

Syllabus

Epidemiology 4310 A Public Health

Fall 2022

Class Time

Monday, 9:30-11:30, NCB 293

Instructor:

Laila Rahman (she/her)

Tutorial Time

Wednesday, 9:30-10:30, NCB 293

Messages:

Please use the Messages tab in OWL for course-related messaging or email using the Western's email account

Office Hour with Instructor:

Wednesday, 11:00-12:00, PHFM 3142

E-mail:

lrahman8@uwo.ca

TA:

Bisola Fadilat Hamzat

E-mail:

bhamzat@uwo.ca

Course Description

This is a course on the fundamental principles, theoretical frameworks, and methods of public health, including disease surveillance and outbreak investigation as practiced by the Public Health Agency of Canada and local Health Units. Multiple local, regional, national, and global perspectives will be introduced, encouraging self-aware, reflexive, and lifelong learning.

Course Information

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Biostatistics 3100A, Epidemiology 3200A

Anti-requisites: None

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 if you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Learning Outcomes/Objectives

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

- State the fundamental principles and building blocks of public health
- Outline Canada's public health infrastructure
- Explain, critique, and employ key public health theoretical frameworks
- Identify the role of research in public health policy and practice
- Analyze community and stakeholder engagement models in public health research
- Apply public health knowledge to a real-world public health problem to develop an interdisciplinary cross-sectoral strategy in a commentary position paper
- Reflect critically and provide constructive critiques of their own and peers' works
- Make scientific communications in the forms of posters and oral presentations
- Write letters to journal editors and commentary to peer-reviewed journals

Course Materials

Course materials will be provided on the course's OWL website, with readings and other materials organized into weekly modules.

Acknowledging the Course Founder

I express my deep gratitude to [Dr. Greta Bauer](#), Professor, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Sex and Gender Science Chair at Western University. She developed and conducted this course until 2021 with outstanding success. Dr. Bauer has generously shared all her teaching materials, and most importantly, her insights into and enthusiasm for public health education and years of experiences culminated in wisdom with me. Without her confidence and all-out support, I would not have been able to take up this daunting task of teaching this critical Public Health course.

Acknowledging the Land

As a member of the South Asian Diaspora, I acknowledge this beautiful land on which I have been conducting research and teaching scholarship at the University of Western Ontario. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. I am grateful to have the opportunity to live, learn, grow, explore, teach, and contribute to health equity research here. I commit to contributing to the Western University's efforts to correct the historical and contemporary wrongs against Indigenous populations, including the [Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls](#) in Canada.

This course will require everyone to reflect on and develop meaningful land acknowledgements aligned with the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) and its [Calls to Action](#) to achieve equitable outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Indigeneity (EDIDI)

In line with public health core values of social justice and equity, this course will explore and integrate Western University's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization, and indigeneity (EDIDI). Addressing EDIDI in our research and teaching are a few ways that might be helpful to make the learning and research successful. Like [the Western Office of Indigenous Initiative](#) (OII) engages in the spirit of *nothing about Indigenous peoples without them*, we will engage with Indigenous theories and learn about decolonizing the public health research space.

Building the Course Community

"If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together" – an African proverb cited by Opiyo Oloya in [OII's 2021 report](#) – captures the spirit of this course's initiative to build a vibrant PH Course Community whose members will learn about public health together. In line with my teaching philosophy of the 360-degree way of learning, students are expected to learn by being reflective on themselves, their life experiences and peers, the TA, and the instructor by engaging with diverse local, regional, national, and global resources that include multiple voices and perspectives.

Therefore, every student in this course is expected to be self-aware and actively contribute to in-person and online discussions, activities, and the formative and summative evaluation of assignments. The teaching team will also be self-reflective and actively seek student input to improve the course and learn from student experiences. We hope the professional relationships and networks built in this course will strengthen student resilience and contribute to their fostering a passion for lifelong learning.

