

The University of Western Ontario
School of Health Studies
Health Sciences: Palliative & End of Life Care
HS 4710B

Instructor: Dr. Afshin Vafaei
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Office Hours: by appointment

Location:

TA: TBD

Lecture Times:
Tutorials:
Location:
Course Website: <https://owl.uwo.ca/>

Prerequisite Checking
Health Sciences 2711A/B

Course Description

This course will explore, from an inter-disciplinary perspective, critical issues related to death, dying, palliative and end of life care relevant to health professionals working in a variety of settings. Topics include an introduction to death and dying in Canadian society, socio-cultural influences on our understanding of death, theories used to guide practice, an understanding of the dying person's experience, principles of palliative care, ethical and legal issues, and health system initiatives and challenges.

Learning Objectives

This course offers an introduction to death, dying, palliative, and end-of-life care with a focus on the Canadian context. This course will examine factors that influence individuals' end of life experiences from a wide variety of perspectives. By the end of this course students will be able to:

- explain current best palliative care practices, as well as the individual and systemic challenges of palliative care within the health system
- offer future directions to improve the end-of-life experiences of individuals across the age spectrum
- have a better understanding of the dying person's experience, as well as the experiences of those around them
- recognize the special palliative care needs of various age and disease groups

Textbook & Reading List

Most reading are selected chapters of these two textbooks that are available in electronic format through [Western Libraries](#). You do not need to purchase a copy.

- Bruera et al (2021). Textbook of Palliative Medicine and Supportive Care.

Westerm Library link: https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/1hdoga6/alma991045469819105163

- Blank et al (2007). Choices in Palliative Care. Issues in Health Care Delivery.

Westerm Library link: <https://books.scholarsportal.info/en/read?id=/ebooks/ebooks2/springer/2011-04-28/5/9780387708751>

Additional readings will be posted in OWL.

Class Schedule (subject to change)

Week/Date	Topic/Focus	Readings
Section 1: Defining Palliative Care		
1:	Approach to palliative care as public health and primary care issues	Chapters 1, 2 & 3 of Bruera (2021)
2:	Medical Needs	Chapters 10 & 20 of Bruera (2021)
3:	Psycho-social Needs	Chapter 77 of Bruera (2021) Rego & Nunes (2016). The interface between psychology and spirituality in palliative care. <i>J. Health Psychol</i> ; 24 (3): 279-289 doi: 10.1177/1359105316664138 Balboni & Peteet (2017). "Religion and Spirituality in Palliative Medicine" Chapter 10 of <i>Spirituality and Religion Within the Culture of Medicine: From Evidence to Practice</i> , Oxford University Press. pp. 147-164 https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044851548905163
Section 2: The Act of Palliative Care		
4:	Palliative Care in Hospitals	Chapter 1 of Blank
5:	Palliative Care in Long-term Care	Chapter 2 of Blank
6:	Midterm	
Fall Reading Week:		
7:	Palliative Care in Home Hospice Care	Chapters 3 & 4 of Blank Chapter 18 of Bruera (2021)
8:	Palliative Care During COVID-19	Arya et al. (2020). Pandemic palliative care: Beyond ventilators and saving lives. <i>Canadian Medical Association Journal</i> , 192(15), E400-E404. https://www.cmaj.ca/content/192/15/E400 Abel et al. (2020). Advance care planning re-imagined: A needed shift for COVID times and beyond. <i>Palliative Care and Social Practice</i> , 14. doi: 10.1177/2632352420934491
9:	Families and Friends of a Dying Person Time for group work on presentations	Chapters 78, 79 & 80 of Bruera (2021)
Section 3: Special Populations and Palliative Care		
10:	Older Adults Presentations 1-3	Chapter 11 of Blank
11:	Individuals with Intellectual Disability Presentations 4-5	TBD Guest lecturer: Dr. Rachel Forrester-Jones
Week 12:	Children and Youth Presentations 6-8	Chapter 10 of Blank

Evaluation and assignments

By students will know 20% of their final grade.

