

Western University
Department of Psychology
PSYCHOL 9232
Health Behaviour and Wellbeing in the Workplace
Winter 2024
See Student Centre for course time and location

Enrollment Restrictions

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Department of Psychology, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.

Instructor and Teaching Assistant Information

Instructor: Dr. M. Blair Evans
Office: SSC 8410
Office Phone: 519-661-2111 x84663
Office Hours: By Appointment
Email: mevan3@uwo.ca

Course Description

This module will explore the interplay between social and physical environments in organizations, and the health and wellbeing of people who belong to those organizations. Student learning will focus on how employees are influenced by coworkers and their larger organizations in terms of mental health and health behaviours. Graduate students will read and discuss contemporary research from several fields including organizational psychology, health psychology, behavioural medicine, and clinical psychology. This course will also include a scientist-practitioner orientation that integrates application, which will include: (a) gaining awareness of key frameworks and resources from public bodies (e.g., Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety), and (b) reviewing health and wellness initiatives with regard to their content and implementation. Therefore, students will complete the course with an understanding of theory, along with awareness of key considerations when designing and implementing comprehensive health initiatives in workplaces. Half course (0.5); one term.

Course Format

This is an in-person, seminar style course. Weekly class meetings will typically be planned as: (a) discussions focused around assigned readings, (b) didactic, instructor-led coursework, and (c) student-led work sessions, focused on exploring online sources or workshopping writing in progress. As a small, seminar-style course, it is critical for students to demonstrate engagement in ongoing course activities.

Course Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

Learning Outcome	Activity	Assessment
Depth and Breadth of Knowledge. ...Recognize traditions within health promotion, occupational health, and organizational psychology involving employee health behaviours and wellbeing. ...Recall key studies, discussed during class time.	Weekly reading Conducting independent research for your proposal	Discussion questions Reflection papers Class participation grades Research proposal and presentation
Knowledge of Methodologies. ...identify innovative observational, intervention-based, and qualitative designs for studying health promotion in organizations.	Weekly reading Discussion questions Reflection papers Class discussion	Discussion questions Reflection papers Class participation grades Research proposal and presentation
Application of Knowledge. ... use knowledge gained to develop a novel idea that is of interest for one or more public audiences. ...adapt key methods that could be brought to bear on students' own research programs.	Class discussion Discussion questions Reflection papers	Discussion questions Reflection papers Class participation grades
Communication Skills. ...write in an engaging manner when communicating evidence pertaining to the 'why' component of promoting health. ...summarize the evidence base to academic and lay audiences.	Research proposal Class discussion	Discussion questions Reflection papers Student-led discussion Class participation grades Research proposal and presentation
Autonomy and Professional Capacity. ...recognize the challenges and opportunities when working within academic teams. ...appreciate the limits and ethical challenges that exist when balancing employee and organizational interests when promoting health.	Discussion questions Class discussion Leading a class discussion Conducting independent research for your proposal	Discussion questions Reflection papers Class participation grades Student-led discussion Research proposal and presentation

Course Materials

The course will be hosted using the OWL LMS, which will include a collection of preparation activities. Primarily, students are expected to prepare using weekly journal article or chapter readings. Students will also complete some prompted 'homework' activities, involving exploration of key organizations or associations online.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Evaluation for this course spans several forms of written and verbal components:

ASSIGNMENT	DATE OF EVALUATION (IF KNOWN)	WEIGHT
<i>Knowledge Translation/Advocacy Assignment</i>	Scientific Summary: Jan 30 (10%) Pitch: Feb 6 (5%) Final: Apr 15 (20%)	35%
<i>Grant: Specific Aims / Summary Page</i>	Mar 12 / Mar 26	25%
<i>Bi-weekly reflections and discussion</i>	Throughout term	20%
<i>Class Participation</i>	Throughout term	20%
TOTAL		100%

Students will receive individual assignment outlines within the OWL page. Briefly, assignment components will include:

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION / ADVOCACY ASSIGNMENT

The primary course assignment within this class involves independent efforts to develop and write a public-facing summary or advocacy piece focused on the student's selected topic relating to wellbeing or health behaviour. The specific layout of the final, submitted, piece will align with the formatting for the specific proposed outlet of the student's choice, but key examples include: (a) SIOP Whitepapers, (b) submissions to The Conversation, (c) APA Policy Briefs or stakeholder summaries, or (d) Op-eds prepared by leading workplace wellness promotion professionals in leading newspapers. Students may choose to actually submit their assignment to such an outlet in the future but, for the purpose of the course, this is a hypothetical assignment. The final project will feature a novel, compelling argument that is based in existing evidence explored during class time and that provokes change from one or more audiences.

