

The University of Western Ontario

School of Health Studies Faculty of Health Sciences

HS100A: Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health
Dr. Jessica Polzer

September– December 2014
Tuesdays: 1:30am-12:30pm
Thursdays 10:30am-12:30pm
HSB 40

Instructor & Teaching Assistant (TA) Information

Instructor	Office Location	Office Hours

Teaching Assistants (TAs) will be announced on the first day of class

Course Description What is health? How can we measure and understand the health of groups and populations? And how can we understand differences in health status between different groups of people? Can healthy lifestyle “choices” alone explain the inequalities in health that are observed between groups? What kinds of explanations can help us understand why some groups of people are healthier than others? How do historical, political and economic forces influence health and health inequalities? And how do processes of economic globalization affect health inequalities within and between countries?

Observed inequalities in health related to social circumstances and the environment have been documented since the time of Hippocrates and Galen, the founders of the Western medical tradition. This course will introduce students to the social determinants of health and will be guided by and respond to the above questions. The social determinants of health are non-medical determinants of health that include social, political, economic and cultural conditions, forces and factors that influence how health is distributed among entire groups and populations. The social determinants of health is an interdisciplinary field of study that draws on research and scholarship from many areas including sociology, anthropology, political science, policy studies, and critical gender and race studies. The course will examine fundamental determinants of health, including income and social class, gender and sexism, ethnicity and racism and will focus on selected specific determinants (e.g. housing, food security, access to medical care) and health issues (e.g. HIV/AIDS, cardiovascular disease). This course will present the social determinants of health both in the Canadian context and in comparative contexts.

Course Objectives The objectives of this course are to:

- x differentiate between personal and social determinants of health;
- x introduce key social determinants of health and their relevance in Canadian and global contexts;
- x understand how health varies systematically in relation to social, economic and political factors;
- x understand the ways in which health is political that is, how health is affected by dominant political discourses and social and economic policies;
- x engage students in thinking about and viewing health in relation to social, political and economic forces, and in terms of the principles of equity and social justice;
- x introduce basic terms, concepts and measurements related to health, population health and health inequalities;
- x familiarize students with the development of universal health insurance in Canada;
- x develop skills in reading, writing, studying and critical thinking; and
- x give students experience with using the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style

Expectations & Responsibilities Learning occurs in a social environment and is a collaborative experience that requires the active participation of all those involved teachers, teaching assistants and students. Successful learning happens when the professor, the assistants and the students uphold their respective roles and responsibilities. In this sense, learning is a *co-responsibility* that depends on the instructor, teaching assistants and the students coming to class prepared. It is the responsibility of the professor to come to class prepared to lecture on course material. It is also the professor's responsibility to address and respond to student's questions about course material in a specified office hours. It is the responsibility of the teaching assistants to assist the professor in the preparation and grading of exams and papers, and to address student questions about course material during the year and before the final exam. It is the responsibility of students to prepare for class by completing required course readings before class, to attend class regularly and listen to the lectures, to take notes in class, and to ask questions about course material in class and on OWL, the University's online learning management system. Students are expected to purchase a dictionary or use an online dictionary (e.g. www.dictionary.com) if they need help understanding the required course readings.

Students will have the opportunity to ask questions about course material in class, to discuss course material and ask questions in weekly discussion groups or via Moodle. Students are expected to communicate respectfully when online. The discussion groups will be monitored regularly by the professor and the TAs.

Creating and maintaining a respectful and productive learning environment In order to maintain a respectful and productive learning environment, it is essential that students arrive at class ready to listen and attend to lectures and films. Disrespectful and disruptive behaviour during class includes, for example, texting or talking on mobile phones, chatting on or browsing Facebook, talking during lectures or films, wearing headphones, emailing, and surfing the Internet for non-class purposes. If this behaviour is observed by the professor, she will use her discretion in deciding how best to deal with the situation. If disruptive behaviour persists, the professor may ask the offending student to stop talking and/or leave the classroom. The professor has the right to end class early without warning should classroom disruption persist. In the case that class is ended without warning due to disruptive behaviour, the uncovered material will be considered unstable and students will be responsible for this material on future exams.

