

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Epidemiology 4900E Research Project and Seminar **Fall 2021**

Meetings:

Friday, NCB 293, 1:30pm-3:30pm

Instructor: Igor Karp, MD MPH PhD

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description

Students in this applied research course will develop skills in identifying and clarifying a research question, carrying out a methodologically critical review of literature, identifying data sources, conducting appropriate statistical analyses, interpreting results, and presenting findings orally, in posters, and in written technical reports or journal manuscripts.

Course Information

This course is designed for undergraduate honors students in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Course meetings will take place (as needed) on Friday afternoons.

Course Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- identify and clarify a research question
- carry out a critical review of literature
- identify data sources
- conduct appropriate statistical analyses
- interpret results
- present findings orally, in posters and in written technical reports or journal manuscripts

Course Materials

Additional materials will be provided on the course's OWL website.

Methods of Evaluation

- 10% - First written report
- 10% - First oral presentation
- 25% - Second (final) oral presentation
- 25% - Final written report
- 25% - Final performance evaluation
- 5% - Class participation

Course Timeline and Format

Students will submit their first written report around the middle of the Fall semester. This report is intended to give students the opportunity to introduce the background and rationale for their project and outline the methods that they will use to answer their research question(s). An oral presentation will be given at the end of the Fall semester. Final oral presentations will occur in April while the final written reports are due at the end of the Winter semester. Two assignments will also be completed: one in the fall and one in the winter semester. All presentations and written reports will be graded by the course coordinator.

Choosing your project and supervisor:

The research projects undertaken by honors students can take very different forms, depending on the supervisor and type of research. The guiding principle is that students must perform a project designed to address a specific research question or questions. Discuss this with your supervisor. Prior to the beginning of the Fall term of your fourth year you may approach faculty that you are interested in working with about potential projects in their research group. Keep in mind that it is not required that you find a supervisor prior to the beginning of the term and projects will still be available. If you do find a supervisor prior to the beginning of the term, send an email to the coordinator for your course. Copy your supervisor on that email. For those students who did not arrange for a supervisor prior to September, the second and third weeks of the term will be dedicated to interviews to help you find a match.

First Written Report:

The first written reports are due Friday, October 22, 2021 by 5 pm. The first written report should be no more than 3 pages long (double-spaced), plus references. It should provide an introduction to your project, state your research questions, and summarize your proposed study design.

First Oral Presentation:

First oral presentations will take place in late November – early December. Presentations should be no longer than 10 min, followed by 5 min for questions. Presentations that go over this time will be cut off. Students should present the research question(s) that their proposal will address, background information and preliminary results, and outline the methods that will

be used. Slides should be prepared in PowerPoint or a similar presentation software. Students should discuss details of content and form with their supervisor prior to preparing their presentations. Project students must attend the entire session and will be graded both on their presentation and their role as question askers.

Second (Final) Oral Presentation:

The final oral presentation will occur in early April. It should be no longer than 15 min, followed by up to 10 min for questions. Presentations that go over this time will be cut off. Students should present an introduction to their project, rationale, research question(s), results, and discussion. Slides should be prepared in PowerPoint or similar. Students should discuss details of content and form with their supervisor prior to preparing their presentations. Project students must attend the entire session and will be graded both on their presentation and their role as question-askers.

Final Written Report:

Final reports are due Friday, April 22, 2022 by 5 pm. (NO EXTENSIONS). Late reports will not be accepted. Reports are to be written in the style of a research paper with an Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections. Figures and legends should be prepared as if for publication and appended to the end. References should be handled appropriately. Specifics of content and style should be discussed with your supervisor. Reports should be no more than 20 pages not including abstract, figures, and references. Reports should also be double-spaced using 12-point font and 1-inch margins. You are expected to get your report to your supervisor TWO WEEKS prior to the deadline for feedback. Your supervisor can give you general feedback and guidance at this time, but can't rewrite your paper for you.

Final Performance Evaluation:

At the end of the course, your supervisor will evaluate your overall performance. This will be based on your commitment, effort, initiative, overall understanding of the project, and intellectual contribution and performance

Timetable for the Fall Semester:

Week	Date	Topic
1	Sept. 10	Course introduction and orientation
2	Sept. 17	TBA
3	Sept 24	TBA
4	Oct. 1	TBA
5	Oct. 8	TBA
6	Oct. 15	TBA
7	Oct. 22	TBA
8	Oct. 29	TBA
9	Nov. 5	<i>Reading week – No class</i>
10	Nov. 12	TBA
11	Nov. 19	TBA
12	Nov. 26	First oral presentation
13	Dec. 13	First oral presentation
14	Dec. 10	First oral presentation

Western Academic Policies and Statements

Absence from Course Commitments

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#)

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, you must seek approval for the absence as soon as possible. Approval can be granted either through a **self-reported absence** or **via the Academic Counselling unit**. Students have two self-reports to use throughout the academic year; absence from course commitments including tests, quizzes, presentations, labs, and assignments that are worth 30% or less can be self-reported. Self-reported absences cover a student for 48 hours (yesterday + today or today + tomorrow). Your instructor will receive notification of your consideration; however, you should contact your instructor immediately regarding your absence. Students are expected to submit missed work within 24 hours of the end of the 48-hour period. Please review Western's [Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#) policy for more details.

If you have used both their self-reported absences or will miss more than 48 hours of course requirements, a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) should be signed by a licensed medical or

mental health practitioner and you should contact academic counselling. Academic Counselling will be operating virtually this year and can be contacted at scibmsac@uwo.ca.

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

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: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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>).

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 Copyright and Audio/Video Recording

All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. You must always ask permission to record another individual and you should never share or distribute recordings.

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws.

Support Services

As part of a successful student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page <http://www.music.uwo.ca/>, and our own McIntosh Gallery <http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>.

Registrarial Services: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

USC Student Support Services: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (Graduate or Undergraduate Chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Health and Wellness-related information and services are available at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members. More information and access to services is available on the AEW website:

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Department & Faculty Offices

The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics is located on the third floor of the Western Centre for Public Health & Family Medicine (PHFM) on Western University's Main Campus.

Technology Requirements

You are responsible for all required course materials and announcements posted to the course's OWL website. Please ensure after the first class that when you log in you are able to access the course site. A copy of the course outline will be available on both OWL and the departmental website.