

The University of Western Ontario

School of Health Studies Faculty of Health Sciences

HS1002A: Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health
Dr. Jessica Polzer

September – December 2016
Tuesdays: 11:30am-12:30pm
Thursdays: 10:30am-12:30pm
HSB 40

Instructor & Teaching Assistant (TA) Information

Instructor	Office Location	Office Hours
Dr. Jessica Polzer	HSB 220	Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00—2:30 pm

Teaching Assistants (TAs) will be announced on the first day of class.

Course Description: What is health? How can we measure and understand the health of groups and populations? And how can we understand differences in health status between different groups of people? Can healthy lifestyle “choices” alone explain the inequalities in health that are observed between groups? What kinds of explanations can help us understand why some groups of people are healthier than others? How do historical, political and economic forces influence health and health inequalities? And how do processes of economic globalization affect health inequalities within and between countries?

Observed inequalities in health related to social circumstances and the environment have been documented since the time of Hippocrates and Galen, the founders of the Western medical tradition. This course will introduce students to the social determinants of health and will be guided by and respond to the above questions. The social determinants of health are non-medical determinants of health that include social, political, economic and cultural conditions, forces and factors that influence how health is distributed among entire groups and populations. The social determinants of health is an interdisciplinary field of study that draws on research and scholarship from many areas including sociology, anthropology, political science, policy studies, and critical gender and race studies. The course will examine fundamental determinants of health, including income and social class, gender and sexism, ethnicity and racism, and will focus on selected specific determinants (e.g. housing, food security, access to medical care) and health issues (e.g. HIV/AIDS, cardiovascular disease). This course will present the social determinants of health both in the Canadian context and in comparative contexts.

Course Objectives: The objectives of this course are to:

- differentiate between personal and social determinants of health;
- introduce key social determinants of health and their relevance in Canadian and global contexts;
- understand how health varies systematically in relation to social, economic and political factors;
- understand the ways in which health is political - that is, how health is affected by dominant political discourses and social and economic policies;
- engage students in thinking about and viewing health in relation to social, political and economic forces, and in terms of the principles of equity and social justice;
- introduce basic terms, concepts and measurements related to health, population health and health inequalities;
- familiarize students with the development of universal health insurance in Canada;
- develop skills in reading, writing, studying and critical thinking; and
- provide students the opportunity to apply the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style.

Expectations & Responsibilities: Learning occurs in a social environment and is a collaborative experience that requires the active participation of all those involved – teachers, teaching assistants and students. Successful learning happens when the professor, the assistants and the students uphold their respective roles and responsibilities. In this sense, learning is a co-responsibility that depends on the instructor, teaching assistants *and* the students coming to class prepared. It is the responsibility of the professor to come to class prepared to lecture on course material. It is also the professor's responsibility to address and respond to student's questions about course material in class and during specified office hours. It is the responsibility of the teaching assistants to assist the professor in the preparation and grading of exams and papers, and to address students' questions about course material during the year and before the final exam. It is the responsibility of students to prepare for class by completing required course readings before class, to attend class regularly and listen to the lectures, take notes in class, and to ask questions about course material in class and on OWL, Western University's online learning management system. Students are expected to purchase a dictionary or use an online dictionary (e.g. www.dictionary.com) if they need help understanding the required course readings.

Students will have the opportunity to ask questions about course material in class, and to discuss course material and ask questions in weekly discussion groups on OWL. Students are expected to communicate respectfully when online. The discussion groups will be monitored regularly by the professor and the TAs.

Creating and maintaining a respectful and productive learning environment: In order to maintain a respectful and productive learning environment, it is essential that students arrive at class ready to listen and attend to lectures and films. Disrespectful and disruptive behaviour during class includes, for example, texting or talking on mobile phones, chatting on or browsing Facebook, persistent talking during lectures or films, wearing headphones, emailing, and/or surfing the Internet for non-class purposes. If this behaviour is observed by the professor, she will use her discretion in deciding how best to deal with the situation. If disruptive behaviour persists, the professor may ask the offending student/s to stop talking and/or leave the classroom. The professor has the right to end class early and without warning should classroom disruptions persist. In the case that class is ended without warning due to disruptive behaviour, the uncovered material will be considered testable and students will be responsible for this material on future exams.