Scientific summary: Students will prepare an annotated bibliography including at least 10 academic references, accompanied by related notes regarding insights relevant to the proposed topic for the assignment (e.g., findings from studies; arguments made by authors).

Pitch: Students will prepare a 400-word summary regarding their proposed assignment topic and structure. This submission should clarify: (a) the target audience for the assignment, (b) the target outlet for the submission, (c) the arguments being made within the piece, and (d) the strengths and weaknesses in the literature underpinning the submission. The student should also identify and briefly summarize two or more existing thought-pieces available to public audiences that would be the closest comparators to their submission.

Final submission (Apr 15): The final submission will be 1500-2000 words in length and be written in an engaging style, appropriate for a lay audience.

GRANT: SPECIFIC AIMS / SUMMARY PAGE (MAR 12 / MAR 26)

A critical component to developing novel directions for research is to develop concise descriptions of proposed research. Students develop this skillset when preparing federal or provincial scholarship applications, as they progress through their graduate careers. However, it can be challenging to transfer this skillset toward generating aims focused on larger and more ambitious programs of study. This assignment will include preparing a 'specific aims' page, which is common to many US funding agencies (e.g., NIH specific aims pages) as well as with many foundation-based funding opportunities (e.g., Letter of Intent). There is also some relation to this specific aims component and the 'significance/hypothesis' component of a CIHR project submission.

The specific aims assignment is to generate a 1000-1500 word Aims for proposed research (references not included). The submission will be concise and will balance an emphasis on the specific health-related significance of the issue for society, the theoretical foundation underpinning the work, the actionable Aims of the project, and the proposed methodologies that will be brought to bear. The submission will adopt Vancouver-style referencing (or another numerical style for referencing), and will include 15 or more academic sources in the submitted reference list.

Students will submit a specific aims draft for feedback (ungraded; Mar 12), followed by a final submission (Mar 26).

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS AND DISCUSSION (Throughout term)

During the first week of class, students will select 4 occasions where they will be the 'lead discussant' for one of the assigned empirical course readings. This role will include two key activities:

1. Reflection paper (Submitted by 9pm Monday, preceding selected class): The student will prepare a 500 word reflection on the selected reading. This summary should include a description and summary of the key aspects of the paper. More importantly, the summary

should seek a novel and reflective aspect, which may include: (a) a critique of key weaknesses in the paper, (b) proposed research questions or approaches building upon the paper, (c) applications of the study toward one's own program of research, (d) reflections on underlying theory or concepts. Papers will be evaluated based on accuracy of understanding regarding the selected article, as well as the depth of reflection. ***Students may select any paper from our assigned readings to consider, or may review articles/chapters included in the 'other' area of our reading list. Dr. Evans actually really enjoys hearing summaries of these 'other' readings, as presenters are sharing on a topic that their peers have not yet read.***

2. Leading discussion. Students will be invited to lead discussion pertaining to their selected article during class time. Students are encouraged prepare PowerPoint slides (maximum of 3-4 slides) to summarize their key points, draw-in related literature, or to refer to specific aspects of the article. It is anticipated that this discussion length will vary, but that it will typically be 20-30 minutes in duration.

CLASS PARTICIPATION. (Throughout term)

Active engagement and participation is vital for this course. Students must come to class prepared with insights and reflections on all key readings and demonstrate a willingness to engage in conversation. The instructor will evaluate participation based on the quality of contributions to the discussions. During reading week, the instructor will offer any feedback regarding participation, to prompt engagement and ensure that all participants understand the extent they are meeting expectations.

