

# HS3094F

## Ethical and Policy Issues in Pandemic Response

University of Western Ontario  
School of Health Studies

Winter 2022  
Course Weight: 0.50

### COURSE INFO

LECTURE TIME	Tuesdays, 2:30 PM – 3:20 PM
TUTORIAL TIME	Wednesdays, 1:30 – 3:20 PM
LOCATION	TBA

### INSTRUCTOR

INSTRUCTOR	Maxwell J. Smith, PhD Assistant Professor
EMAIL	<a href="mailto:maxwell.smith@uwo.ca">maxwell.smith@uwo.ca</a>
OFFICE HOURS	<b>By appointment</b> Sign up via email
TEACHING ASSISTANT	TBA
EMAIL	TBA
OFFICE HOURS	Sign up via email

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course explores and examines key controversies, decision points, and policies arising in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with an eye toward preparing for future infectious disease outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics. Topics will include, but are not limited to: allocating ventilators and ICU beds when demand exceeds available supply, vaccine allocation and prioritization, mandatory vaccination, immunity/vaccination certificates, the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions like lockdowns, isolation, quarantine, and travel restrictions, conducting research during public health emergencies, and preventing the creation or exacerbation of health and social inequities. This course will explore these topics through real case examples from the pandemic response locally, provincially, nationally, and globally.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- a. Understand the ethical and policy dimensions of prominent challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic
- b. Examine the ethical and policy dimensions of decisions made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- c. Identify and articulate key ethical and policy considerations applicable to future public health threats

## **PREREQUISITES**

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 in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

**There is no required textbook.** Required readings and resources will be posted on OWL on a weekly basis. These resources may include relevant peer-reviewed articles, reports, government documents, media reports, websites, and videos. Students can expect 2-3 readings, and/or additional website/links to explore each week. Students are responsible for all assigned readings.

## **LECTURES**

This course will consist primarily of lectures and student-facilitated debatesou es ti(. A0.004 Tw (d)-10.33 0(n)-4

## HS4400B – Advanced Health Policy

In the School of Health Studies, each course instructor sets specific expectations for attendance and participation that are specific to the course, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes. Regular attendance is expected and essential for all courses, but particularly those that include participation grades in their evaluation schemes. Participation means not only attendance, but active engagement in the class, including (for example) contribution to small and large group discussions, a demonstrated effort to prepare for class by completing assigned readings before class, and following the instructor's guidelines for use of electronic devices during class time. Students who miss classes, or parts of classes, are responsible for the material they have missed. Instructors are not obliged to review the contents of missed lectures.

Persistent absenteeism may have serious repercussions and may result in you failing this course. In this course, the equivalent of 3 weeks of unexcused absences, per term, will be considered to be persistent absenteeism. Persistent absenteeism may result in you being contacted by the instructor, who may request a meeting. Continued absence after this point may be reported to the Undergraduate Chair and may result in debarment from submitting the final course paper. In such a case, you would receive a grade of zero on the evaluations from which you were debarred.

### **Weekly reflections**

Each week, we will be engaging with a new ethical or policy issue in the pandemic response. These are big topics and big issues, and it will not be possible to fully engage with the topic or hear from every student regarding their experience or perspective. Brief weekly reflections will therefore be used to encourage students to reflect on their own personal experiences and views regarding the topic and issue discussed. These weekly reflections will serve as the basis for discussion in the week following.

### **Outline of final paper**

Students will prepare and submit a 2-page outline of the course's final paper (see below) in order to receive feedback on potential avenues for further exploration. Further instructions and a rubric for evaluation will be disseminated in the first few weeks of the course.

### **Final paper**

Students will write a final paper on a topic or issue of their choosing and examine the associated ethical and policy dimensions. Further instructions and a rubric for evaluation will be disseminated in the first few weeks of the course.

**There will be no final exam.**

### **Extensions and late assignments**

In order to be fair to your peers and the instructor and teaching assistant, assignments submitted after the deadline which did not receive a written, pre-arranged approval for extension by the instructor will be penalized by 5 percentage points per day (including Saturday and Sun (y a)4.2tJ21.ttng artill be

## Grading

The university-wide descriptor of the meaning of letter grades, as approved by Senate:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable.
F	below 50	Fail

It is expected that the grades for this course will fall between 74-78. In the event that the course average falls outside this range, a constant may be added (or subtracted) from each student's grade, by the instructor, to bring the class average in line with school policy.

## Plagiarism and other scholastic 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: [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)

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>).

## English proficiency for the assignment of grades

Please see: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

As part of a successful undergraduate experience at Western, we encourage you to make your 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 receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre as part of their registration fees. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page

(<http://www.music.uwo.ca/>), or the McIntosh Gallery (<http://mcintoshgallery.uwo.ca/>)



## HS4400B – Advanced Health Policy

- d. The duration of an excused absence will terminate at 8:30am on the day following the last day of classes each semester, regardless of how many days of absence have elapsed;
- e. Self-reported absences will not be allowed for scheduled final examinations; for midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations (i.e., “bellringers”);
- f. Self-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., midterm exams, tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;
- g. Students must be in touch with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed.