

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
LONDON, CANADA

School of Health Studies  
Health Sciences 3624B – Social Determinants of Mental Health  
Winter 2023

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, we will discuss the interplay between social and personal determinants of mental health. We will also discuss the interrelatedness of mental disorder, social inequity, and both trauma and adversity in childhood.

**More specifically:**

According to the World Health Organization “good mental health is integral to human health and well being”. Similarly, the United Nations Human Rights Council states, “there can be no health without mental health”. Although the importance of ‘good mental health’ has risen to an unprecedented state of priority in health-care systems all over the world, burdens resulting from compromised mental health, including personal, family, community, workplace, economic impacts, are increasing, worldwide. The serious impact of trauma, adversity and social inequality, particularly in childhood and adolescence, on mental health in adulthood are now widely recognized as primary precursors to the occurrence of compromised mental health later in life. The design and delivery of services, supports and treatments that are trauma-informed, and that address various impacts imposed by individual, family, and community social inequity, is the new gold standard in mental-health care.

This course focuses on social determinants of mental health, with an emphasis on trauma-informed concepts of mental health that acknowledge the central roles of childhood adversity and social inequity.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the concepts mental health and mental disorder as they have been conceptualized by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Human Rights Council.
- Describe and discuss some of the potential effects of adversity in childhood on overall mental health.
- Describe and discuss the some of the potential effects of social inequality and inequity on overall mental health.
- Describe and illustrate key paradigm shifts and various agendas (political, professional, corporate, patient care) in mental health.
- Write a comprehensive and coherently articulated analytical report of a piece of relevant grey literature.
- Participate in the co-creation of a learning experience that is vital and engaging.

Prerequisites: Health Sciences 1002A/B

**NOTE:** 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.

Extra Information: 3 contact hours. Course Weight: 0.50

## COURSE INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Marnie Wedlake, PhD, RP

Email: [mwedlak@uwo.ca](mailto:mwedlak@uwo.ca) (contact me using this email address only – PLEASE INCLUDE THE COURSE NUMBER IN THE SUBJECT LINE)

**Office Hours:** TBA - Meetings will take place using Zoom (sign-up available in OWL)

**Teaching Assistants:** TBA

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

**Days & Times of Lectures:** Thursdays, 10:30am to 1:30pm

**Location of Lectures:** TC-205

## ASSIGNED READINGS AND OTHER COURSE MATERIALS

There are no textbooks for this course. All assigned readings will be available, without cost, through Western's Library System, online and/or through our OWL site.

Readings and course materials will be assigned for each topic of the course. Sources might include peer reviewed journal articles, grey literature, popular press articles, films, video clips, and website content. Materials assigned will correspond to the lecture topic. Additional materials may be assigned at any time, and will be posted on the course website. Students are responsible for the content covered in all assigned course materials.

**A COMPLETE LIST OF LECTURE TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS WILL BE POSTED TO OWL BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS.**

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This course experience will function according to the assumption that successful learning happens in environments where learning is co-created by the instructor and the students.

As the instructor, I will endeavour to provide students with course experiences that are optimally engaging, motivating, and interesting. In return, I will expect students to attend all classes, and contribute to the collaborative nature of the learning experience through their active participation in discussions, by completing the assigned readings, and by offering constructive feedback as will be deemed useful to the overall learning experience.

Ideally, we will co-create a learning environment that welcomes and encourages group dialogues that are dynamic, passionate, and open-minded. That is, a learning experience that is vital and engaging for all. In this regard, it is my hope that we will come together in the spirit of community and shared interest to co-create a learning environment that is supported by civility and mutual respect. In doing so, we will set the stage for a healthy and stimulating intellectual forum.

Finally, if you are having problems with any aspect of the course, please contact me. I'm genuinely committed to your learning experience, I'm approachable, and I welcome your comments, your constructive criticisms and, of course, your questions.

## EVALUATIONS

1. Mind Map – 5%. **Due Thursday 19 January 2023. Must be submitted through OWL by 4:00pm on Thursday 19 January 2023.** Details will be posted on OWL during the first week of classes.
2. Mid-term Examination – 30%. **Thursday 16 February 2023.** Details will be posted on OWL during the first week of classes.
3. Written Assignment (expected length = 6 to 8 pages) – 35%. **Due Thursday 23 March 2023. Must be submitted through OWL by 4:00pm on Thursday 23 March 2023.** Details will be posted on OWL during the first week of classes.
4. Final Examination – 30% - **Scheduled by The Registrar, during the final exam period.**

## PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING REGARDING EXAMS:

- The final exam is cumulative.
- 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.
- Makeup exams will be different from those originally scheduled, and may include multiple choice, written and/or short answer questions.
- Examinable materials may include any content covered/presented in classes, including: lecture content, content presented by guest speakers, any/all assigned readings, videos, etc.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We/I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay-wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

With this, I respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. I acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and I accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

## GENERAL COURSE NOTES

### **Statement on 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.

### **Statement on contingency plan for in-person pivoting to online learning:**

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service.** By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

### **Statement on plagiarism checking software:**

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/>)

### **Statement on multiple-choice exams:**

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.

### **Statement on 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) 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

- (ii) For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to academic advising office 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 an SMC;
- Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to the academic advising office within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities

**Statement on use of 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.

**Statement on 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: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

**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/>
2. Student Health -- <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombudsperson Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

**Health and Wellness:**

The undergraduate experience is rewarding and challenging socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Finding ways to balance scholarly life with our personal lives can be tough, but it's important to learn how to manage stress. Western provides several health and wellness-related services to students, which may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>. You can also check out the Campus Recreation Centre or the McIntosh Gallery ( <http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>), for alternative spaces to reconnect with your bodies and restore your spirit. You may also want to access local resources that are closer to where you are living during the school year. Recalibrating ourselves emotionally begins with slowing down, reminding ourselves that we are ok, and taking a few deep, slow breaths. This remarkably effective strategy brings the body from stress mode into a more relaxed state.

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [Mental Health Support - Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](mailto:MentalHealthSupport@uwo.ca) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or Thames Valley Family Services (<https://www.familyservicethamesvalley.com/>), a trusted provider within the community. To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: [Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](https://www.uwo.ca/healthwellness/). It's also advisable to have a wellness safety plan if you don't want to reach out to formal services. Having the numbers of a few trusted individuals is another strategy.

**School of Health Studies grade 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 74-78%. 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.

**Common Concerns Guidelines:**

The table below summarizes a list of common student concerns and how they are to be resolved. If you have a concern that is not listed here, then please email your instructor.

Concern	How to address concern
Course administrative matters	Read through the course outline or email instructor if question cannot be answered from information in the course outline
Course content questions	Refer to the OWL Resources (notes, calendar, etc). Email the instructor.
Grade disputes and requests for appeals	A student requesting an appeal to a specific course with respect to a grade for an assignment or examination must first contact their instructor to discuss such matters.  Visit the following website for guide on submitting an appeal: <a href="https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html">https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html</a>