Course Materials: The required text for the course is listed below and is available at the campus bookstore located in the lower level of the UCC building. Any additional readings will be posted on OWL. Students are expected to access these readings from their accounts on OWL at <https://owl.uwo.ca/>. A copy of the required text and a complete set of additional readings will also be put on reserve in the Taylor library.

Required Text: Germov, J. and Hornosty, J. (2012). *Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology, Canadian Edition*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780195431988

Evaluation: Your grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

Evaluation	Percentage	Date	Course Material Included
Assignment 1	15%	Oct 13	--
Assignment 2	15%	Dec 6	--
Midterm Exam	30%	Nov 3	TBA in class
Final Exam	40%	TBA	Weeks 1-13, inclusive

Assignments (2 X 15%): Students will complete two written assignments that will involve the application of key concepts introduced and explored in the course. Instructions for assignments will be provided on OWL. Late papers will have 5% deducted from the assigned grade for every 24-hour period.

Midterm and Final Exams (30%, 40%): In-class tests and the final exam may include a variety of question types, including true/false, multiple choice, and questions that require short and long written answers. Exams will test students on all course materials, including required readings and any material covered during regularly scheduled classes (e.g. class lectures, films/videos, guest presentations, etc.). The final exam is cumulative. The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Students should not plan their holidays/vacations until the Registrar's Office publishes the exam schedule. Final grades are not released on OWL until they have been reviewed and approved by the Director of the School of Health Studies.

Policy on missed exams: In the event that a student misses an exam for medical reasons, religious reasons or other extenuating circumstances, appropriate supporting documentation MUST be provided in writing. Medical documentation must be presented to an academic counsellor from the student's home faculty, not the instructor (see next section). Make up exams for the midterm will be arranged by the course instructor and will be held within one week of the scheduled exam. Make up exams for the final exam will be arranged by the School of Health Studies and will be held in December and January 2016/2017.

Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences: 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. For more information, see: http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/academic_accommodation/index.html

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.

Privacy: Students will be able to access their grades through OWL, a secure network which requires a personalized log-in name and password. The sharing of information about student grades (between an instructor/TA and student) will only be conducted over e-mail with the student's permission. Appointments with the instructor must be made for a student to view their own graded examination.

Use of Electronic Devices: No electronic devices are allowed during the writing of exams. Students may use laptops during class to take notes. The use of laptops for non-class purposes (e.g., email, Facebook), and the use of cell phones, is prohibited during class. The instructor may require that students not use their laptops during some specified classes.

Academic Offenses: 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/appeals_discipline/index.html

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.

Email Policy: Students should direct all email concerning the course to their assigned TA using OWL mail. TAs will be assigned to students on the first day of class. The TA will field questions and will forward any questions or concerns they cannot address to the instructor. Responses to students' emails will be made as promptly as possible. If a student does not receive a response from the TA within 48 hours, a second email is acceptable as a polite reminder of the student's question or concern.

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>

Student Development Centre's Learning Skills Services: Rm 4100 WSS, <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>
LS counsellors are ready to help you improve your learning skills. We offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Lecture Schedule

Week #	Date	Topic
1	Sept 8	Course Introduction and perspective Social model of health
2	Sept 13 Sept 15	Universal access to medical care as a determinant of health Medical dominance, public health and health promotion The development of national health insurance in Canada
3	Sept 20 Sept 22	Social Class and Health Income inequalities and health The social gradient in health
4	Sept 27 Sept 29	Political and Economic Barriers to Health Equity The political economy of health and health care The case of the pharmaceutical industry
5	Oct 4 Oct 6	Feminomics, Gender, and the Social Determinants of Health Feminomics Gender as a SDH: Unravelling the complexity
6	Oct 11 Oct 13	Medicalization Gender and medicalization The social construction of female sexual dysfunction <i>Assignment 1 due</i>
7	Oct 18 Oct 20	Racism as a Determinant of Health The social construction of “race” Exploring the links between racism and health
8	Oct 25 Oct 27	The Enduring Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Peoples The intergenerational effects of colonization NO CLASS – STUDY DAY
9	Nov 1 Nov 3	The Enduring Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Peoples (cont.) Case study in the embodiment of inequity: The housing crisis in Attawapiskat MIDTERM
10	Nov 8 Nov 10	The Environment and the Social Determinants of Health Case study of the embodiment of inequity: Diabetes and environmental dispossession Environmental racism and environmental justice
11	Nov 15 Nov 17	Global Health Inequalities and Structural Violence Globalization and health Social suffering and structural violence
12	Nov 22 Nov 24	Health and Human Rights Human rights as a framework for health Case study: Maquiladoras, human rights and social change
13	Nov 29 Dec 1	Creating Change through Research Conducted from a Social Determinants Perspective Case study: Undocumented workers in Canada NO CLASS
14	Dec 6	Course Conclusion Course conclusion and evaluations <i>Assignment 2 due</i>

Lecture Schedule & Required Readings:

Readings are not in the text are noted with an asterisk (*) and can be accessed on OWL.

