THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

SCHOOL OF HEALTH STUDIES

HEALTH SCIENCES 3092A: INTELLECTUAL EMPATHY FOR HEALTH JUSTICE (SPECIAL TOPICS COURSE)

FALL 2021

Instructor: Dr. Carla Filomena Silva
Office: Arthur and Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building (HSB), Room 345
Email: csilva42@uwo.ca
Office Hours: TBA
Blended format: Content and tasks online (OWL/ MSTeams)
Date/Time: In- person session: Tuesdays 2:30-4:30pm FLEX ROOM 2220

COURSE DESCRIPTION
One reason health equity is so difficult to achieve is because often that individuals empowered to make a change may be experientially, emotionally and cognitively detached from the crude realities of health inequities. The skill of Intellectual Empathy- the ability to see the world through the eyes of individuals who may lead very different lives from our own- can fill in this gap. Intellectual empathy for health justice invites you into a journey of personal reflection and growth through storytelling. Throughout this journey, you will develop theoretical and practical tools to both understand and analyze the workings of systems of privilege and oppression underpinning health inequities and to become an effective player in enacting health equity. Your drive to act towards health justice will be nurtured by a renewed ability to empathize with marginalized and vulnerable populations. All teaching and learning activities respect the principles of active, collaborative and critical learning, as these are foundational to the development of Intellectual Empathy itself.

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

Antirequisites: HS3071A and B

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. (2018). A Healthy Society: How A Focus on Health Can Revive Canadian Democracy. Purich Books. (Available digitally at the Western library but limited to a few users at the same time. Consider purchasing a copy if you can.)
Hernandez, C. (2017). *Scarborough: A Novel*. Vancouver, British Columbia: Arsenal Pulp Press. (The reading of the printed or digital version is strongly recommended, even if the audiobook is also purchased, for a complete immersion in the novel’s universe and appreciation of writing techniques).

*Some other titles (selected chapters) you will be exploring as part of your weekly compulsory readings:*


Raphael, D. (Ed.). (2016). *Social Determinants of Health: Canadian Perspectives*. Canadian Scholars’ Press. (selected chapters will be scanned by the library)


**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To explain the importance of intellectual empathy, the capacity to develop a reasoned and empathetic understanding of the experiences of individuals whose lives may seem very different from one’s own for a comprehensive and impactful understanding of determinants of health and health inequities.
- To develop all dimensions of intellectual empathy by analyzing credible evidence (academic research), exercising creative imagination through fictional reading and creation and active participation in all class activities.
- To develop a comprehensive understanding of the close interaction between key social health determinants in one’s chances for a healthy life, building upon the knowledge gained in the first-year courses social and individual determinants of health.
- To expand the ability to work collaboratively for one’s own and others’ benefit.
- To expand metacognition, the awareness of how one learns and grows.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

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

1. Identify and explain the five skills of intellectual empathy;
2. Demonstrate in everyday life, class interactions and work increased awareness and growth in terms of the different skills of Intellectual Empathy;
3. Identify and describe key social determinants of health and disease;
4. Explain key concepts related to health equity and its determinants;
5. Discuss the interrelationship between different social determinants of health;
6. Analyze specific cases, applying relevant theoretical and informational tools;
7. Design and facilitate labs/workshops to foster intellectual empathy;
8. Design and present strategies to tackle key determinants of health in varied and specific contexts;
9. Advocate and act to improve the social determinants of health in the world outside the university;
10. Work collaboratively;
11. Design and regulate one’s learning journey.

**Course tools and materials:**

As the course will be partially developed online and partially in-person, a computer/tablet/smart phone with audio and video capabilities and access to the Internet are required. Additional course materials will be posted each week on the OWL course site. You will also be encouraged to contribute to the development of a repository of relevant resources. Software: We will be using OWL and MS Teams (tbc) as the main digital tools. If other software is used, you will be instructed on how to use it in a timely fashion.

