



FACULTY OF HEALTH
PhD Health Program
Fall 2024

HLTH 6000

Health Research: Ways of Knowing and Doing

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.
We are all Treaty people.¹

SECTION A: COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE DATES: September 4th – December 11th (inclusive of final assignment)

CREDIT HOURS: 3 credit hours

INSTRUCTOR: **Dr. Shanon Phelan, PhD** (she/her)
Office: Forrest Building, Rm 326
Email: shanon.phelan@dal.ca

COURSE METHOD: In person
Brightspace Platform
Self-directed study

WHERE AND WHEN WE MEET: Wednesdays
2:35 pm (***2:45 pm²**) – 5:25 pm
Collaborative Health Education Building (CHEB) C266

CONTACT WITH INSTRUCTOR:

By email: It is best to contact me by email at shanon.phelan@dal.ca. Please include HLTH 6000 in the subject line of all emails about this course. I will respond to email within 48 hours on weekdays. If you do not receive a reply in 48 hours, I invite you to re-send your email as I may have missed it. I recommend using your Dalhousie University email address for all course-related correspondence.

¹ For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, or information about alternative territorial acknowledgements outside of Nova Scotia, please visit <https://native-land.ca/>.

² In alignment with inclusive design and drawing on notions of *crip spacetime* (Price, 2024), class will begin at 2:45 pm, allowing 10 minutes of flex time to arrive, settle, regulate, transition, connect, and do what you need to prepare to start class.

Virtual meetings: I am available for one-to-one discussions via phone, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom. My availability varies from Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm (Atlantic Time). Meetings can be requested by email.

In-person meetings: I am not on campus daily. However, I am available for in-person meetings when I am on campus. When on campus, my availability varies from Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm (Atlantic Time). Meetings can be requested by email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will expose students to the range of methods and issues in health research and increase their understanding of the potential contributions made by diverse interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

Pre-requisites: There are no pre-requisites for this course. This is a required course for students in the PhD Health program. For students in the 2-year residency program, this course is completed in the first year. For students in a 3-year residency program, this course is completed in the second year.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Appraise how multiple worldviews and scholarly paradigms orient and inform health research.
2. Develop knowledge about plural ways of generating and disseminating health knowledge.
3. Dissect fundamental issues related to ethics in research and ethical conduct in health research, with a particular focus on human participation in research.
4. Learn to respond appropriately to constructive feedback on your own scholarly work and develop skills in providing constructive feedback to peers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

Freire, Brookfield, hooks, Boler, and Greene inform my approach to curriculum design, teaching, and learning. Teaching and learning is a partnership and an opportunity for transformation, reflexivity, and student-driven inquiry. This course is designed to be dialogic and self-directed, using a reverse teaching approach (also known as a “flipped classroom”). Taking this pedagogical perspective, I believe that to thoroughly understand and be able to apply philosophical and theoretical material, it works best to read, think, and discuss. My role is to lead you to foundational resources and facilitate learning opportunities that will create scaffolding for learning. You will be introduced to different research paradigms and approaches to *knowing* and *doing* health research. Foundational readings and resources are included in the *Materials for Discussion* sections on Brightspace and are required to establish an understanding of the topic at hand. The *Suggested Resources to Direct Your Learning* will be selected based on class questions, discussions, and the group's learning interests and needs.

YOUR ROLE IN THIS COURSE

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. All students are expected to work at a high level of independence and intellectual curiosity. You are expected to adhere to all relevant Dalhousie University policies and engage with other class members at a practicing health researcher level. You will be expected to be attentive and open to diverse worldviews, use critical thinking skills, engage in careful reflection and reflexivity, actively contribute to class deliberation, be nimble and open to feedback, and communicate clearly and efficiently. You are responsible for taking a leading role in facilitating your own learning. **Attendance at all seminars is required.**

ROLE OF THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR

I am here to be your champion on matters relating to this course, to animate the discussion informed by our seminar facilitators and guests, 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 question and ask questions!**

COURSE FORMAT

This course is designed as an interactive **3-hour in-person seminar** facilitated by the course Instructor and invited guests, involving the review and critical analysis of course materials and open dialogue. This format will enhance dialogue among the learners and create an environment of scholarly discussion, critique, and reflexivity. This course is intended to encourage learners and educators to challenge and be challenged in their ways of thinking about *science* and ways of *knowing* and *doing* health research. The success and effectiveness of the seminars depend on proactive involvement and the readiness of students to participate meaningfully in respectful and reflective ways. It is expected that students will meaningfully engage in class materials in preparation for each class, critically reflect on class materials in relation to their own fields, research, and experiences, and be prepared to critically analyze course materials, discuss contemporary issues, and raise questions. If necessary (i.e., weather or illness), there will be an option to connect virtually via Brightspace.

MINIMAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Students require access to the Internet, Brightspace, Dalhousie Library, word processing software, and e-mail.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SITE INFORMATION

This course will be managed via the online Brightspace course site. All course materials and links will be housed on this site. Assignments and feedback will be exchanged through this site. Student support for Brightspace is provided by the Help Desk. Phone 902-494-2376 or 1-800-869-3931, or email helpdesk@dal.ca.

REQUIRED READINGS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Required readings and learning materials will be posted on Brightspace and embedded in weekly content sections. You will be asked to engage with **materials for discussion (required)** and **suggested resources to direct your learning (optional)**. Suggested resources will be provided as appropriate to support self-directed learning and build your research library. Please allow at least 4 hours to read these materials prior to each seminar to adequately prepare for class discussion. You will be expected to do independent research to complete your assignments.

COURSE SCHEDULE

See the Course Schedule on Brightspace for details on weekly readings, materials, guests, and activities. All lectures and supplementary materials (videos, media, etc.) will be posted at least one week prior to class.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to adapt the course schedule to meet the learning needs of the class. Topics and dates may change as necessary.

See: [University holidays and important dates](#) for details on university holidays and information on withdrawal and drop dates.

Week	Topic
Part 1: Ways of Knowing	
1 Sept 4	Introduction to HLTH 6000 *2 Hours followed by “Meet the Faculty” PhD Health Program Event
2 Sept 11	“What is Science?”: Doubt Everything
3 Sept 18	Understanding Research Paradigms: <i>Knowing</i> and <i>Doing</i> Health Research *Note: “What is Science?” Assignment Outline Due Sept 20th
4 Sept 25	Locating Yourself and Your Research *In class activity: Co-create interview guide for <i>Navigating Paradigms</i> Assignment
5 Oct 2	“What is Health?” Part 1: Dominant Discourses in Health Research
6 Oct 9	“What is Health?” Part 2: Critical and Subversive Discourses in Health Research
Part 2: Ways of Doing	
7 Oct 16	Coffee Talk: “How do we study health?” Guest Facilitator: Dr. Lori Weeks *Researcher Panel from the Faculty of Health*
8 Oct 23	Coffee Talk: “How do we study health?” *Researcher Panel from the Faculty of Health*
9 Oct 30	Debrief & Reflexive Dialogue Session: Interview a Health Scientist ~75 min Mini Lecture: Diverse Forms of Knowledge Synthesis~75 min *Navigating Paradigms Assignment Due
10 Nov 6	Procedural Research Ethics Guest Lecture: Dr. Lori Weeks
Fall Break Nov 12th-15th	
11 Nov 20	Practical Research Ethics

Week	Topic
12 Nov 27	<p>Ask Me Anything: In Conversation with Editors, Associate Editors, and Grant Reviewers in the Health Sciences</p> <p>*Editor/Associate Editor/Reviewer Panel from the Faculty of Health*</p> <p>*“What is Science?” Assignment Due</p> <p>*Note: You will receive an essay generated by one of your classmates on Nov 28th to be reviewed for your Peer Review Assignment</p>
13 Dec 4	<p>Plural Ways of Disseminating Health Research</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Dr. Sarah Moore</p> <p>*Note: Peer Review Assignment Due Dec 11th</p>

REQUIRED COURSE ASSESSMENTS

See Appendix A and B posted to Brightspace for detailed assignment descriptions and expectations. Supplementary rubrics will be posted on Brightspace as appropriate.

