

The University of Western Ontario
School of Health Studies
Health Sciences 3050a
Health-Related Quality of Life

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Office Hours: Monday 9-11 a.m., Thursday 2-3 p.m., Friday 7-10 a.m.

September 2012

Teaching Assistant: Katie Findlater Office Hours and Location: TBA

Lecture: Every Tuesday from 2:30 – 5:20 p.m.
Location: HSB 35

Prerequisite Checking

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

For information on prerequisites and/or antirequisites for this course, please review the current Western Academic Calendar at www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca.

Course Information

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, backgrounds, and future career plans. In order to provide the most comprehensive level of instruction, class attendance is highly recommended. I am not inclined to waste your time or mine; hence, what we will discuss is important and you are responsible for the information presented in lectures on examinations.

Evaluation

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 or final examinations.

Evaluation Summary

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

Should you miss an examination due to illness or other personal reasons, please notify the Academic Counsellor within the School of Health Studies. This will require that documentation for the absence is provided. Such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean’s office, and it will be the Dean’s office that will make the determination whether accommodation is warranted. Given the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy, instructors may not collect medical documentation. Should accommodation be denied, the student may appeal to the Academic Counselling Office of their Faculty for consideration. In all circumstances where a request for accommodation is submitted and approved through the School and Faculty, a make-up examination will be provided by the instructor at the soonest possible date as arranged between the instructor and the student.

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 and universalism specific to illness 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 does not manifest in a uniform fashion across individuals; it is sensitive to factors such as age, gender, ethnic and cultural background, religious/spiritual beliefs, 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.

Confidentiality

Throughout this course, vignettes of real examples specific to issues of (HR)QOL will be provided. While confidentiality of the individuals in these examples will be maintained, it is also the student’s responsibility to understand issues of privacy. These examples are used in the context of this course – they are not examples that are to be discussed with friends or others at the local coffee shop, bar, or during social gatherings. They are meant to be instructive, yet they are also sensitive and private. Please respect the confidentiality of these examples. They are provided to you in an effort to make you understand the gravity of individual response to illness and disease; they are not provided as examples that are to be used for social discussion outside of class. Use the examples for your own learning, but not as a topic for outside discussion with others. Thank you!

Course Materials

Required Texts:

1. Ablon, M. (1998). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.
2. Frank, A.W. (1991). *At the Will of the Body: Reflections on Illness*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Additional Readings: A series of readings (articles, book chapters) will be placed on OWL 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 1 (September 11th). All will be provided as pdf versions for ease of use.

Some things you might consider reading at some point (HOWEVER, THESE ARE NOT REQUIRED):

Byock, I. (2004). *The Four Things that Matter Most: A Book About Living*. New York: Free Press.

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.

*Several chapters from this book will be offered as required readings.

Additional Curiosities and Items of Interest

I also often post pieces on OWL 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; they are optional for those who seek to obtain additional and more varied information and perspectives on particular topics that overlie 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 independently.

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 (please see prior information on such accommodation for a missed examination). 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.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic recording device (audio, video, or audio and video) will be permitted at any point during lectures. The reason for this restriction is that information on real people will at times be provided and maintaining the confidentiality of these individuals is essential.

Cell phones must always be turned off during class; this requirement eliminates potential disruption during class due to phone calls and/or text messaging.

No electronic devices of any type will be allowed during tests and examinations including the use of cell phones.

Laptops are permitted in the classroom, however, I would prefer that you are using them appropriately. More explicitly, I do not want to see students doing email, surfing the web, arranging for concert tickets, airline flights to Cancun, etc. during the lecture. If you feel that you need to do this during class time, please feel free to leave class and take care of such business, but do not return to class afterwards. This request serves to reduce interruption to your classmates who are committed to the content of the course. Thank you!

Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)

If Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”) are used in the course, a reference to the Guidelines for their use is at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf> on page 4. Instructors are to communicate clearly to students information on how clickers are used including: how the student’s privacy will be protected, how clickers may be used by the instructor for data gathering and for evaluating the student, and why they cannot be used by anyone but the student (since the students involved in misuse of a clicker may be charged with a scholastic offence).

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/board/code.pdf>.

English Proficiency for the Assignment of Grades

Visit the website <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/english.pdf>.

Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

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: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>.

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/handbook/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/ssd/>
2. Student Health -- <http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>



Topical Outline of Weekly Lectures Health-Related Quality of Life

HS 3050a -Fall 2012

Date of Class

Topic(s) de Jour

September 11 – FIRST CLASS

**Part 1: 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? HRQOL – In the beginning, there was life!**

Why I Teach this Course? Who's Teaching 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
Death as Reality and the Life Passport
Historical Evolution of HRQOL as a Construct
Why Measure HRQOL?

September 18

So what the heck is (HR)QOL and what does it really mean?

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"
The Potential Value of the "Biopsychosocial Model"

September 25

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

October 2 - Midterm Examination #1

October 9

Part 2: 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

October 16

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

October 23

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

October 30 - Midterm Examination #2

November 6

Part 3: 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 and the Perception of Others

November 13

I've never had this happen before in class!!!

Cinema Academia and Discussion

November 20

Independent Study and Review of Materials

November 27

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?

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
Influence on Health Care and Public Policy
HRQOL as a Political Issue

December 4 – LAST CLASS

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

Social Influences and Impact 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?
Revisiting and Sharing "the Passport" of Life

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