Course Materials The required text for the course is listed below and is available at the campus bookstore located in the lower level of the UCC building. Any additional readings will be posted on OWL. Students are expected to access these readings from their accounts on OWL at <https://owl.uwo.ca/>. A copy of the required text and a complete set of additional readings will also be put on reserve in the Taylor library.

Required Text: Germov, J. and Hornosty, J. (2012). *Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology, Canadian Edition*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780195431988

Evaluation: Your grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown

Evaluation	Percentage	Dates	Course Material Included
In-class tests (3)	20% each	Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 25	TBA
Final Exam	40%	TBA	Classes 26, inclusive

In-class Tests and Final Exams (3 X 20%, 40%): In-class tests and the final exam may include a variety of question types, including true/false, multiple choice and questions that require short and long written answers. Exams will test students on all course materials, including required readings and any material covered during regularly scheduled classes (e.g. class lectures, films/videos, guest presentations, etc.). The final exam is cumulative.

The final

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>

Documentation is required for non-medical absences where the course work missed is more than 10% of the overall grade. Students may contact their Faculty Academic Counselling Office for what documentation is needed.

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Academic Counselling Office of the student's Faculty of registration. For BHSc students, you may go to the School of Health Studies Office in HSB room 222.

Privacy Students will be able to access their grades through OWL secure network which requires a personalized login name and password. The sharing of information about student grades (between an instructor/TA and student) will only be conducted over email with the student's permission. Appointments with the instructor must be made for a student to view their own graded examination.

Use of Electronic Devices No electronic devices are

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of ~~con~~pected 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 ~~u~~iversity will follow. For more information, visit <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

Student Development Centre's Learning Skills Services ~~in~~ 4100 WSS, www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning
LS counsellors are ready to help you improve your learning skills. We offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple choice exam preparation/writing, textbook ~~re~~ading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the ~~drop~~ Learning Help Centre, and yearound through individual counselling.

Lecture Schedule & Required Readings

Readings not in the text are noted with

- Class 7 Thurs Sept 25 The social gradient in health
Required readings:
 *The Whitehall II Study (2004). International Centre for Health and Society/Dept. of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College London, UK, 7pp.
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/whitehallIII/findings/Whitehallbooklet.pdf>
- *Sapolsky, R. (2005). Sick of poverty. *Scientific American*, December, 92-99.
- *Bloch G., &The Ontario Physicians Poverty Work Group. (2008). Why poverty makes us sick: Physician background. *Ontario Medical Review*, May, 32-37.
- Film: In Sickness and In Wealth, from the series `Unnatural Causes`

Week 4: Political and Economic Barriers to Health Equity

Class 8 Tues Sept 30 TEST 1

- Class 9 Thurs Oct 2 The political economy of health and health care
Required readings:
 Text Chapter 14: The pharmaceutical industry and Health Canada: Values in conflict?, pp. 27-295.
- *McGregor, S. (2001). Neoliberalism and health care. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 25(2), 82-89.
- *Thompson, A. (August 12, 2014). Drugs aren't the only answer to prevent spread of Ebola. *The Toronto Star*.
- Film: Health for Sale (53 minutes)

Week 5: Gender and the Social Determinants of Health

Class 10 Tues Oct 7 Gender and Medicalization
Required reading:

*Indian Residential Schools. Agreement in principle: FAQs
<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/05/16/faqs-residentialschools.html>

Film: Kuper Island: Return to the healing circle (1997)

Week 8: Test 2 and Study Day

Class 16 Tues Oct 28 TEST

Class 17 Thurs Oct 29 (n.9(m)2)-1(e)nt9(s)JTJ 0 Tc 0 7.109087 0 Td ()Tj -0

Class 21 Thurs Nov 13 Social suffering and structural violence

Required reading:

*Farmer, P. (1997). On suffering and structural violence: A view from below. In A. Kleinman, V. Das & M. Lock (Eds.),