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weight
Weekly Contributions to Learning	Weekly	10%
Navigating Paradigms Assignment	Submitted via Brightspace any time before midnight October 30th	25%
“What is science?” Assignment	<p><u>Assignment Outline</u> submitted via Brightspace any time before midnight September 20th (*for feedback only, not graded)</p> <p><u>Assignment</u> Submitted via Brightspace any time before midnight November 27th</p>	40%
Peer Review Assignment	Submitted via Brightspace any time before midnight December 11th	25%

COURSE POLICY ON THE USE OF AI-DRIVEN TOOLS

Students may choose to use AI-driven tools e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm to facilitate student learning. Beware that using AI-driven tools may also stifle independent thinking and creativity. Students should note that the material generated by AI-driven tools may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. For example:

- Work created by AI-driven tools may not be considered original and instead, be considered automated plagiarism. It is derived from previously created texts from other sources the models were trained on, yet it doesn't consistently, sufficiently, or accurately cite (relevant) sources.
- AI-driven models have built-in biases (e.g., they are trained on limited underlying sources; they reproduce, rather than challenge, errors in the sources).
- AI-driven tools have limitations (e.g., they lack critical thinking to evaluate and reflect on criteria and lack abductive reasoning to make judgments with incomplete information).

As this is a PhD-level course, it is important for doctoral students to deeply engage with original scholarly sources. Doing so will help students learn how to synthesize, critically appraise, analyze, and reflect on these sources, preparing them for their comprehensive exams, thesis proposals, thesis writing, thesis examination, and defence. It will also help students consolidate their skills as independent researchers capable of generating novel insights and contributing new knowledge or advancing existing knowledge in their respective fields.

In this course, students are expected to cite, integrate, synthesize, critique, and reflect on original scholarly sources. Citation of AI-generated content in place of original scholarly sources is not acceptable and does not demonstrate evidence of original thinking, research and critical skills; ability to analyze and synthesize; grasp of subject matter; and understanding of the literature; all of which constitute the bare-minimum expectations for a passing grade in this course (See Appendix A for the course Global Grading Scale). Note that it is permissible to purposefully include AI-generated content to critique the limitations of AI-driven tools or provide an example, etc., within the "What is science?" assignment; it should be cited like any other reference material. Otherwise, any other reference to AI-generated content within class assignments will not be accepted, and students will automatically receive a zero. Students will not be given an opportunity to repeat the assignment for a passing grade. Under no circumstances should students submit any work generated by an AI-driven tool as their own. If work generated by an AI-driven tool is suspected, students may be asked to produce the original scholarly sources from which they drew cited information upon request. Using AI-driven tools when producing submitted work constitutes an academic offence.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of Dalhousie's academic integrity policy and take the necessary steps to ensure that any use of AI-driven tools complies with both course policy and Dalhousie's academic integrity policy. If students have questions, please speak with me first as we navigate how best to use these tools ethically and responsibly.

GRADING POLICY

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. You are encouraged to support one another through peer review and feedback.

HLTH 6000 is graded using Faculty of Graduate Studies standard grading scale. You must pass each component to pass the course. Students must obtain an overall grade of B- or higher to pass the course.

Please see further information at the following link regarding Dalhousie's [Grading Practices Policy](#).

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

LATE AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Written assignments should be submitted electronically to the course Brightspace Page on the due date. At the discretion of a course instructor, students may be granted an extension on the submission of an assignment. To avoid a late penalty of 10% per day, please contact the instructor in advance to discuss any need for extension. All extension requests must be submitted by email at least one day prior to the due date.

Dalhousie students are asked to take responsibility for their own short-term absences (3 days or less) by contacting their instructor by email prior to a missed class. If an absence will result in a late or missed academic requirement deadline, a student must submit a complete Student Declaration of Absence to their instructor. Only 2 separate Student Declaration of Absence forms may be submitted per course during a term. Please find the form at: <https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/www/about/mission-vision-and-values/edia/student-declaration-absence-form.pdf>

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT YOUR DOCTORAL STUDIES

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>

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 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' 2024 book *The Craft of Research*, 5th ed., also offers excellent advice on effective writing and research skill development.

***More resources are available on the course Brightspace site**

SECTION B: UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Territorial Acknowledgement

The Dalhousie University Senate acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

The Dalhousie University Senate also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). 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. (read more: <https://www.dal.ca/about/leadership-governance/academic-integrity.html>)

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility 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). Dalhousie's Accommodation policy can be found here ([Student Accommodation Policy](#)). If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your learning and/or inclusion please contact the Student Accessibility Centre (read more: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html). Once you meet with a member of the Student Accessibility Centre, you will collaboratively develop the best plan to meet your learning needs. This plan will then be forwarded to each of your course instructors to seek their assistance with implementation of the plan in their respective courses. **Additionally, feel free to make design suggestions to S. Phelan, as she is flexible with course design and open to suggestions that will improve inclusion, access, and learning.**

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 (Strategic Priority 5.2). (read more: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>)

Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Our classrooms are ours to use as they suit us. Feel free to stand or pace (at the back), come and go from class (quietly), or do whatever might help you to remain attentive. Please respect your classmates and instructor(s) by doing so in a quiet/non-disruptive manner. If alternative/accessible equipment, seating, or workstations are available (i.e., adjustable height tables), please allow access to those who require their usage in order to fully participate in the class.

