this Course? Some Starting Points and Some Caveats.
The Instructor's Perspective on HRQOL. The Student's Perspective on HRQOL.
Where are YOU headed in the future?
Definition(s) of Health Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) and Quality of Life (QOL).
Theoretical Framework for HRQOL - A Brief Snapshot
Historical Evolution of HRQOL as a Construct
Why Measure HRQOL?

Sept. 23 - *So what the heck is (HR)QOL?*

Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced HRQOL.
Development and Refinement of HRQOL Taxonomies.
Overview of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF)
Narrow and Broad Views of "Normal Functioning".
HRQOL Measured as a Static Event with QOL as a Dynamic Construct.
Limits of the "Medical Model"

Sept. 30 - *Boy, HRQOL seems like a very big thing that's hard to get one's head around!*

HRQOL as a Multidimensional Construct:
Stigma, Social Penalty, and Perceived QOL.
Considerations of Body, Mind, Spirit, and Culture (and other dimensions)
"Hidden" Dimensions and Domains Influencing HRQOL.
Populations of Interest and Some Data

Oct. 7

****Midterm Examination #1***

Oct. 14 - *You know, I think HRQOL is influenced by other things...is it?*

The Impact of Health Care on HRQOL

The Influence of Professional Interactions on HRQOL

Construction of Measurement Instruments

Ways of Knowing, Validity and Reliability, and Inadvertent Cooking of Data

Oct. 21- *Like most things in life, everybody wants to measure something!*

Application of Measurement Tools and Modes of Administration

Evaluation of Specific Populations

Discriminative vs. Evaluative Instruments,

Survey of Instruments: Advantages and Disadvantages

Generic vs. Disease Specific Instruments

Oct. 28 - *But come on, is HRQOL actually measured in the real world?*

Application of QOL tools, Advantages and Disadvantages

Commonly Evaluated Populations, Unique Populations and Associated Concerns

Communication Disorders

Pain and Suffering

QOL in Children: At Least Two Sides of a Coin – Children and their Parents.¹

Nov. 4

Midterm Examination #2

Nov. 11 - *So, what do the data say about HRQOL and QOL?*

The Influence of other Factors on QOL - Distress and its Association with Disease, Illness, and Treatment²

Measuring Outcomes using HRQOL Instruments

Applications from the Literature

Nov. 18 - *I've never had this happen before in class!!!*

Cinema Academia and Discussion

Nov. 25 - *This stuff is all well and good, but I want to be a professional health care provider; what can thinking about QOL do for me? Show me the money!!!*

Considerations of Age, Gender, Culture, and Community

Utility of Measures of HRQOL as an Outcomes Metric: Some Examples

Pulling it all Together...Subjective Impression and Objective Promise

Death as a Reality

Dec. 2 - Geez, I think I've got it or at least got a little bit of an understanding of QOL.

Influence on Health Care and Public Policy

HRQOL as a Political Issue

Social Influence on HRQOL

Disease, Illness, and Stigma and Social Penalty

Relationship of HRQOL to Client-Centered Care; Family Considerations

What really defines HRQOL?

Can a Good QOL Exist in Illness?

Sharing "the Passport"

***Final examination – As scheduled
Details Forthcoming ASAP***

¹One hour lecture to be provided by Agnes Dzioba, M.Sc., Ph.D.(C)

²One hour lecture to be provided by Catherine Bornbaum, M.Sc., Ph.D.(C)

Note: Examinations must be taken on the day and time they are scheduled unless other arrangements are made due to health reasons that can be fully documented according to the requirement of the School of Health Sciences program and the University of Western Ontario. If an examination is missed without appropriate documentation as required, no make-up examination will be offered and the student will forfeit that portion of the exam weighting. All approvals for make-up exams must be processed through the School of Health Studies; once approved, they will notify the instructor as to whether a make-up exam is to be scheduled.