

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
LONDON CANADA**

**School of Health Studies**

**Health Sciences 4991G  
Independent Study in the Health Sciences**

**1.0 CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**

Readings and discussion on, or field experience in, selected topics in Health Sciences agreed upon through consultation between the student and the supervising professor

**Prerequisites:** Enrolment in the fourth year of an Honors Specialization module in the School of Health Studies with a minimum average of 75%

**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.*

**2.0 COURSE INFORMATION**

*Instructor:* Dr. Andrew Johnson  
[ajohnson@uwo.ca](mailto:ajohnson@uwo.ca)

*Office Hours:* By appointment (see [OWL signup](#) for details) via [Zoom](#)

*Course Website:* <https://owl.uwo.ca>

**3.1 TEXTBOOKS**

There are no required readings of any kind for this course, other than readings that may be provided by your supervisor and/or generated collaboratively within your project.

**4.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with practical research experience under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Students will have an opportunity to develop their research skills and learn to apply these skills to a contemporary health issue.

**5.1 EVALUATION**

Research Proposal	2021.02.05	4%
TCPS 2 Ethics Certificate	2021.02.12	4%
Abstract	2021.03.19	4%
Online Presentation	2021.03.29	14%
Peer Evaluation	2021.04.12	4%
Independent Study Project	2021.04.16	70%

*Research Proposal.* You are responsible for submitting a research proposal to the course coordinator that indicates the learning goals and objectives for your independent study, created in consultation with your faculty mentor. This assignment must be submitted through the assignment tool in OWL, **no later than 4:30pm on 2021.02.05**. This research proposal should be approximately 500 words in length (approximately 2 double-spaced pages). This is designed to be a brief description of your plan of action for the developing project. It is possible that the objectives may change over the course of the independent study – this is perfectly understandable, and any such changes should be documented by you and approved by your faculty mentor. It is not necessary to re-submit the proposal should your plans change during the course of the independent study.

*TCPS 2 Ethics Certificate.* On your own, you will complete the TCPS 2 Core tutorial (<https://tcps2core.ca>), and submit your ethics certificate (online, through the assignment tool in OWL), as proof of completion of the tutorial, **no later than 4:30pm on 2021.02.12**.

*Project Abstract.* You will create an abstract for your online presentation and submit this to the course coordinator (through the assignment tool in OWL), **no later than 4:30pm on 2021.03.19**. The abstract is to be approximately 250 words in length and should be formatted as an “unstructured abstract.” Further details as to how to structure an abstract will be provided within the lecture videos presented online.

*Online Presentation.* In lieu of giving an in-person presentation, you will create an online presentation using the resources available at [PowToon.com](http://PowToon.com). The goal of this PowToon presentation is to showcase the work that you have done within your independent study. Presentations are expected to be 3 to 5 minutes in duration and may be no longer than 10 minutes. Detailed information will be presented on OWL.

After you have created your online presentation, you will “present” it to a group of your peers, on a page that you will customize on OWL. This page should present your abstract, a link to your presentation, and any additional information that you would like to provide to your audience (e.g., reference list or a handout). You will also upload a script of your presentation through the assignment tool in OWL – this is not explicitly “graded” by the instructor (or your peer reviewers), but may be used as reference during the grading process. *Failure to upload a script of the presentation will result in a loss of 4/14 marks for this evaluation component.* **This script is due at 4:30pm on 2021.03.29.** Given that we are expecting all students to view all presentations, approximately two weeks have been set aside within the course for these presentations. All of the presentations are due at the same time (**and are to be presented online by 4:30pm on 2021.03.29**). You may work through your classmates’ presentations at your own pace. Your presentation is worth 14%:

9/14 grade assigned by the course coordinator

5/14 grade assigned by five of your peers (i.e., the average of their assessment)

*Peer Evaluation.* As noted above, your presentation grade will be partly determined by peer evaluation. A grade will also be assigned to you based on the quality of the peer evaluation that you conducted on the presentations that were assigned to you for evaluation. **Your peer evaluation must be completed (and submitted) by 9:00am on 2021.04.12.**

*Independent Study Project.* The nature of the project and its specifications are organized and agreed to between the student and his or her faculty mentor. The project in its entirety is to be submitted online **no later than 4:30pm on 2021.04.16**. The paper is to be at least 2,000 words in length, not including references, title page, and abstract. It should be double-spaced and formatted using a font size no smaller than 12 points. You are encouraged to use subheadings to identify the main sections of the paper. Referencing and formatting of the paper should conform to the most recent version of 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>).

## 5.2 LATE POLICY

All assignments are due on the date and at the time indicated. Late assignments are penalized at a rate of 1% for each full hour after the deadline. No assignments will be accepted more than four days late. This includes your final deliverable for the independent study (i.e., the deliverable that is graded by your supervisor).

## 6.0 TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Week starting	Lecture Topic
2021.01.11	Welcome and orientation to the course
2021.01.18	Asking good questions
2021.01.25	Putting together an effective research proposal
2021.02.01	Accessing library resources
2021.02.08	Electronic reference management
2021.02.15	<i>No content this week – Fall Reading Week</i>
2021.02.22	Scientific and scholarly writing
2021.03.01	Putting together an effective abstract
2021.03.08	Putting together an effective online presentation
2021.03.15	Independent work on online presentations
2021.03.22	
2021.03.29	Online Presentations (and Peer Feedback)
2021.04.05	

## 7.1 GENERAL COURSE NOTES

### *Student Code of Conduct*

You are expected to comply with the Code of Student Conduct at all times. The purpose of this Code 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>.

### *Course Website*

This course is a totally “paperless” course, and as such the course website will be your sole source for lecture presentations, 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.

### *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 non-UWO 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. I will do my best to answer your emails promptly.

### *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”.

### *Policy on Lecture Materials (and other content on OWL)*

Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

## 7.2 POLICY REGARDING ILLNESS

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:

- Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form, provided that the conditions for submission are met;
- 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
- 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 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., completing and submitting assignments, participating in or evaluating 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-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;
- f. 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

### **7.3 POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and you 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)

#### **7.4 HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

As part of a successful undergraduate experience at Western, we encourage you to make your health and wellness a priority. 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, please 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://www.uwo.ca/health/staff\\_fac/mental\\_wellbeing/education/module.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/staff_fac/mental_wellbeing/education/module.html).

#### **7.5 SUPPORT SERVICES**

There are various support services available at Western, and these include (but are not limited to):

- Student Development Centre -- <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/>
- Student Health -- <http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html>
- Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
- Ombud's Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

#### **8.0 PROCEDURES 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 Undergraduate Chair for the School of Health Studies. 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.