**Tentative course schedule:**

The following table offers a provisional thematic/activity map for our weekly teaching and learning units. Note that this plan will be updated weekly with more detailed information and may change. Be aware that effective engagement in the course requires between 6 - 8 hours weekly (including your own study time). This number really depends on you being able to set up a study environment free of distractions and interruptions. **Make sure you schedule these hours in your personal calendars.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Week</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Key Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1         | Setting the foundations for the course. Ways of working together.      | Lesson activities, Presentations, Live in-person session | Meili, 2018,  
Scarborough  
Other Resources on OWL |
|           | Presentations and getting to know one another. Planning and preparing the ground for a successful course. |                                      |                        |
| 2         | Do we all have the same chances to be healthy? What does it mean to be healthy? What is a healthy society? Key course concepts: Intellectual Empathy, | Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours | Meili, 2018, chapter 1, Linker, 2015, selected excerpts  
Scarborough |
<p>| | | | |
|           |                                                                        |                                     |                        |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lesson Activities</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
<th>Reading References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Medicine on a larger scale</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapter 2 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough (reading must be completed)</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Downstream and upstream approaches to “closing the gap”.&lt;br&gt; Key qualities of meaningful and efficient strategies and/or interventions.</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapters 3 and 10 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Growth and Development&lt;br&gt; Income, Socio-economic status, class and individual health&lt;br&gt; Gross domestic product and national health indexes; Addressing fallacies.</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapters 4 and 5 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Food and Housing Insecurity</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live Session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapters 6 and 7 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Criminal justice and health: identical twins?&lt;br&gt; The Equality of Mercy</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapter 8 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Learning to live healthy: education, class and life chances.</td>
<td>Lesson activities, Live in-person session, Office hours</td>
<td>Meili, 2018, chapter 9 &lt;br&gt; <em>Scarborough</em>&lt;br&gt; Other Resources on OWL</td>
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1 to 7 Nov. Reading week.

| 9   | Oppressions and access to healthcare. The role of invisible ideologies: How do they form and develop? Oppressive ideologies, -isms and unconscious bias | Lesson activities  
Live in-person session  
Office hours | Linker, 2015, selected excerpts  
*Scarborough*  
Other Resources on OWL |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 10  | Exploring diverse oppressive ideologies and their impact on health care and health status. Case study: anti-fat bias. | Lesson activities  
Live in-person session  
Office hours | Raphael, 2016, selected chapters  
*Scarborough*  
Other resources on OWL |
| 11  | **Upstreaming Health Conference**  
So what? Will our knowledge and intellectual empathy skills make any difference? What can we do? What will we do? | Lesson activities (reduced)  
Live in-person session: Final plenary | Meili, 2018, chapter 11  
*Scarborough*  
Other Resources on OWL |
| 12  | **Submit final assignment.**  
*(December 1)* | Finalize and submit assignments. | |

**Evaluation:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Methods of Assessment</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>%</th>
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</table>
| 1. Participation/ Engagement (Team/ Individual) | Whole term (peer-graded)  
Attendance/Engagement in the live session and IEL(1)                                           | 10 |
| 2. Quizzes               | 5 Quizzes throughout the term                                                               | 15 |
Below you find a general description of each method of assessment. Detailed guides for each assignment will be delivered in a timely fashion throughout the course.

Note that your evaluation does NOT include midterms nor exams, so weekly engagement and high-quality participation in all pedagogical activities is extremely important.

All assignments stated above are to be submitted as WORD documents (when applicable), using the assignment tool on OWL, by 11.55 pm on each due date.

1. **Participation/ Engagement (Team/ Individual).** Weekly engagement in small team lesson tasks and your contribution to the IEL will be evaluated by your teammates for 10% (at the end of the term). Attendance and engagement in the live sessions will be graded by the teaching team to a maximum of 1 point per session (the first and final session are not graded).

2. **Quizzes.** In 5 different weeks, at the end of the live in-person session, you will be required to undertake a quiz (between 5-10 min.), which will assess your understanding of core readings, key concepts and specific content addressed in the previous lessons (it may include content from any of the previous lessons at the time of the quiz). Each is worth 3% of your final grade.

