

**HEALTH SCIENCES 3071 A/DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND DISEASE**

FALL 2019

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Office Hours: Thursday 10.30-11.30

Date/Time: Tuesday 9.30-11.30 and Thursday 9.30-10.30

TA: TBA

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Determinants of health and disease entails a journey of reflection into the discourses (academic, political, public) regarding what matters when it comes to one's chances of living a healthy life. This reflection focusses on two related yet distinctive issues: health and health care. Disparities in the access to health care, although important, do not account for inequities in basic health. Students will be challenged to reflect upon their own situation of privilege/disadvantage; to discuss sensitive issues with fellow students with openness; to make ethical judgements and to envision strategies to tackle some of the problems identified in different professional scenarios. This course promotes the development of critical and intellectual empathy skills important for future health professionals passionately dedicated to a reduction of systemic health inequities. A committed engagement with the proposed resources for each week and active participation in all sessions is essential.

*Prerequisites:* Minimum of 60% [mandatory] in each of Health Sciences 1001A/B and Health Sciences 1002A/B.

*Antirequisites:* Sociology 2246A/B (Sociology of Health & Illness).

Note regarding prerequisite checking: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, 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.

**COMPULSORY READINGS:**

Meili, R. (2017). *A healthy society: How a focus on health can revive Canadian democracy*. Purich Books.

Hernandez, C. (2017). *Scarborough: A novel*. Vancouver, British Columbia: Arsenal Pulp Press.

Raphael, D. (Ed.). (2009). *Social determinants of health: Canadian perspectives*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

**Supplemental reading:**

Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2011). *The spirit level: Why greater equality makes societies stronger*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA. Read a review [here](#).

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

To develop a comprehensive understanding of the close interaction between key determinants in one's chances for a healthy life, building upon the knowledge gained in the first year course social determinants of health. To develop skills of intellectual empathy, the capacity to develop a reasoned understanding of the experiences of individuals whose lives may seem very different from ours, based upon the analysis of credible evidence (academic research) and imagination through the creation of a fictional story, novel reading and constant discussion in class.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and describe key determinants of health and disease;
2. Explain key concepts related to public health and its determinants;
3. Discuss the interrelationship between different determinants of health;
4. Present strategies to tackle key determinants of health in different contexts;
5. To advocate to improve the social determinants of health in the world outside the university.

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

Additional course materials will be posted each week on the OWL course site.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:**

The following is a tentative schedule for our weekly topics and lectures. Note that this schedule may change. An up-to-date lecture schedule will be provided on OWL; it is the student's responsibility to be aware of changes made.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Lecture Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	S5	Introduction to the course. Goals, themes, philosophy, expectations and ways of working together.
2	S10	Developing intellectual empathy. Why? Key skills and ground rules. The concept of intersectionality/ compound disadvantage. Creative storytelling to develop intellectual empathy. Explanation of the storytelling assignment. Form working groups.
2	S12	What is a healthy society? All determinants of health and disease are social. Key concepts.
3	S17	The contested terrain of public health politics and ethics. Intellectual empathy lab.
3	S19	The evolving art of medicine and public health policy.
4	S24	Political and advocacy approaches to "close the gap". Intellectual empathy lab.
4	S26	Social economic status and individual health. Gross domestic product and national health indexes. Addressing fallacies.
5	O1	Intellectual empathy lab.
5	O3	The world around us: housing, food insecurity and the natural environment.

6	O8	Intellectual empathy lab.
6	O10	Criminal justice and health: identical twins?
7	O15	Intellectual empathy lab. Connecting fictional stories with the course themes and goals. Developing the best possible creative story for the assignment. Tutor and peer feedback.
7	O17	Learning to live healthy: education, class and life chances.
8	O22	Intellectual empathy lab.
8	O24	Oppressions and access to healthcare. The role of invisible ideologies.
9	O29	Intellectual empathy lab.
9	O31	Oppressions and access to healthcare. The role of invisible ideologies: part 2.
	N4-8	Reading week
10	N12	Intellectual empathy lab.
10	N14	Health literacy. What is it and how to promote it? The role of environment literacy in health for all.
11	N19	Intellectual empathy lab.
11	N21	Democracy and public health: downstream and upstream paradigms. The big question: what can we do?
12	N26	Intellectual empathy lab. Peer and tutor feedback on individual reports/ stories.
12	N28	So what? Will our knowledge and intellectual empathy skills make any difference?
13	D3	Exam preparation.
13	D5	Course plenary

The intellectual empathy labs are mostly practical sessions where students expand their views on the course content, through different strategies that rely upon the principles of intellectual empathy, such as reflection, collaborative reasoning and discussion. A section of these labs will be run by students for students, who will explore a specific

topic related to the weekly theme. We will also explore potential exam questions; address any doubts related to the contents of the lecturing and readings; share our reflections and work on the different assignments.

**EVALUATION:**

	Submission date (OWL)	%
1. Participation in the intellectual empathy labs		10 %
2. Intellectual empathy lab+ reflection	One week after the lab takes place	15%
3. Fictional text + Commentary	19 <sup>th</sup> October	20%
4. Fictional text + Commentary	30 <sup>th</sup> November	25%
5. Exam	TBA	30%

All the assignments are to be submitted as a Word file through the assignment tool in OWL, by the end of the submission date (11.00 pm).