Week 1: Course introduction and perspective

Class 1 Thurs Sept 8 Social model of health

Required readings:

Text Chapter 1: Imagining health problems as social issues, pp. 2-21.

*Picard, A. (2004, 30 September). Bring on the duelling top-10s: Two lists not to die for. *The Globe and Mail*, A21.

Week 2: Universal access to medical care as a determinant of health

Class 2 Tues Sept 13 Medical dominance, public health and health promotion

Required readings:

Text Chapter 12: Medicine, medical dominance and public health, pp. 230-253.

*The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion

Class 3 Thurs Sept 15 The development of national health insurance in Canada

Required readings:

Text Chapter 13: Power, politics, and values: The Canadian health-care system, pp. 254-276.

Film: Bitter Medicine: Part 1, 30 minutes

Week 3: Social Class and Health

Class 4 Thurs Sept 20 Income inequalities and health

Required readings:

Text Chapter 4: Class, health inequality and social justice, pp. 60-81.

*Simpson, J. (2011, July 20). Do we care that Canada is an unequal society? *The Globe and Mail*.

*Picard, A. (2009, November 25). Rich v. poor: The lives we can expect from our income, *The Globe and Mail*.

Class 5 Thurs Sept 22 The social gradient in health

Required readings:

*The Whitehall II Study (2004). International Centre for Health and Society/Dept. of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College London, UK, pp. 3-7.

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/whitehallII/findings/Whitehallbooklet.pdf>

*Sapolsky, R. (2005). Sick of poverty. *Scientific American*, December, 92-99.

*Bloch, G., & The Ontario Physicians Poverty Work Group. (2008). Why poverty makes us sick: Physician backgrounder. *Ontario Medical Review*, May, 32-37.

Film: *In Sickness and In Wealth*, from the series 'Unnatural Causes'

Week 4: Political and Economic Barriers to Health Equity

Class 6 Tues Sept 27 **The political economy of health and health care**

Required readings:

*McGregor, S. (2001). Neoliberalism and health care. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 25(2), 82-89.

Read "Marxism" and "Political Economy" approach in text, pp. 29-32

Class 7 Thurs Sept 29 **The case of the pharmaceutical industry**

Required readings:

Text Chapter 14: The pharmaceutical industry and Health Canada: Values in conflict?, pp. 277-295.

*Thompson, A. (August 12, 2014). Drugs aren't the only answer to prevent spread of Ebola. *The Toronto Star*.

Film: Health for Sale, California Newsreel (53 minutes)

Week 5: Feminomics, Gender, and the Social Determinants of Health

Class 8 Tues Oct 4 **Feminomics**

Required reading:

*Luxton, M. (2009, 1980). More than just a labour of love: Three generations of women's work in the home. Women's Press: Toronto. Pp. 13-21 of 260. ISBN 9780889610620

*Zerbisias, A. (2010). Feminomics: Calculating the value of 'women's work' .*The Globe and Mail*, October 30.

Film: *Who's Counting? Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics*, National Film Board of Canada (1995)

Available online at: https://www.nfb.ca/film/whos_counting/

Class 9 Thurs Oct 6 **Gender as a SDH: Unravelling the complexity**

Required reading:

*Benoit, C., Shumka, L., Vallance, K. et al. (2009). Explaining the health gap experienced by girls and women in Canada: A social determinants of health perspective. *Sociological Research Online*, 14(5): 1-23.

Week 6: Medicalization

Class 10 Tues Oct 11 **Gender and Medicalization**
Required reading:
Text Chapter 9: The medicalization of society, pp. 168-186.