COURSE TIMELINE. [see next page]

Date	LECTURE TOPIC	Readings and preparation	Activities
Sep 9	1. Introduction to course	-	
Sep 16	2. Contributing perspectives to health and wellbeing promotion	Day et al. (2015) Goetzel et al. (2014) Review writing-focused papers.	
Sep 23	3. Contributing perspectives to health and wellbeing promotion (cont'd)	Sauter & Hurrell (2017) Yarker et al. (2022). Review lay summaries.	
Sep 30	4. Design: Quantitative and qualitative innovations	Andrews et al. (2020) Shoshan et al. (2023).	<i>Submit scientific summary.</i>
Feb 6	5. Design: Intervention and implementation	Olson et al. (2015) Ipsen et al. (2018)	<i>Share/discuss pitches (KT/Adv)</i>
Feb 13	6. Work experiences and wellbeing	Wright et al. (2017) Spreitzer et al. (2005)	
Feb 20	Reading week		
Feb 27	7. Recovery and Fatigue	Sonnentag et al. (2022) Chawla et al. (2020)	
Mar 5	8. Mindfulness	Hülshager et al. (2012) Vonderlin et al. (2020)	
Mar 12	9. Mental health promotion	Follmer & Jones (2018) Meunier et al. (2019)	<i>Submit draft aims page</i>
Mar 19	10. Social interactions	Gerbası et al. (2015) Heaphy & Dutton (2008)	
Mar 26	11. Physical activity	Leonard et al. (2022) Calderwood et al. (2021)	<i>Submit final aims page</i>
Apr 2	12. Critical and ethical perspectives	Terry (2019) Three sources relating to the case study of intervention at BJs.	
Apr 9	13. Writing workshop	-	
<i>Final submission of KT/Advocacy piece (Apr 15)</i>			

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_grad.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>).

Health/Wellness Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> 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, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate 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 graduate programs (normally their Graduate 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.

DETAILED READING LIST
1. Introduction to course.
<p>2. Contributing perspectives to health and wellbeing promotion [also: engaging academic writing and writing for lay audiences]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day, A. and Helson, T. (2015). Workplace Health Promotion. In <i>The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of the Psychology of Occupational Safety and Workplace Health</i> (eds S. Clarke, T.M. Probst, F. Guldenmund and J. Passmore). Goetzel, R. Z., Henke, R. M., Tabrizi, M., Pelletier, K. R., Loeppke, R., Ballard, D. W., ... & Kelly, R. K. (2014). Do Workplace Health Promotion (Wellness) Programs Work?. <i>Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine</i>, 56(9), 927-934. <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant, A. M., & Pollock, T. G. (2011). Publishing in AMJ-Part 3: Setting the hook. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 54(5), 873-879. Lingard, L., & Watling, C. (2021). Problem/Gap/Hook Introductions. In <i>Story, Not Study: 30 Brief Lessons to Inspire Health Researchers as Writers</i> (pp. 7-14). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
<p>3. Contributing perspectives to health and wellbeing promotion (cont'd)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sauter, S. L., & Hurrell Jr, J. J. (2017). Occupational health contributions to the development and promise of occupational health psychology. <i>Journal of Occupational Health Psychology</i>, 22(3), 251. Yarker, J., Lewis, R., Sinclair, A., Michlig, G., & Munir, F. (2022). Meta-synthesis of qualitative research on the barriers and facilitators to implementing workplace mental health interventions. <i>SSM-Mental Health</i>, 2, 100148. <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanders, L. (2018, Feb). How employers can design workplaces to promote wellness. Retrieved from: https://theconversation.com/how-employers-can-design-workplaces-to-promote-wellness-91983 <p>Lay summaries to review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lieberman, C. (2019). What wellness programs don't do for workers. https://hbr.org/2019/08/what-wellness-programs-dont-do-for-workers Roemer EC, Kent KB, Goetzel RZ, Krill J, Williams FS, Lang JE. The CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard: A Tool to Advance Workplace Health Promotion Programs and Practices. <i>Prev Chronic Dis</i> 2022;19:210375

4. Design: Quantitative and qualitative innovations

- Andrews, H., Tierney, S., & Seers, K. (2020). Needing permission: The experience of self-care and self-compassion in nursing: A constructivist grounded theory study. *International journal of nursing studies*, 101, 103436.
- Nesher Shoshan, H., Venz, L., & Sonnentag, S. (2023). Reciprocal relations between emotional exhaustion and episode-specific emotional labour: An experience-sampling study. *Work & Stress*, 1-25. (advance online publication).

