



**Course Syllabus
HS 3050a
Health-Related Quality of Life
Fall 2017**

Instructor: Dr. Philip C. Doyle
Lecture: Thursday 11:30 am – 2:20 pm
Class Location: UCC - 41

Office: Elborn College, Rm. 2518, Ext. 88942
Office Hours: Thursday 8:30 – 10:00 am or by appointment
Email: pdoyle@uwo.ca

Course TA: None

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) and *quality of life* (QOL). Understanding concepts specific to [HR]QOL serves to form an essential and fundamental construct of importance in the health sciences AND health professions. 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, disease, and disability. 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 with particular importance to those who seek to pursue professional degrees in health and health care.

Prerequisite Checking

Unless you have either the pre-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 cannot 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.

Requirements

In order to provide the most comprehensive level of instruction, class attendance is expected. There will be one (1) midterm examination and a final examination. The midterm exam will take place on Thursday October 19th during regular class time, but you will be limited to 2 hours. The final exam will take place at the date and time established by the Registrar. Both the midterm and final exam will be comprised of multiple choice questions. The midterm examination will account for 40% of your final course grade. Lastly, the final exam will be similar to the in-class midterm examination in that it will be comprised of multiple choice questions; this Final Examination will account for the remaining 60% of the final course grade. The content of examinations will be facilitated through both lecture material and assigned readings, and in some instances the experience of the student. Readings are the responsibility of the student and they will be covered in both the midterm and the final examinations. Thus, I would encourage you to start on reading early in the term rather than waiting until the night before the examination. Because the material associated with course content is “additive” in that one issue evolves or builds from another, you may view the final examination to be “cumulative”.

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 (in class, multiple choice)	=	40%
Final Examination (as scheduled, multiple choice)	=	60%

Additional Comments

This course is designed to provide students with an introductory, albeit substantial and comprehensive exposure to the concept of [HR]QOL. However, the course also seeks to provide detailed exposure to the multidimensionality of HRQOL and QOL 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, even in those who are dying. QOL is a concept that knows no boundary and is not a uniform or predictably selective process dictated by age, gender, ethnic, cultural or religious 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 and one’s response to a health condition, disease, etc.

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 will be required to submit their written work in electronic format for plagiarism checking. All written materials provided to the instructor will be fully evaluated for plagiarism and violations will be actively pursued according to university guidelines.

Note: The above University statement is critically important and violations have serious consequences. Please adhere fully to these rules...it is absolutely essential that you do so.

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 by appropriate agents within the School of Health Sciences or their representatives elsewhere on campus and 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.

Your Own Well-Being and that of Your Peers

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several excellent resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.

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 83.2% to 84%)

This is a practice that students sometimes request. The practice will not occur here under any circumstances. The edges of this course are clear and sharp. You will be asked to think about this course and make informed interpretations of the material. Sometimes, one’s thinking can lead to incorrect answers, but that is part of the learning process. The mark attained is the mark you

achieved and the mark attained is the one that will be 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 and I will maintain those standards for your benefit.

Required Texts:

Gawande, A. (2014). *Being mortal: medicine and what matters in the end*. Metropolitan Books.

Ablon, M. (1998). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.

Additional Readings: Additional articles will be uploaded 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 during Week 2 (by September 15, 2017). All will be provided as pdf versions for ease of access and use.

Some things you might consider reading at some point, but NOT required or mandatory:

Hitchens, C. (2012). *Mortality*. Hachette UK.

Cohen, R.M. (2005). *Blindsided: A Reluctant Memoire*. New York, NY: Perennial Harper Collins.

O'Kelly, E. (2006). *Chasing Daylight*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

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.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on a Spoiled Identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Additional Curiosities and Items of Interest

I often post what I consider to be unique, relevant, and interesting published work on OWL that I believe might be of interest to some students given the broad topics addressed as part of this course. 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 they are there for those who seek to obtain additional and more varied information and perspectives on particular topics that overlay with our interests in HRQOL. Sometimes looking at an issue from a different perspective can provide an opportunity for you to understand the material presented in class even better. For those of you who read one or more of these items, and should you ever wish to discuss them as a non-requirement of the course, let me know and I would be happy to meet with you and talk about them. Again, these items are provided to enhance your knowledge, expand your thinking, and to provide a perspective that you may not have ever considered. But, once again, these readings are not mandatory.



