

HLTH 6100 X/Y | Fundamental, Applied, and Translational Aspects of Health Research

Syllabus 2023-2024

Course Coordinator

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COURSE DELIVERY AND LOCATION

This course is designed as a synchronous in-person course. If necessary, there will be an option to connect virtually via Brightspace. Location: Dentistry Building, Room 2005.

COMMUNICATION

Email correspondence to lori.weeks@dal.ca. Please include HLTH 6100 in the subject line of all emails about this course. I recommend that you use your Dalhousie University email address for all course-related correspondence. Office hours are available by appointment. I will also be able to remain after most class meetings if you wish to meet with me then.

PREREQUISITE

There is no prerequisite as this is a required course. HLTH 6100 X/Y is a half credit (3 credit hours) required course for all doctoral students in the PhD in Health encompassing the Fall (X) and Winter (Y) terms, and is a companion course to the PhD seminar, HLTH 6000 X/Y Health Seminar Series. Students taking this class must register and complete both the X and Y terms consecutively in their first year of their PhD program in Health to receive course credit. For students in a 3-year residency program, this course would be in their second year.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Health research is an exciting multidisciplinary scientific enterprise that encompasses scholarly inquiry across multiple paradigms and that aims to address the many complex factors that shape the health of individuals and populations. The objective of this course is to provide a macro view of the health research field through exploration of methods, skills, and tools as they are applied in funded research programs by diverse practitioners of and leaders in health research. The course is an opportunity to reflect and analyze your own evolving role and goals within health research, with specific application to your thesis research, scholarly interests, and career trajectory.

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe the breadth and applicability of health research as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the interrelationships of the components defined by the International Classification of Function (ICF)
2. Explore how diverse worldviews and scholarly paradigms orient and inform health research.
3. Consider practices fundamental to health research encompassing: biomedical approaches to human functioning, from molecular models to whole body work; animal models; health professional practice across the spectrum of disease,

injury, rehabilitation, and palliation, across the life course; quality of life; product and service development; quality, provision, and governance of health services and systems; and the social, cultural, environmental, occupational, economic, and political factors that shape health and health equity for populations, jurisdictions, and societies.

4. Analyze the relationship between knowledge generation and the scope of knowledge translation/exchange/mobilization in health research intended for diverse audiences, including research/scholarly presentations, innovation and product development, practice guidelines, civic action, and policy change, with specific application to your own research.
5. Dissect fundamental issues related to ethics in research and ethical conduct in health research, with a particular focus on human participation in research.
6. Identify and assess the impact of health research for individuals, communities, and societies, with a particular focus on health and economic benefits and harms, including anticipated and unanticipated outcomes.

YOUR ROLE IN THIS COURSE

This course is an opportunity for career development through a collective undertaking in skill building and reflection, applying your life and educational experience to date, and flexing your transdisciplinary scientific muscles. All students are expected to work with a high level of independence and discretion. You will be expected to adhere to all relevant Dalhousie University policies and engage with other class members at a practicing health researcher level. You will need to be attentive to diverse worldviews, use critical thinking skills, be nimble and open to feedback, engage in careful reflection, actively contribute to class deliberation, and communicate clearly and efficiently. You are responsible for taking a leading role in facilitating your own learning. This seminar course is intended to establish a foundation of basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will assist you in situating your research and research interests within diverse health research perspectives, practices, and worldviews. Attendance at all seminars is required.

ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR

I am here to be your champion on matters relating to this course, to animate the discussion informed by our seminar facilitators, and to offer practical feedback on your personal learning objectives and your assignments. I will offer mentorship, guidance on substantive subject matter, feedback on critical reading and writing, supplementary advice on methods and skills, and support the development of effective written and oral communication skills. Please ask questions.

FORMAT

This course consists of seminars facilitated by the course coordinator or the students enrolled in the course. In preparing to facilitate a seminar, students are welcome to consult with Dalhousie health researchers, and researchers outside of Dalhousie, who are involved in research, practice, and administrative aspects of health research. Facilitators are expected to:

1. Select readings and other reference material for the seminar and e-mail them to the course Coordinator at least 1 week prior to the seminar,
2. Provide a critical summary of key content/issues/debates in a variety of formats to the class (e.g., lecture, videos, summary of interviews with researchers),
3. Prepare and facilitate discussion or other activities during the seminar.

READINGS

Readings and other reference material provided by the seminar facilitator(s) will be available on Brightspace at least one week prior to each seminar. These materials could be in a variety of formats including peer-reviewed academic journal articles, book chapters, practitioner resources, websites, and policy reports. Please allow at least 4 hours to read these materials prior to each seminar to adequately prepare for the class and discussion.

CLASS SCHEDULE

All classes are from 2:35-4:25 pm, Fall and Winter Terms. This course alternates with HLTH6000.

Date	Topic	Facilitator(s)
Sept. 13, 2023	Introduction to the course and students, create seminar facilitation schedule, diverse ways of knowing, worldviews, and scholarly paradigms	Lori Weeks
Sept. 20, 2023	Research Ethics, Introduction to the Systematic Review of Evidence	Lori Weeks
Oct. 11, 2023	What is Health? Health frameworks, WHO definitions of health research, International Classification of Function (ICF)	Temi Sodunke Timi Idris
Oct. 18, 2023	Why do equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility matter in health research?	Jaime Blenus, Fatemeh Mahdizadehkarizaki
Nov. 8, 2023	Indigenous issues in health research	Emilee Fackelmann Sarah Norris
Nov. 29, 2023	Patient/citizen/public engagement in health research	Emily Devereaux Theresa Vo
Dec. 11, 2023	Reflexive paper due	
January 10, 2024	The relevance of health policy and health economics	Firoozeh Bairami Md Zobraj Hosen
January 24, 2024	Integrating sex and gender+ in health research	Lindsay Macdonald
February 7, 2024	Health inequity and health inequality	Moriam Khanam
March 6, 2024	Peer review in health research: contexts & best practices	Seth Daley
March 20, 2024	Knowledge translation, implementation science frameworks, the value of diverse forms of knowledge dissemination	Ehsan Ghafari
April 3, 2024	Course wrap up, final paper knowledge sharing Final paper due	Lori Weeks
April 17, 2024	Peer review assignment due	

EVALUATION

Evaluation is about demonstrating academic achievement but also about applying skills and abilities in knowledge gathering and interpretation, critical thinking, and collaborating with diverse colleagues. In this course, assignments are your responsibility as an individual, but the quality of your assignments will be strengthened and your preparation of them invigorated by collective input of class members during seminar discussion with experts on various topics, and through deliberation on each other's work.

HLTH 6100 is graded using Faculty of Graduate Studies standard grading scale. You must pass each component to pass the course.

Course Work Deliverables (see details at the end of this document)

- 1) Seminar Facilitation – 25%
- 2) Seminar Participation – 10%
- 3) Reflexive paper – 15%
- 4) Final Paper – 35%
- 5) Peer Review Assignment – 15%

Recommended Activities

- 1) TCPS2: Course on Research Ethics (CORE-2022) <http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>
- 2) Canadian Common CV: <https://ccv-cvc.ca/indexresearcher-eng.frm>
- 3) Integrating Sex & Gender in Health Research Online Training Modules. Complete the module(s) that are relevant to your research (i.e., biomedical research, primary data collection, secondary data) <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49347.html>
- 4) Any additional courses or training programs relevant to your program of study such as

- The First Nations Principles of OCAP® <https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/>
- Conducting systematic reviews (e.g., JBI Comprehensive Systematic Review Training Program) <https://jbi.global/education/systematic-review-training>

Submitting written assignments: Written assignments should be submitted electronically to the course Brightspace Page at 11 AM on the due date. Please submit documents in .doc and .docx or PDF (accepted only)

Late assignments: A late penalty of 20% per day late will be deducted from the grade for any written assignments submitted after the due date. If you have made an electronic error and submitted the wrong file as your assignment, send me an email as soon as you detect the error, noting that you have sent the wrong file and would like me to disregard it. You will still be responsible, even with a file error, for handing in your assignment on time.

Resources on written communication

Good general guidance on effective scholarly writing, referencing, and style can be found in the following resources.

- Online Writing Lab at Purdue (including online style guides for referencing) <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.
- The Turabian Manual: Turabian K. 2013. A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago style for students and researchers, 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press editorial staff.) <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/manual/index.html>
- The Dalhousie Writing Centre offers personalized support. Services will be very busy at peak times, so aim to make appointments well in advance. These can be scheduled online. https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html
- Booth, Colomb, and Williams' 2016 book *The Craft of Research*, 4th ed., also offers excellent advice on effective writing in addition to research skill development.

Faculty of Graduate Studies Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Numerical (%) Equivalent
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
F	< 70

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate <https://academiccalendar.dal.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx>

- **Academic Integrity**
https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills/academic-integrity-module.html
At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.
- **Accessibility**
The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and

accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFLD).

