

**GEO 325 - Geographies of Health**  
**Winter 2018**  
**Tuesdays 2:30 – 5:20**  
**RCH 308**

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**University of Waterloo**  
**Faculty of Environment**

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**Office hours:** Monday 2 – 4:00 pm or by appointment

**TAs:** Joseph Kangmennaang ([jkangmennaang@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:jkangmennaang@uwaterloo.ca)) (office hours will be posted on LEARN)

**Course description:**

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to issues of health and health care as seen through a geographical lens. Our health is shaped by our ‘geographies’ – the places and environments in which we live, work and play. Where we live shapes our health outcomes and the access to services we have as well as the broad range of ‘determinants of health’. Places shape both physical and mental health; they may or may not help people age well; they may or may not be therapeutic or healthy. The characteristics of places may serve to aid the spread of infections, whether in the global north or the global south. And inequalities in this essential resource – health – abound.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course a student should be able to:

- Critically assess a public health issue;
- Demonstrate understanding of the broader determinants of health;
- Communicate a clear argument.

**LEARN:** Users can login to LEARN via:<http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/> using your WatIAM/Quest username and password. LEARN is an important component of this course, so please be sure to login for course updates and information.

**Required Textbooks:**

Gatrell A.C. and Elliott S.J. (2015) *Geographies of Health: An Introduction* (third edition). London: Wiley-Blackwell.

**Course Format and Evaluation:**

We will do everything we can to endeavor to create an active learning environment in this course. At times, this may be restricted by class size, but that will always be the goal! We will have several guest speakers in attendance throughout the term. These people are

experts in their field and are outstanding contributors to the science around the geographies of health and health care.

It is important to note that all material covered in the course (current events, lectures, readings, guest speakers, films) is eligible for testing on exams.

### Course structure:

This class will meet for 3 hours every week. The first **20 minutes** will be spent discussing current events that reflect how geography shapes our health. Students will be strongly encouraged to contribute – indeed **LEAD** – this discussion (after the first week, of course!). While no **FORMAL** grade will be assigned to this section of the grading scheme, a **bonus** of 1.5 marks will be given to any student who chooses to **LEAD** the introductory section of the class. Students may **LEAD** a maximum of twice during the term. **PURPOSE:** identify your current event; how does it relate to health geography; prompt discussion by asking 1 or 2 thought provoking questions.

The next **60-75 minutes** will be spent in lecture format. Following the lecture, there will be a break of approximately **15 minutes**.

Following the break, we will engage in an active learning activity that could take one of many forms; this will be addressed on a weekly basis. But to give you an idea it might involve breaking into groups for discussion, a debate, engaging a guest speaker in discussion, having a tutorial on some additional reading assigned for the week via **LEARN**, or watching a film followed by discussion.

In undertaking the various elements of this course, the intent is to explore geographies of health from the global to the local.

### Elements of Evaluation:

| Assessment Activity                     | % Final Grade | Date Assigned | Date Due                        |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Assignment 1                            | 15%           | Jan. 9/18     | January 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 |
| Reflections <sup>1</sup> x 3 (out of 4) | 30%           | Jan. 9/18     | TBA                             |
| Debate                                  | 15%           | Jan. 9/18     | AFTER the break                 |
| Final Exam – open book                  | 40%           | Jan. 9/18     | TBA                             |

Written assignments must be **typed** and **double-spaced**. Please include a title page with student's name and student number, the title of the paper and the date. All work is due **in hard copy** on the date stated, at the **beginning of class**, unless otherwise arranged in

<sup>1</sup> Serious thought or consideration that is written down.

advance. Late penalty - 5% each day after the due date (weekends included). Please ensure you save an electronic copy of your work just in case.

**\*\*\*EXTREMELY IMPORTANT INFORMATION\*\*\*PLEASE READ THIS\*\*\***

**Accommodations and Access:** I want this class to be open and accessible to everyone, and to be a safe, welcoming, and collegial environment. So, please feel free to sit where you like, eat snacks, use a laptop, and come and go from the classroom when you need to, so long as none of these activities disturb the learning experience of others. I recognize that classroom learning can be challenging, and I will try and reduce barriers to access in general and also work to meet any specific accommodation needs you may have. You can approach me directly, after class, in my office hours, or via email to discuss any accommodation. Some specific accommodations, such as note taking, extended test writing times, learning technology support, and others can be arranged at the AccessAbility office (located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, (<https://uwaterloo.ca/disability-services/>)). Please register with this office at the beginning of each academic term, if you feel accommodation is required.

**Mental Health:** Pretty much every student has or will face some type of mental health challenge in their time at university. There are many types of physical and emotional challenges that can make it difficult to do your best work and enjoy your studies. **You are not alone, and help is available from many different places.** If you need help, go immediately to the place you feel most comfortable; your residence don, your friends, your professors or to Counselling Services (<http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services>), located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the new Needles Hall expansion. Counselling Services is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counseling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more. Above all, seek help – these are challenges that you do not need to face alone.