**Health-Related Quality of Life
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Class Schedule**

Date of Class

Topic(s) de Jour

Sept. 7 - *Introductory Meeting & Getting Started*

Some class rules and the general design and structure of the course. Where are YOU headed in the future? Maybe I can help you figure out why you took this course? In the beginning, there was life!

The Instructor's Perspective on HRQOL
 Definition(s) of HRQOL and QOL
 Why Measure HRQOL/QOL?
 Theoretical Framework for HRQOL/QOL - A Brief Snapshot
 Accepting Subjectivity
 Finding "Voice" in Illness
 A Bit of Stark Reality That You Likely Haven't Considered!

Sept. 14 – *Quality of Life and Health-Related Quality of Life - more than theoretical constructs*

Historical Evolution of HRQOL as a Construct
 Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced HRQOL
 Narrow and Broad Views of "Normal Functioning"
 Development and Refinement of HRQOL Taxonomies
 Limits of the "Medical Model"
 The Potential Value of the "Biopsychosocial Model"
 Quality of Life as a Social Construct

Sept. 21 – *Who Knows QOL Best?*

Perspectives on Illness: Being Mortal
 HRQOL - A Static Event or a Dynamic Construct?

Sept. 28 – *Is (HR)QOL influenced by other things?*

HRQOL as a Multidimensional Construct
 Stigma, Social Penalty, and Perceived QOL
 A Bit of a History Lesson
 Considerations of Body, Mind, Spirit, and Culture (and other dimensions)
 "Hidden" Dimensions and Domains Influencing HRQOL
 Overview of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF)

Oct. 5 - How are Measures Constructed and Interpreted

Construction of Measurement Instruments
 Ways of Knowing, Validity and Reliability, and Inadvertent Cooking of Data
 Evaluation of Specific Populations
 Generic vs. Disease Specific Instruments
 QOL in Children: At Least Two Sides of a Coin – Children and their Parents

Oct. 12 – Thanksgiving Holiday and Fall Reading Week – ENJOY!**Oct. 19 – Midterm Examination****Oct. 26 - *Like most things in life, everybody wants to measure something!***

Application of Measurement Tools and Modes of Administration
 Survey of Instruments: Advantages and Disadvantages
 Generic vs. Disease Specific Instruments
 Discriminative vs. Evaluative Instruments
 Application of QOL Knowledge – Practical Importance and Meaning

Nov. 2 - *Is HRQOL actually measured in the “real” world?*

Self-Perception Secondary to Disease and Treatment
 Body Image: Conceptual and Applied Considerations
 Commonly Evaluated Populations, Unique Populations and Associated Concerns
 Communication Disorders
 Pain and Suffering

Nov. 9 – *Quality of Life in Special Populations*

Explorations from the Clinical Literature
 Utility of Measures of HRQOL as an Outcomes Metric: Some Examples

Nov. 16 – *I plan to be a health care provider; can understanding how QOL is defined and thinking about it in more detail help me be a better professional?*

Considerations of Age, Gender, Culture, and Community
 Utility of Measures of HRQOL as an Outcomes Metric: Some Examples
 Relationship of HRQOL to Client-Centered Care; Family Considerations
 Considerations of Age, Gender, Culture, and Community
 Pulling it all Together...Subjective Impression and Objective Promise
 Influence on Health Care and Public Policy

Nov. 23 – An entirely different way to learn!

Cinema Academia and Discussion

Nov. 30 - The Influence of other Factors on QOL - Distress and Disease, Illness, and Treatment

Measuring Outcomes using HRQOL Instruments

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

Applications from the Literature and the Perception of Others

December 7 – Completing the Circle

What really defines HRQOL?

Can a Good QOL Exist in Illness?

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

The Impact of Health Care & Professional Interactions on [HR]QOL

The Reality of Life - Revisiting "the Passport"

*Final examination – As scheduled by the Office of the Registrar
Details Forthcoming ASAP*

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.