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

Code of Student Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

- **Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect**

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness

<http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

- **Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory**

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Contact the Indigenous Student Centre for more information.

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)
http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
- University Grading Practices Policy https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html
- Scent-Free Program
<https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

Learning and Support Resources

- General Academic Support – Advising https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html
- Writing Centre https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html
- Online and Blended Pedagogies, Center for Teaching and Learning <https://www.dal.ca/dept/ctl/e-learning.html>
- Study Skills/Tutoring http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html
- Dalhousie Libraries <http://libraries.dal.ca>
- Copyright Office <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>
- Indigenous Student Centre https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html
- Black Student Advising Centre https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html
- International Student Centre https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre.html
- Student Health & Wellness, including mental health https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness.html
- Dalhousie Ombudsperson https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html

Description of Course Deliverables

1. Seminar Facilitation – 25% of final mark

This course consists of seminars facilitated by the Course Coordinator, or the students enrolled in the course. In preparing to facilitate a seminar, students are welcome to consult with Dalhousie health researchers, and researchers outside of Dalhousie, who are involved in research, practice, and administrative aspects of health research. Facilitators are expected to:

1. select readings and other reference material for the seminar and e-mail them to the course Coordinator at least 1 week prior to the seminar,
2. provide a critical summary of key content/issues/debates in a variety of formats to the class (e.g., lecture, videos, summary of interviews with researchers),
3. prepare and facilitate discussion or other activities during the seminar.

As a student facilitator, you will lead the structuring and trajectory of the conversation; and the content of the discussion will be contributed and enriched by all. The discussion will encompass a reflection on and critical analysis of the material, with regard to how the issues and topics raised relate to your specific area of research.

Assessment will be based on:

- Preparing: thoughtfully selecting readings and other references prior to the seminar, preparing the content to share, developing meaningful discussion questions and other activities
- Engaging: presenting material in various formats, clarity of the material presented
- Structuring the session to ensure all participants have the opportunity to interact and be heard in a respectful manner

2. Seminar Participation – 10% of final mark

A mark will be awarded for attending and actively participating in the seminars throughout the course. This includes spending sufficient time prior to each seminar reading/viewing materials posted on Brightspace for that seminar.

3. Reflexive Paper – 15% of Final Mark

Objective: Explore how diverse worldviews and scholarly paradigms orient and inform research.

Format: Structured paper. About 4-6 pages, double spaced. Use whatever type of formatting you wish for referencing sources (e.g., APA, Vancouver, AMA).

This paper provides a critical analysis in response to the question: “who am I as a researcher?” Consider biographical, professional/disciplinary and conceptual/theoretical orientations that shape your positionality as a researcher. What worldviews/scholarly paradigms/philosophical perspectives do, and do not, fit with who you are as a researcher.

4. Final Paper – 35% of Final Mark

Objective: To explore the onto-epistemological congruence of research.

Format: Structured paper. About 10-12 pages, double spaced Use whatever type of formatting you wish for referencing sources (e.g., APA, Vancouver, AMA).

This paper builds on the reflexive paper in that you need to first summarize your positionality as a researcher (e.g., worldview/ scholarly paradigms/ philosophical perspectives). Then explore in detail the theory or theoretical framework(s) that could inform your doctoral research. This section should be the largest section of your paper. Provide a description of a proposed research purpose/objective and one or more research questions. Include a description of methods that could be used to address the research question(s). Make clear connections about the congruence/alignment between your positionality, theory or theoretical frameworks that will guide you as a researcher, the proposed research question(s) and research methods. Address one or more key ethical issues that could arise in this research.

5. Peer Review Assignment – 15% of Final Mark

Objective: Gain experience in performing peer review through reviewing another student's final paper.

Format: Structured paper. About 4 pages, double spaced

You will receive an assignment from another student in the class. You will be required to carefully read the assignment and provide a written review according the template below. Your review can remain anonymous but be aware that the other student will be receiving what you write as feedback, similar to real peer review.

Your review should be clear, constructive, professional and provide support and rationale for the statements that you make. You should also treat this as real peer-review in that you should keep the information you read in the other student's assignment confidential.

Include the following headings in your peer review:

- a. A paragraph summarizing the content of the document
- b. Key strengths (e.g., clarity of content, writing quality, thoroughness, insights)
- c. Areas needing clarification or improvement
- d. Overall assessment and comments