

The University of Western Ontario
School of Health Studies

Health Sciences HS4044a

International Health Systems Comparison

Fall/Winter 2017

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1 – 2 pm

Course Information

Around the world governments are trying to assess and improve the quality of health services. The course begins by introducing participants to the organization and operation of the Canadian health system by considering the legal and policy context as the foundation for understanding health system funding, delivery and performance. Students will then consider comparator countries using a similar approach that looks at the social, legal and economic structures that impact health systems. The course will cover a different country each week including Canada, the United States and other countries from Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. This course will also consider international and Canadian performance measurement frameworks for comparing and assessing health services and health outcomes including those from the World Health Organization (WHO), Institute of Medicine (IOM), and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In addition, relevant health systems topics such as equity, patient-centredness, evidence-based medicine and innovation will be covered.

Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able:

- To describe and explain key components of various health systems, including their legal context, funding mechanisms, delivery systems and performance metrics.
- To demonstrate an understanding of the Canadian health system.
- To analyze and compare core components of health systems and explain how these components contribute to health outcomes in different countries.
- To identify and apply different frameworks for assessing and evaluating health system performance.

Course Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. All course materials will be posted on the OWL website.

Evaluation

For the purposes of this course, learning and teaching are considered a shared responsibility. The instructor's role is to guide, facilitate and support your learning. Students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking and actively participate in discussion to support their own learning and that of their colleagues. Attendance in class and active participation is expected.

Evaluation	Percentage
Mid-Term Exam	30% (Monday, October 23)
Group Assignment	30% (November 27 and December 4)
Final Exam	30%
Participation	10%

1. Mid-Term Exam

A mid-term exam will be given in class on Monday, October 23. The exam will be based on the class content and assigned readings prior to this date. The format of the exam will be multiple choice questions.

2. Group Assignment

Students will work in small groups to research a national health system of their choice and using the frameworks introduced in class present their findings to the class. The countries identified by each group must be different than those covered in class and each group must present a different country. Students will be responsible for identifying two readings for their peers on their specific country, presenting their findings and facilitating class discussion. All students are expected to fully participate in these sessions and support their colleagues. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be posted on OWL in early September.

3. Final Exam

A final exam covering the course content will be given during the December exam period. The exam will be comprised of short answer questions.

4. Participation

Students will be asked to post questions and comments related to the required readings to the course OWL site at a minimum three times over the course of term. The questions and comments will be discussed as a part of the class content.

Late Assignments

A late assignment will be penalized 10% for each day, or part of the day, that it is late. There will be no exception except for valid, extenuating circumstances (e.g. incapacitating illness etc.) which must be documented as outlined below in the case of medical illness.

Makeup Exams

You must have a valid medical or compassionate reason for missing a scheduled examination, and documentation for your absence must be filed with the main office of the School of Health Studies prior to the examination (please see “Additional Statements” section below for information pertaining to accommodation for medical illness or non-medical absences).

Retroactive accommodation (i.e. for exams that have been written) will not generally be granted, nor will last minute requests for extensions/make-up exams. Following receipt of approved accommodation from the counselling office, a make-up examination will be scheduled within one-week of the originally scheduled exam. Please note that make-up examinations may differ in format from the originally scheduled exam.

General Course Policies and Procedures

Course Website

This course is a totally “paperless” course, and as such the course website will be your sole source for lecture overheads, readings, and course information (including this course outline). Due to privacy regulations, grades will only be provided to you through OWL – I will not, under any circumstance, convey grades via email, or over the phone.

Online Discussion Forum

An online discussion forum has been set-up on OWL, and you are encouraged to use this resource to locate and set-up study groups, and to ask questions regarding course content and procedures.

Email

I am happy to answer your questions via email. You must, however, use your UWO email address for all correspondence regarding this course. Because the University ‘anti-spam’ programs often reject email from Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, and other public email addresses, there is no guarantee that I will receive your emails if you send them from a public email program – or from any off-campus server, when sending email using any method other than the university’s webmail system. That said, I will do my best to answer your emails promptly. Please limit your questions to administrative matters only – detailed questions on course content should be: (a)

raised during (or immediately after) lectures, (b) asked during office hours, or (c) posted to the online discussion forum.

Lecture Attendance

You are expected to attend every class, as some material that is covered during lecture will not be in the course notes.

Eating and Drinking in Class

Out of consideration for your fellow students, please refrain from eating during class (lidded beverages are acceptable).

Grade Adjustments

Final grades in this course will be taken to the closest integer (i.e., I will “round off” decimals). Exam grades will be calculated out of 100% to one decimal place. I will not, under any circumstances, “bump up” your grade (i.e., to facilitate professional school applications etc.). This includes grades that end in a “9”. Along similar lines, I will not reweight examinations for reasons other than those outlined in section 5.3. In other words – I will not alter exam weights for evaluations that you have already written.

Use of Cellphones During Class

Please ensure that any cellphones, pagers, or other communication devices on your person are turned off, or have their ringers silenced (or turned to vibrate) during lectures and labs.

Use of Laptops During Class

If you plan to bring your laptop to class, please restrict your computer use to course-related activities, and refrain from using instant messaging clients, video games, or other software packages that might be distracting to students sitting near you.

Recording Lectures

You do not have my permission to make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor do you have my permission to edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

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> .

English Proficiency for the Assignment of Grades

Visit the website http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/english.pdf

Policy Regarding Illness

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 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 counselors (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. For this course, you are to contact the academic counselors in the main office of the School of Health Studies. Documents submitted in this fashion will be retained in your 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 your instructor. 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 you could not reasonably be expected to complete your academic responsibilities. Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that you were “seen for a medical reason” or “were ill.” Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. You must follow up with your professors and the Academic Counseling office in a timely manner.

Documentation from Family Physicians and Walk-In Clinics

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required whenever you seek 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 Counseling.

Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. You may take 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 you to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, you must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that your ability to meet your academic responsibilities was seriously affected.

Policy on Cheating & Academic Misconduct

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and you are directed to read information prepared by the Office of the Ombudsperson, here: <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/student/cheating.html>.

Additionally, 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/>

Procedure for Appealing Academic Evaluations

In the first instance, all appeals of a grade must be made to the course instructor (informal consultation). If you are not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal must be sent to the Program Director. If you consider this response to be unsatisfactory, you may then appeal to the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. If this response is unsatisfactory, you may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office.

Class and Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic
September 11	Introduction & Key Concepts
September 18	The Canadian Health System(s)
September 25	Health Care in the United States
October 2	The National Health Service (NHS)
October 9	(Fall Reading Week) - No class
October 16	Measuring Health System Performance
October 23	Mid Term Exam
October 30	Brazilian Health System
November 6	Right to Health - Health Care in India
November 13	Public and Private Healthcare in South Africa
November 20	Work on Group Presentations - No Class
November 27	In Class Group Presentations
December 4	In Class Group Presentations
December Exam Period	Final Exam