COURSE DESCRIPTION
Many students at Western hope to become some kind of professional, such as a lawyer, doctor, teacher, engineer, or journalist. But what does it mean to be a professional? What does it mean to have a profession as opposed to a job that isn’t a profession? Are there special privileges but also duties that go along with being a professional? Are the relationships that professionals have with the people who use their services and depend on them unique in some way? These are the sorts of questions we will ask in this course. We will also look at more specific topics in professional ethics, such as the demands of truth-telling for professionals, client or patient confidentiality, the nature and importance of professional integrity, whether professionals should heed their conscience when it conflicts with their professional duties, and whistleblowing. Overall, the course should prepare students well for grappling with the ethical demands of professional life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course, students will be able to,

- Discuss what it means to be a professional or part of a profession, and what is distinctive about professional-client (or patient) relationships
- Describe what many philosophers believe to be the special moral duties of professionals
- Think critically about core topics in professional ethics and appreciate their complexity
- Provide ethical analyzes of actual cases involving professionals

In addition, through their assignments (see below under Course Evaluation), students will develop or hone the following skills:

- Critical analysis and writing (through the online forum, quizzes, and essays)
- Thoughtful engagement with others on controversial topics (through the online forum and class discussion)
- Confident public speaking (through class discussion, which will occur in large and small groups)
• Synthesis and consolidation of significant amounts of material (through the quizzes and papers)

COURSE WEBSITE
All course information, including assignments, will be posted on our OWL site at https://owl.uwo.ca/portal.

REQUIRED READINGS
• Some online readings available on our OWL site

COURSE EVALUATION
1) Participation in an online forum and in class: 10%
   • Students will post summaries of our readings and questions or comments about them in an online forum on OWL five times during the term
   • Classes will be discussion-based and the discussion will be prompted in part by what is happening in the online forum

2) In-class quizzes: 45%
   • Material for the course will be divided into four sections and students will write a quiz on each section
   • Only the best three quizzes will count, although students will be required to write all four
   • Each quiz that counts will be worth 15%

3) Two essays (each ~1500 words; the first worth 20% and the second worth 25%): 45%
   • Students will have the opportunity with this assignment to apply their knowledge of theories in professional ethics to actual cases involving professionals

More information about assignments will be available on our OWL website and provided in class.