Assessment	Weight of Final Mark	Due Date
Midterm	20%	
Tutorial activities	20%	until the last week
Group Assignment		Varies
Presentation	10%	
Written paper	20%	
Final exam	30%	During the exam period ()

Tutorial Activities: 20% of the overall grade

Starting in the second week, every students are expected to attend and **actively** participate in tutorial sessions. Concepts learned in the week before will be discussed and expanded upon during tutorials. For full marks, **active** participation in 8 tutorials is required (2.5 each, *8=20).

Group Assignment: 30% of the overall grade (Presentation 10%; Paper 20%)

The goal of this assignment is a deep evaluation of palliative care approach for a specific population and their specific care needs. Students will apply what they learned in sections 1 and 2 in their work. This assignment, to be completed in groups of 5-6 students, includes two components: a short (7-8 minutes) in-class presentation in weeks 10 to 12 and a written paper to be submitted two weeks after the presentation day. As a group or individually students select a specific population in need of palliative care and send it to the instructor before for approval. Examples of **specific** populations: individuals with HIV, older adults with dementia, youth with end stage leukemia.

The presentation provides an opportunity for receiving feedback from the instructor and fellow classmates. **Please check your timing during a practice run.** It is expected that the written paper considers all valid feedback and be a reliable scientific work.

There will be measures to ensure a fair participation within groups for a more equitable experience. Half of the mark for this group assignment will be based on the individual performance either by peer evaluation or by grades for itemized components of the assignment. Therefore, students in the group might receive different grades. Details about the logistics and content of the assignment will be discussed throughout the semester.

Midterm (20%) and Final (30%) Exams:

Two exams will evaluate students' deep understanding of course materials. The midterm exam will take place at the regular meeting time () on while the final exam will be scheduled by the *Exam Central* during the formal exam period (). Both exams will be in multiple choice, fill in blanks, short answer format. **The final exam is cumulative.**

Missed Work:

This is a discussion-based course and attendance in all lectures and tutorials is essential for learning. It is not possible to provide equal opportunity to make-up for the missed classes. **All materials** covered in **all classes** are **testable**.

Missed Exams:

If you are too ill to write a quiz or exam or there are other 'extenuating circumstances beyond your control' you **must** document this either with a medical certificate (if available) or by notifying the instructor in writing (with your signature). If you are ill for an extended period of time, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor immediately on your return to campus.

Only **one** make-up time will be scheduled for missed midterm in the week after the reading week on **TENTATIVE final examination common make-up** dates in will be provided when the Final Exam schedule is released by the *Exam Central*.

MARKS

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 anticipated that the course averages in years 1 through 4 grades will vary and this is the normative breakdown of average grades/year:

Year 1: 68-72

Year 2: 70-74 (core) and 72-76 (elective)

Year 3: 72-76 (core) and 74-78 (elective)

Year 4: 74-80

POLICIES

Prerequisites

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.

Covid -19 Contingency Plan for 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>.

Late assignments

Assignments must not be missed unless there is a medical condition, family emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances. A note from your Physician indicating the nature of your condition must be submitted to the School of Health Studies Main Office, and only upon receipt of such a letter will instructors consider a new due date for an assignment. Late assignments may be docked a certain percentage per day, which is determined by the instructor.

Attendance and Classroom Behaviour (online and/or in-person)

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.**

Use of Recording Devices and Course Content

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.**

Use of 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>).

Student Code of Conduct

Code of Student Conduct defines the standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provides examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this conduct, provides examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and sets out the disciplinary procedures that the University follows. 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 \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic/calendar).

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;
- **Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;
- **Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic advising office within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities**

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 \(uwo.ca\)](#) 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.

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 <i>cannot be answered</i> 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	<p>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.</p> <p>Visit the following website for guide on submitting an appeal: https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html </p>