1. **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%

2. **COURSE INFORMATION**
*Coordinator:* Dr. Treena Orchard ([torchar2@uwo.ca](mailto:torchar2@uwo.ca))  
*Office Hours:* By appointment, contact via email  
*Course Website:* [https://owl.uwo.ca](https://owl.uwo.ca)

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

4. **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. **EVALUATION**
- Research proposal 2024.01.26 4%
- TCPS 2 Ethics Certificate 2024.02.09 4%
- Abstract 2024.03.08 4%
- Mini Conference presentation 2024.04.05 14%
- Peer evaluation 2024.04.10 4%
- Independent study project report 2024.04.10 70%

**Research Proposal.** You are responsible for submitting a research proposal to Dr. Orchard 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 4:30 pm on 2024.01.26.** This research proposal should be approximately 500 words in length (2 double-spaced pages). This is designed to be a brief description of your plan of action for the developing project, including the significance of the
project in relation to existing research, the method(s) to be used, and anticipated outcomes. It is possible that the objectives may change over the course of the independent study and any such changes should be documented 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.** 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. If you already have one of these certificates, upload it instead of redoing it. Please upload no later than 4:30 pm on 2024.02.09.

**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 4:30 pm on 2024.03.08. The abstract is to be approximately 250 words in length and should be formatted as an “unstructured abstract.” Key items to include are a description of the problem/issue, methods to be used, key findings, and a statement about the significance of the findings or research experience relative to the existing literature. An example of how to structure the abstract is posted on OWL.

**Mini–Conference.** The mini conference is designed to showcase the key findings and lessons learned from your respective Independent Studies projects. Like a formal conference, each student will be given a 10 minute time slot to deliver their presentation and there will be room for Q & A at the end. Students will present in alphabetical order and light snacks will be provided. The mini conference will take place on 2024.04.05- time & location TBD

**Conference presentation content**
These presentations provide the audience with an understanding of the project(s) you undertook this term, the key findings, and the lessons learned from the experience. You do not need to tell us everything you learned or every aspect of the project, just the key points and their significance relative to the current research literature as well as your expertise as a young researcher, writer, and/or advocate. You determine the number of slides or pages devoted to each part of the presentation, and here is the format that each student will use:

1. **Introduction** - your name, year of study, supervisor, project title
2. **Background information** - why you selected this project/what it means to you, the scope of the project and the issues explored
3. **Methodology** - how you gathered data, where you obtained the data/findings, your analytical procedures
4. **Key findings** - main themes or results generated and how they informed your primary aims going into the project
5. **Lessons learned** - discuss some of the challenges and key takeaways from your experience
6. **Future directions** - how or will this experience shape your career path going forward?

**Conference presentation delivery**
Your presentations can be read from paper or a slide deck, or a combination of the two. Be creative! If you’re using something other than PPT, just make sure that your delivery method corresponds to the computer/digital equipment we have available in the classroom. Each student will email me their presentation the day before our conference.
Conference evaluation
The presentation is worth 14% of your final grade- 9% is marked by Dr. Orchard and 5% by your peers. The peer grades will consist of an average of the marks submitted, and everyone must submit their marks to Dr. Orchard by April 10th. Electronic copies of the rubric will be provided to each student at the event and submitted through OWL. These must be kept confidential and be taken seriously given the value accorded to this portion of the overall grade.

Peer Evaluation Rubric (5pts):
Background-1pt (Significance of issue in current research -.5, project relevance is clear-.5)
Methodology- 1pt (Clearly described-.5, includes analysis-.5)
Findings-1.5pts (Well articulated- 1, ties back to study aims-.5)
Delivery- 1.5pts (Organization-.5, Interesting material-.5, Audience engagement-.5)

Dr. Orchard’s Evaluation Rubric (9 pts):
Introduction- 1pt (Includes name, year of study, supervisor, project title)
Background- 1pt (Significance of issue in current research -.5, project relevance is clear-.5)
Methodology- 1pt (Clearly described-.5, includes analysis-.5)
Findings- 1pt (Well articulated-.5, ties back to study aims-.5)
Next Time- 1pt (Reflection on study design-.5, suggestions/innovation-.5)
Lessons Learned- 1.5pts (Challenges-.5, key takeaways from experience-.5)
Future Directions- 1pt (How this experience will r career path going forward-.5)
Delivery- 1.5pts (Organization-.5, Interesting material-.5, Audience engagement-.5)

Feel free to invite your friends, family, and community partners or advocates who you think might enjoy seeing your tell us about your awesome projects! I hope this answers your questions about the upcoming event, and I’m looking forward to it!!

Independent Study Project. The nature of the project and its specifications are organized and agreed to between you and your faculty mentor. The project in its entirety is to be submitted to your supervisor in early April. 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. Your paper will be checked for textual similarity and plagiarism using Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com). Supervisors submit their grades to Dr. Orchard by April 15th.

6. 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 “paperless”, 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. Grades will not be discussed or conveyed via email or over the phone under any circumstance.

**Email**
For all correspondence regarding this course, please use your UWO email address. The University ‘anti-spam’ programs often reject emails from non-UWO email addresses, so there is no guarantee that I will receive your emails if you send them from a public email program – or an off-campus server. I’ll do my best to answer your emails promptly.

**Grade Adjustments**
Final grades in this course will not be “bumped up” if they 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.

**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: Academc Calendar - Western University (uwo.ca).
**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) 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/](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/)
2. Student Health -- [https://www.uwo.ca/health/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/)

**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/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/). You can also check out the Campus Recreation Centre or the McIntosh Gallery ([http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/](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). 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>How to address concern</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course administrative matters</td>
<td>Read through the course outline or email instructor is question cannot be answered from information in the course outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course content questions</td>
<td>Refer to the OWL Resources (notes, calendar, etc). Email the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade disputes and requests for appeals</td>
<td>A student requesting an appeal to a specific course with respect to a grade for an assignment or examination much first contact their instructor to discuss such manners. 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></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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