3. **Intellectual empathy lab (planning, facilitation, and reflection).** In teams randomly created, you will collaboratively design an online workshop to engage peers in discussion and reflection on a specific topic related to one of the course themes. The team plan and reflection need to be submitted the latest one week after the event.

4. **Intellectual empathy lab (Written reflections).** You will be asked to write 4 short reflections (500 words +- 50) where you will identify the learning facilitated by the lab and how you will further develop and apply that learning. Two of these will be randomly selected to be graded for 8% each.

5. **Fictional text + Commentary + Strategy (Individual).** Inspired by the novel *Scarborough*, you will create a fictional text, in which you show the intricate dynamics between social determinants/structures and health status. The assignment includes an academic analysis of the situation and/or character depicted, applying relevant concepts to frame and analyze the ‘problem’ and a strategic plan to ease the negative impact of the determinant(s) at play.

**Formatting:** All formatting (information here) and referencing of written assignments must follow APA guidelines. Learn about styles here. The word count for all assignments excludes the reference list (at the end of the paper, not in-text references) and title page. Documents must be double-spaced and formatted using a font size no smaller than 12 points.
Plagiarism: All required assessments 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 assessments 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.

Participation: Participation in this course implies active engagement with the proposed lesson tasks, including (for example) contribution to small and large group discussions and intellectual empathy labs. The specific expectations for each teaching unit/week will be communicated weekly.

Communication: To be updated.

Use of Recording Devices and Course Content Course: Instructors own and retain the intellectual property rights of their teaching materials. These rights extend to materials used in online settings and digital learning management systems like OWL and MS Teams. Students do not have the right to make audio or video recordings of lectures, take pictures of lecture material, or distribute any course content for any reason inclusive of nefarious purposes (e.g., for sale or to cheat on exams). It is the decision of the instructor as to how and when teaching materials can be shared or used. Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of pre-recorded lectures or other course materials. Nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Troubleshooting:

Technical/ software/hardware: “I am having technical issues with my computer and I am not sure what the problem is...” you can create a help request in FHS IT Support or if the issue relates more to online learning software (OWL, Teams or other) go to FHS Online Learning Support (Students). If you have lost internet connection use the data on your phone to do this or to work as a hotspot for your other device.

Help with Writing Skills: “I will need to write some papers this term and would benefit from improving my writing skills” or “I would like some helpful feedback on writing quality...” you can contact the Writing support Centre online. They have (the images below are not hyperlinks):
Illness: “One of my main assignments is due is two days and I feel really ill…”, you can action an academic consideration to be granted some accommodation. You do that in Request for Academic Consideration.

Academics: “I would benefit from some advice regarding my academic experience, engagement and success…”, you can explore the resources available on Academic Support and Engagement or contact the HS counselling staff.

General Course Notes:

Student Code of Conduct: You are expected to comply with the Code of Student Conduct at all times 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 and the Microsoft Teams’ hub 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 these spaces regularly.

Grades: 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, do not ask me to do this for you.

Assignment objectives and rubrics will be shared with you in advance. Should you have a concern regarding the grade you received for an assignment, you must wait 24 hours from the receipt of the grade to approach the instructor or TA. Please request an appointment and prepare in writing, with evidence, the reasons for your concern. Note that calculations errors (which can occur) must be brought to the instructor’s attention immediately, with enough information for it to be promptly corrected.

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 fulfill 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.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.
**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: [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)

**Support Services**

There are various support services around campus, and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/)
2. Student Health -- [https://www.uwo.ca/health/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/)

**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/](http://www.music.uwo.ca/)), or the McIntosh Gallery ([http://mcintoshgallery.ca/](http://mcintoshgallery.ca/)). Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at [http://www.health.uwo.ca/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/).

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [Mental Health Support - Health & Wellness - Western University (uwo.ca)](http://www.health.uwo.ca/) 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: [Health & Wellness - Western University (uwo.ca)](http://www.health.uwo.ca/)

**Grading Policy**

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

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

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 to bring the class average in line with School policy.