1. Participation. All the sessions in the course require not only your attendance, but also your active participation. This is particularly important during the intellectual empathy labs. Excellent participation is evident when your interventions are respectful of others’ views, insightful and anchored in reflective engagement with the course materials. **Each intellectual empathy lab attended in which participation has been positive is awarded 1% of the mark. In case of (justified) absence, a student can submit an individual task to be granted 1%. In case of non-justified absence, this opportunity is not available.** Be aware that in each lab, you will be receiving guidance and working towards your assignments.
2. Intellectual empathy lab+ reflection. In groups of two, you will plan a short session (app. 40 min.) to engage your peers in discussion and reflection on a specific topic related to the theme of the week. The facilitation of that session in class will be individual (to allow for small groups of 10 students or less to be formed). After the initial sessions, you will have a more solid understanding of what this assignment entails. On OWL, you will find a resource to help you design your intellectual empathy lab.

Following this session, the group will submit a reflective report; explaining how the session explored the weekly theme; describing and commenting on the insights shared and reflecting upon how this activity expanded your knowledge and skills (see *intellectual empathy lab reflective report* resource on OWL). The required length for this report is between 800 and 1000 words and it must be submitted as a Word file through the assignment tool in OWL no later than 11 p.m., the following Tuesday. In appendix, you must also include the session plan.

3. Fictional text + Commentary. In order to expand your intellectual empathy skills, you will be required to interact with the novel Scarborough and write fictional short texts depicting plausible events and situations in the context of the novel, focusing on the difficult negotiation between social determinants/ structures and health promotion goals. The assignment also entails a commentary explaining how these texts enact important concepts and topics explored in the course (please refer to academic sources). During the labs, you will engage in activities that will help you develop and refine your assignment. The requirement length for this assignment is between **700 and 800 words for the fictional text+ 700 to 800 words for the commentary (1400 to 1600 words in total)**. Submit your fictional text+ commentary as a Word file through the assignment tool in OWL **no later than 11.00 pm on 2019.10.19**.

4. *The Fictional Text+ Commentary*. Taking into account the feedback provided by the instructors and peers, submit another fictional text(s) + a more expanded commentary. The requirement length for this assignment is between **800 and 900 words for the fictional text + 800 to 900 words for the commentary (1600-1800 words in total)**. Submit your fictional text + commentary as a Word file through the assignment tool on OWL **no later than 11.00 pm on 2019.11.30**.
5. *Final Exam*. Examples of exam questions will be explored during sessions.

Formatting: The word count for all assignments exclude the references and title page, if included. Documents should be double-spaced and formatted using a font size no smaller than 12 points. Referencing must follow the APA guidelines.

**Note:** 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>).

**Late policy:** All assignments are due on the date and at the time indicated. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of **1% for each hour** after the deadline. No assignments will be accepted more than four days late.

**Attendance:** In the School of Health Studies, each course instructor sets specific expectations for attendance and participation that are specific to the course, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes.

Regular attendance is expected and essential for all courses, but particularly those that include participation grades in their evaluation schemes. Participation means not only attendance, but active engagement in the class, including (for example) contribution to small and large group discussions, a demonstrated effort to prepare for class by completing assigned readings before class, and following the instructor's guidelines for use of electronic devices during class time. Students who miss classes, or parts of classes, are responsible for the material they have missed. Instructors are not obliged to review the contents of missed lectures.

#### **GENERAL COURSE NOTES:**

**Student Code of Conduct:** You are expected to comply with the Code of Student Conduct at all times within the classroom, and when dealing with members of the instructional team. The purpose of this Code is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, 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>.

#### **Course Website**

The OWL website will function as the privileged space for communication between all participants in this course. Important resources, dates and announcements will be posted regularly, so please check this space weekly.

#### **Communication with Faculty Instructor**

Please use the OWL mail system to communicate with your faculty instructor on issues related to this course or to book a meeting outside of the office hours. These will be answered these twice/ week, so do not expect an immediate reply.

### **Grade Adjustments**

Final grades in this course will be taken to the closest integer (i.e., I will “round off” decimals). 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”. The mark attained is the mark you achieved and the mark assigned; there is no rounding to the next grade level, or ‘giving away’ of marks. Please don’t ask me to do this for you; the response will be “please review the course outline where this is presented”.

### **Electronic devices**

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit 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.

### **Academic consideration**

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances, including short-term illness or injury. Reasonable academic consideration is a cooperative process between the University, the student, and academic staff. All participants in the process must act in good faith, and fulfil their respective obligations, if it is to succeed.

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;

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 fulfill the academic expectations they may have missed.

### **Academic 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 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)

### **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/>

### **Health and Wellness:**

As part of a successful undergraduate experience at Western, we encourage you to make your health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum

health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre as part of their registration fees. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page (<http://www.music.uwo.ca/>), or the McIntosh Gallery (<http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>). Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>.

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: [https://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/education/module.html](https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/education/module.html).

### **Grading Policy**

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 grades for this course will fall between [72 and 76]. 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.