Class 11 Thurs Oct 13 **The social construction of female sexual dysfunction**
No required reading
Film: *Orgasm Inc.*

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE (ON OWL AND IN CLASS)

Week 7: Racism as a Determinant of Health

Class 12 Tues Oct 18 **The social construction of “race”**
Required readings:
*Smedley, A. and Smedley, B. (2005). Race as biology is fiction, racism as a social problem is real: Anthropological and historical perspectives on the social construction of race. *American Psychologist*, 60(1), 16-26.

*McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. In: *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies*. (Working paper No. 189). Wellesley College.

Film: Excerpt from *Race: The Power of an Illusion, California Newsreel*

Class 13 Thurs Oct 20 **Exploring the links between racism and health**
Required readings:
Text Chapter 6: Ethnicity and health: Social and cultural factors, pp. 100-118.

*Cooper, R., Rotimi, C., and Ward, R. (1999). The puzzle of hypertension in African-Americans, *Scientific American*, February, 56-63.

Film: *When the Bough Breaks*, California Newsreel, 30 minutes

Week 8: The Enduring Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Peoples

Class 14 Tues Oct 25 **The intergenerational effects of colonization**
Required readings:
Text Chapter 7: Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples and Health: The perpetuation of inequalities, pp. 119-141.

*Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Preface and Introduction. Available online at:

http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf

*Indian Residential Schools. Agreement in principle: FAQs

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/05/16/f-faqs-residential-schools.html>

Class 15 Thurs Oct 27 **NO CLASS – STUDY DAY**

Week 9: The Enduring Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Peoples (cont.)

Class 16 Tues Nov 1 **Case study in the embodiment of inequity: The housing crisis in Attawapiskat**
Film: The people of the Kattawapiskak River, NFB (50 minutes)
Available online at: https://www.nfb.ca/film/people_of_kattawapiskak_river/

Class 17 Thurs Nov 3 **MIDTERM**

Week 10: The Environment and the Social Determinants of Health

Class 18 Tues Nov 8 **Case study in the embodiment of inequity: Diabetes and environmental dispossession**
Required reading:
*Richmond, C. & Ross, N. (2009). The determinants of First Nation and Inuit health: A critical population health approach. *Health & Place*, 15, 403-411.

Film: Bad Sugar, from the series 'Unnatural Causes', California Newsreel, 30 minutes

Class 19 Thurs Nov 10 **Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice**
Required readings:
Text Chapter 8: Environmental links to health, pp. 142-166.

*Bullard, R. *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality* (3rd Edition). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. Chapter 1: Environmentalism and Social Justice.

Film: The Beloved Community, California Newsreel, 60 minutes

Week 11: Global Health Inequities and Structural Violence

Class 20 Tues Nov 15 **Globalization and health**
Required readings:
*Gershman, J. and Irwin, A. (2000). Getting a grip on the global economy. In Kim, J., Millen, J., Irwin, A. and Gershman, J. (Eds.) *Dying for Growth: Global Inequality and the Health of the Poor*. Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press. pp. 11-43 of 585.

Class 21 Thurs Nov 17 **Social suffering and structural violence**

Required reading:

*Farmer, P. (2005). On suffering and structural violence: Social and economic rights in the global era. In *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 29-50.

Film: *Life and Debt*, Stephanie Black, 80 minutes

Week 12: Health and Human Rights

Class 22 Tues Nov 22 **Human rights as a framework for health**

Required reading:

Wronka, J. (2008). Human rights and social justice: Social action and service for the helping and health professions. Thousand Oaks: Sage. pp. 16-32 of 368. ISBN 1412938732

Class 23 Thurs Nov 24 **Case study: Maquiladoras, human rights and social change**

Required reading:

Williams, D. & Homedes, N. (2001). The impact of maquiladoras on health and health policy along the U.S.-Mexico border. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 22(3), 320-337.

Film: *Maquilapolis*, California Newsreel, 70 minutes

Available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUQgFzkE3i0>

Week 13: Creating change from a social determinants perspective

Class 24 Tues Nov 29 **Case study: Undocumented workers in Canada**

Gastaldo, D., Carrasco, C. & Magalhães, L. (2012). *Entangled in a web of exploitation and solidarity: Latin American undocumented workers in the Greater Toronto Area*.

The impact of lack of status, pp. 101-127, Retrieved from:

<http://www.migrationhealth.ca/undocumented-workers-ontario/summary-findings>

Class 25 Thurs Dec 1 **No class**

Week 14: Course conclusion

Class 26 Tues Dec 6 Conclusion and evaluations

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE (ON OWL AND IN CLASS)