Assignments and Assessments

No.	Assignments*	Type	Mark**	Formative assessment date	Summative assessments		
					Date	Location	Evaluators
1	Community building: Participation in in-person and online activities	I, G	20%	Class and tutorial days	Class and tutorial days	Classroom and OWL	Teaching Team
2	Poster presentation with an oral splash: Conceptual theories and frameworks, an online poster	I	15%	Sep 28	Oct 3	Classroom and OWL	Students*** and Teaching Team
3	Letter to Editor: Critical reviews of published papers and media reports following the Canadian Journal of PH (CJPH, Text: 500 words, References: 10)	I	15%	Oct 19	Oct 26	Classroom and OWL	Teaching Team
	Bonus: Quiz	I	5%	N/A	Nov 16	OWL	Instructor
4	Oral presentation and reflection: Taking a position on a PH strategy (Presentation: 10 minutes, Questions/ Answers: 5 minutes)	G	15%	Nov 23	Nov 30	Classroom and OWL	Students*** and Teaching Team
5	The CJPH Commentary and reflection: A position paper on a PH strategy (Abstract: 200 words; Text: 1500 words, Tables/figures: 3, References: 15)	G	35%	Dec 5 Dec 7	Dec 16	OWL	Students**** and Teaching Team

I= individual, G= group

* Detailed descriptions of assignments, including rubrics, will be posted on OWL.

** A penalty of 5%-mark deduction for each day of lateness will be applied.

*** Students will assess their peers in the class.

**** Students within each group will assess their fellow group members.

Course Timeline

Wk	Day	Date	Content	Highlights	Remarks
1	Mon	Sep 12	Introduction to the course Public health fundamental principles Knit a spider web: Introduce and build the community Problem tree: What issue are you most interested in?	Welcome to the first day of class! A1: Start building a community	
1	Wed	Sep 14	Public health infrastructure		
2	Mon	Sep 19	Public health theories/frameworks I		
2	Wed	Sep 21	Solve the theory puzzle: Match a theoretical model in applied research.		
3	Mon	Sep 26	Public health theories/frameworks II		
3	Wed	Sep 28	Give 1, Get 1: Feedback on the A2, poster outline	A2: Receive feedback	
4	Mon	Oct 3	Poster presentation: PH theories and frameworks	A2: Due today	
4	Wed	Oct 5	Critique away I: Critiquing media reports/research articles		
5	Mon	Oct 10	Thanksgiving Holiday		
5	Wed	Oct 12	Critique away II: Critiquing media reports/research articles.		
6	Mon	Oct 17	Public health methods I		
6	Wed	Oct 19	Give 1, Get 1: Feedback on the A3, letter to the editor outline	A3: Receive feedback	
7	Mon	Oct 24	Public health methods II		
7	Wed	Oct 26	Practice: Research and writing skills	A3: Due today	
		Oct 31–Nov 6	Reading week		
8	Mon	Nov 7	Public health surveillance and outbreak investigation		

Wk	Day	Date	Content	Highlights	Remarks
8	Wed	Nov 9	Meet the experts		
9	Mon	Nov 14	Building public health and community collaborations		
9	Wed	Nov 16	Meet the experts	Bonus quiz	
10	Mon	Nov 21	Public health strategies and policies		
10	Wed	Nov 23	Give 1, Get 1: Feedback on the A2, oral presentation outline	A4: Receive feedback	
11	Mon	Nov 28	Building public health strategies		
11	Wed	Nov 30	Group oral presentation: PH strategy position paper	A4: Due today	
12	Mon	Dec 5	Work and feedback session on the A5, commentary outline	A5: Receive feedback	
12	Wed	Dec 7	Reflect on the role of epidemiology and biostatistics in PH and wrap up	Last day of class. Good luck!	
	Fri	Dec 16	Final assignment due on OWL	A5: Due today	

Note. Western undergraduate studies drop deadline is Sep 16, 2022, and the deadline without an academic penalty is November 12, 2022.

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 a student has used both 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 to be submitted to academic counselling (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.

Copyright and Audio/Video Recording Statement

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. You must always ask permission to record another individual and you should never share or distribute recordings.

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. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective program.

Students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their programs (normally the Program Chair and/or Course Instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction. 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.

Undergraduate Students requiring academic counselling should contact the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling Office: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

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.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy

The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry is committed to ensuring that testing and evaluation are undertaken fairly across all our departments and programs. For all tests and exams, it is the policy of the School and the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics that any electronic devices, i.e., cell phones, tablets, cameras, or iPod are strictly prohibited. These devices **MUST** be left either at home or with the student's bag/jacket at the front of the room and **MUST NOT** be at the test/exam desk or in the individual's pocket. Any student found with one of these prohibited devices will receive a grade of zero on the test or exam. Non-programmable calculators are only allowed when indicated by the instructor. The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics is not responsible for stolen/lost or broken devices.