Student Code of 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 do not 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. (read more: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html)

Fair Dealing policy

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. (read more: <https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/www/about/leadership-and-governance/university-policies/fair-dealing-policy.pdf>)

Originality Checking Software

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. (read more: <https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/www/about/leadership-and-governance/university-policies/originality-software-policy.pdf>)

Student Use of Course Materials

These course materials are designed for use as part of the Course Code at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.

SECTION C: UNIVERSITY POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Dalhousie courses are governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [Academic Calendar](#) and the [Senate](#). Important student information, services and resources are available as follows:

University Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, and Programs

- [Important Dates in the Academic Year](#) (including add/drop dates)
- [Classroom Recording Protocol](#)
- [Grading Practices Policy](#)
- [Grade Appeal Process](#)
- [Sexualized Violence Policy](#)
- [Scent-Free Program](#)
- [Links to Dalhousie Policies, Procedures and Guidelines by Category](#)

Learning and Support Resources

- [On Track](#) (helps you transition into university, and supports you through your first year at Dalhousie and beyond)
- Academic Support - Advising [Halifax](#)
- [Student Health & Wellness Centre](#)
- [Indigenous Student Centre](#). See also: [Indigenous Connection](#).
- Elders-in-Residence: The [Elders in Residence program](#) provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the [Indigenous Student Centre](#) or contact the program at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803.
- [Black Student Advising Centre](#)
- [International Centre](#)
- [South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre](#)
- [LGBTQ2SIA+ Collaborative](#)
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
- [Copyright Office](#)
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service \(DSAS\)](#)
- [Dalhousie Ombudsperson](#)
- [Human Rights & Equity Services](#)
- [Writing Centre](#)
- [Study Skills/Tutoring](#)

SECTION D: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

WHAT DOES ACADEMIC INTEGRITY MEAN?

At university, we advance knowledge by building on the work of other people. Academic integrity means that we are honest and accurate in creating and communicating all academic products. Acknowledgement of other people's work must be done in a way that does not leave the reader in any doubt as to whose work it is. Academic integrity means trustworthy conduct, such as not cheating on examinations and not misrepresenting information. It is the student's responsibility to seek assistance to ensure that these standards are met.

HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY?

We must all work together to prevent academic dishonesty because it is unfair to honest students. The following are some ways to achieve academic integrity in this course; some may only apply in some circumstances. (These examples should be considered only as a guide and not an exhaustive list.)

- Do not cheat on assignments or complete an assignment for someone else.
- Be sure not to **plagiarize**, intentionally or unintentionally, for example...
 - Clearly indicate the sources used in your written or oral work. This includes computer codes/programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images.
 - Do not use the work of another from the Internet or any other source and submit it as your own.
 - When you use the ideas of other people (paraphrasing), make sure to acknowledge the source.
 - Do not submit work that has been completed through collaboration or previously submitted for another assignment without permission from your instructor.

WHERE CAN YOU TURN FOR HELP?

If you are ever unsure about any aspect of your academic work, contact me, the PhD Health program Coordinator, or your thesis supervisor:

- [Faculty of Health Academic Integrity Website](#)
 - Overview of academic integrity process, with resources for faculty and students
- [Academic Integrity Website](#)
 - Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing
- [Writing Centre](#)
 - Assistance with learning to write academic documents, reviewing papers for discipline-specific writing standards, organization, argument, transitions, writing styles and citations
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
 - Workshops, online tutorials, citation guides, Assignment Calculator, RefWorks
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service](#)
 - Assists students with academic appeals and student discipline procedures.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF AN ALLEGATION OF AN ACADEMIC OFFENCE IS MADE AGAINST YOU?

As your instructor, I am required to report every suspected offence. The full process is outlined in the Faculty Discipline Flow Chart (<https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/www/about/leadership-and-governance/academic-integrity/academic-discipline-process-flowchart.pdf>). You can find more information here: <https://www.dal.ca/about/leadership-governance/academic-integrity/discipline-process-and-penalties.html>.