### **Academic Integrity Policies**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/).]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action

constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties that may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is grounds. A student who believes he/she has grounds for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

**What does a grade mean?** Students come to the University of Waterloo from a variety of backgrounds, where numeric grades may not be used, or have very different meanings. The following table gives a general definition for what type of work constitutes a particular grade.

| Assigned Grades | Description   |
|-----------------|---|
| 80-100          | Grades in this category signal a sign of excellence and are not something that should be expected for work that simply meets the requirements of the assignment. In this category, a student has demonstrated a full understanding of the subject matter, has capacity to analyze, has demonstrated critical thinking, shows evidence of creative thinking, familiarity with literature and previous work in area, highly developed communication and presentation skills. The work is of outstanding quality according to the criteria established for evaluation. |
| 70-79           | Student has shown good comprehension of subject matter, evidence of critical and creative thought, familiarity with literature and previous work in subject area, competence in communication and presentation skills, but none of the above to the degree found in A category. The work is of very good quality according to evaluation criteria   |
| 60-69           | Student has demonstrated some understanding of subject matter, can assimilate and communicate basic aspects of the subject matter. The work is of satisfactory or adequate quality according to evaluation criteria   |
| 50-59           | Student has demonstrated minimal understanding of the subject matter, poorly developed communication skills, inability to apply subject matter understanding in other contexts, little evidence of critical or creative thinking. The work is of unsatisfactory but passable quality according to evaluation criteria.  |
| 0-49            | Inadequate understanding of subject matter, failed to complete course requirements, no demonstration of critical thought, communication skills very poor. The work is clearly of unacceptable quality according to the evaluation criteria.   |

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with

a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

*The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their Waterloo email and course websites weekly during the term.*

## LECTURE SCHEDULE<sup>2</sup>:

| Date        | Topic   | Reading   |
|-------------|---|---|
| January 9   | Introduction  |   |
| January 16  | Introducing and explaining the geographies of health  | Text, Chapters 1 & 2  |
| January 23  | Measuring and analyzing the geographies of health   | Text, Chapters 3 & 4  |
| January 30  | Health inequalities at the global level   | Text, Chapter 5<br><b>Assignment 1 due</b>                                |
| February 6  | Health inequalities at the local level  | Text, Chapter 6   |
| February 13 | <b>CODE RED</b><br><br><i>Guest Speaker: Adam Watson, Project Manager, Neighbourhood Action Strategy, City of Hamilton</i>  | Re-read chapter 1, pages 3 – 6<br><br><i>(reflection due next class!)</i> |
| February 20 | <b>READING WEEK</b>   |   |
| February 27 | Systems of care and inequalities in access  | Text, Chapters 7 & 8  |
| March 6     | It happens to all of us: Aging in a global context<br><br><i>Guest Speaker: Andrea Rishworth, PhD Candidate, GEM, UW</i>  | Text Chapter 9<br><br><i>(reflection due next class!)</i>                 |
| March 13    | On airs, waters, places   | Text, Chapter 11  |
| March 20    | Health impacts of global environmental change   | Text, Chapter 12  |
| March 27    | <i>Guest speaker: Climate change and global health; Francesca Cardwell, PhD candidate, GEM, UW</i><br><br><i>Guest speaker: Morgan Levison, Public Health Promoter, Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit, Assessing climate change impacts and vulnerabilities at the local</i> | <i>(reflection due next class!)</i>                                       |

<sup>2</sup> Subject to change with notice via LEARN

|         |  |                 |
|---------|--|-----------------|
|         | level  |                 |
| April 3 | Emerging, Re-Emerging and neglected diseases | Text Chapter 13 |

### ***Assignment #1***

Write a two (2) page position paper that completes the following sentence: ***The greatest health problem today is....***

Use at least 3 ***peer reviewed sources*** to support your argument. You may use additional sources (e.g., government documents posted on the web) but these must be over and above your 3 peer reviewed references.

Your paper must not be longer than 2 pages in length (exclusive of references or tables/figures), double spaced, no smaller than 12 point font, and one inch margins.

Hard copies of papers are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday January 30, 2017. Late penalties will apply.

The primary purpose of this assignment is to:

1. Take a position;
2. Build an argument;
3. Defend your position.

Thus, you will be evaluated on your capacity to do these three things, well, and do so in a clearly articulated and well referenced manner.

### **A NOTE ON REFLECTIONS:**

As defined, ‘reflection’ means to give something serious thought or consideration. You will be asked to write a **one-page** reflection on 3 of the 4 guest speakers. No references, just your (critical) reflections. Double-spaced, etc. (see above). These will be due at the beginning of the class following the guest speaker. The dates vary, so stay tuned!

*Follow this outline, think critically, write with clarity:*

3 sections of a (critical) reflection:

#### **•The what:**

A description of the experience with just enough detail to support doing your ‘so what’ section. For example, a description of: who, what, when, where and why

#### **•So what?**

This is the sense-making section that asks you to bring to the surface the general meaning, significance, your position/view point; actions; emotions...

#### **•Now what?**

This section makes connections from the experience/incident to further actions. For example, how did the guest speaker change your thinking about things going forward? What were the key points/lessons learned to share with your colleagues, friends, etc?