



**Course Syllabus  
HS 3050a  
Health-Related Quality of Life  
Fall 2019**

**Instructor:** Dr. Philip C. Doyle  
**Lecture:** Thursday 11:30 am – 2:20 pm  
**Class Location:** Social Science Centre (SSC) Room 3028

**Office:** Elborn College, Rm. 2518, Ext. 88942  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays and Thursdays - 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
**Email:** pdoyle@uwo.ca

**Course TA:** Not yet determined

**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 outcome 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](http://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. Midterm #1 will take place on Thursday October 18<sup>th</sup> during class time. The midterm exam will be comprised of multiple choice questions and 1-2 short answer questions. The midterm examination accounts for 30% of your final grade. There will be one short (two typewritten pages) written assignment during the term; this assignment will be worth 10% of the course grade. The 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. Because the material to be presented is “additive” in that one issue evolves or builds from another, you may view the final examination to be “cumulative” in that respect.

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 & short answer)	= 30%
Short written assignment (due October 31 by 4:00 pm)	= 10%
Final Examination (as scheduled, multiple choice)	= 60%

Note: 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

## Use of Electronics and Recording

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit written permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any of the following electronic devices during ANY of the tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations: cellphones, smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses, audio players or recorders of any sort, video cameras, video games, DVD players, televisions, laptop/notebook/netbook computers, flashlights or laser pointers.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class.

### **Reiteration Regarding Audio and/or Video Recording**

You may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website. The material presented in class should be considered as confidential and private. Please respect this request. Thank you!

### **Additional Comments**

This course is designed to provide students with an introductory, albeit a 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 those who are dying. QOL as a concept that knows no boundary and is not a uniform or predictably selective process to 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/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.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>].

*Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements, may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:*

- (i) *Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form, provided that the conditions for submission are met;*
- (ii) *For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner, in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or*
- (iii) *For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration, in order to be eligible for academic consideration.*

*Students seeking academic consideration:*

- *Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;*
- *Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;*
- ***Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;***
- ***Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic counselling within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities***

*Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less. The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:*

- a. Students will be allowed a maximum of two self-reported absences between September and April, and one self-reported absence between May and August;*
- b. The duration of the excused absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30pm;*
- c. The duration of the excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period, should the student undertake significant academic responsibilities (e.g., write a test, submit a paper) during that time;*
- d. The duration of an excused absence will terminate at 8:30am on the day following the last day of classes each semester, regardless of how many days of absence have elapsed;*
- e. Self-reported absences will not be allowed for scheduled final examinations; for midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations (i.e., “bellringers”);*
- f. Self-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., midterm exams, tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;*
- g. Students must be in touch with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed.*

***During Exams:*** *Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit written permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.*

***During Lectures and Tutorials:*** *Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.***

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 83.3% to 84%)**

This is a practice that students sometimes request. The practice will not occur in this course. 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 assigned 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.

### **More about Grading**

The university-wide descriptor of the meaning of letter grades, as approved by Senate:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable.
F	below 50	Fail

It is expected that the average grade for this course will fall between 74% and 78%. In the event that the course average falls outside this range, a constant may be added (or subtracted) from each student's grade, by the instructor, to bring the class average in line with school policy.

### **Required Texts:**

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

Gawande, A. (2014). *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. Metropolitan Books.

**Additional Readings:** Additional articles 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 during Week 2 (by September 13, 2018). 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:**

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

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

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.

### **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.



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**Date of Class**

**Topic(s) de Jour**

*Please note that lecture topics are subject to change.*

**Sept. 5 - 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 Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) and Quality of Life (QOL)  
 Why Measure HRQOL?  
 Theoretical Framework for HRQOL - A Brief Snapshot  
 Accepting Subjectivity  
 Finding "Voice" in Illness  
 A Bit of Stark Reality That You Likely Haven't Considered!

**Sept. 12 – *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  
 HRQOL - A Static Event or a Dynamic Construct?

**Sept. 19 – *Who Knows QOL Best?***

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  
 Overview of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF)  
 The Impact of Health Care & Professional Interactions on HRQOL

**Sept. 26 – Is (HR)QOL influenced by other things?**

Construction of Measurement Instruments  
 Ways of Knowing, Validity and Reliability, and Inadvertent Cooking of Data  
 Evaluation of Specific Populations  
 Generic vs. Disease Specific Instruments

**Oct. 3 - *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

**Oct. 10 - *Is HRQOL actually measured in the “real” world?***

A Change in One’s Self-Perception Secondary to Disease and Treatment  
 Body Image: Conceptual and Applied Considerations<sup>1</sup>  
 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

**Oct. 17 – Midterm Examination**

**Oct. 24 - Explorations from the Literature - Applications**

**Oct 31 - *What do the data say about HRQOL and QOL?***

The Influence of other Factors on QOL - Distress and Disease, Illness, and Treatment  
 Measuring Outcomes using HRQOL Instruments  
 Applications from the Literature

**Nov. 7 – Undergraduate Reading Week**

**Nov. 14 – Biopsychosocial Inter-relationships**

The Influence of other Factors on QOL - Distress and its Association with Disease and Illness  
 The Negative Consequences of Treatment  
 Fatigue and QOL  
 Applications from the Literature and the Perception of Others  
 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

**Nov. 21 - An entirely different way to learn!**

*Cinema Academia and Discussion*

**Nov. 28 – Extended Considerations**

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

**Dec. 5 – Completing the Circle**

What really defines HRQOL?  
Can a Good QOL Exist in Illness?  
Pulling it all Together...Subjective Impression and Objective Promise  
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 in writing 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 course grade 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.