Other:

- Cruickshank, J. (2012). Positioning positivism, critical realism and social constructionism in the health sciences: a philosophical orientation. *Nursing inquiry*, 19(1), 71-82.
- Tetrick, L. E. (2017). Trends in measurement models and methods in understanding occupational health psychology. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 22(3), 337.

5. Design: Intervention and implementation

- Olson, R., Crain, T. L., Bodner, T. E., King, R., Hammer, L. B., Klein, L. C., ... & Buxton, O. M. (2015). A workplace intervention improves sleep: results from the randomized controlled Work, Family, and Health Study. *Sleep Health*, 1(1), 55-65.
- Ipsen, C., Sorensen, O. H., Poulsen, S., & Gish, L. (2018). Using high-involvement fishbone workshops to transform problem identification into tailor-made organizational interventions. In Neilsen & Noblet (Eds.) *Organizational Interventions for Health and Well-being*. Routledge.

Other.

Greenberg, K., Donchin, M., Leiter, E., & Zwas, D. (2021). Health ambassadors in the workplace: A health promotion intervention mobilizing middle managers and RE-AIM evaluation of outcomes. *BMC Public Health*, 21.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11609-8>

6. Work experiences and wellbeing.

- Wright, T. A., Emich, K., & Klotz, D. (2017). The many 'faces' of well-being. In *Research Handbook on Work and Well-being* (Eds Burke and Page). Edward Elgar.
- Spreitzer, G., Sutcliffe, K., Dutton, J., Sonenshein, S., & Grant, A. M. (2005). A socially embedded model of thriving at work. *Organization science*, 16(5), 537-549.

Other

- Fritz, C., Lam, C.F., & Spreitzer, G.M. (2011). It's the little things that matter: An examination of knowledge workers' energy management. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 25: 28-39.

7. Recovery/Fatigue

- Sonnentag, S., Cheng, B. H., & Parker, S. L. (2022). Recovery from work: Advancing the field toward the future. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 9, 33-60.
- Chawla, N., MacGowan, R. L., Gabriel, A. S., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2020). Unplugging or staying connected? Examining the nature, antecedents, and consequences of profiles of daily recovery experiences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 105, 19.

Other

- Allen, T. D., Merlo, K., Lawrence, R. C., Slutsky, J., & Gray, C. E. (2021). Boundary management and work-nonwork balance while working from home. *Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 60-84.
- Day, A., & Hartling, N. (2017). Finding the balance: initiatives to promote work-life balance. *Research Handbook on Work and Well-Being*, 389.

8. Mindfulness

- Hülshager, U. R., Alberts, H. J. E. M., Feinholdt, A., & Lang, J. W. B. 2012. Benefits of mindfulness at work: The role of mindfulness in emotion regulation, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(2): 310–325.
- Vonderlin, R., Biermann, M., Bohus, M., & Lyssenko, L. (2020). Mindfulness-based programs in the workplace: A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Mindfulness*, 11, 1579-1598.

9. Mental health promotion

- Follmer, K. B., & Jones, K. S. (2018). Mental illness in the workplace: An interdisciplinary review and organizational research agenda. *Journal of Management*, 44(1), 325-351.
- Meunier, S., Roberge, C., Coulombe, S., & Houle, J. (2019). Feeling better at work! Mental health self-management strategies for workers with depressive and anxiety symptoms. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 254, 7-14.

Other

Fikretoglu, D., Liu, A., Nazarov, A., & Blackler, K. (2019). A group randomized control trial to test the efficacy of the Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) program among Canadian military recruits. *BMC Psychiatry*, 19(1), 1-14.

10. Social interactions and wellbeing

- Gerbasi, A., Porath, C. L., Parker, A., Spreitzer, G., & Cross, R. (2015). Destructive de-energizing relationships: How thriving buffers their effect on performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100, 1423-1433.
- Heaphy & Dutton (2008) Positive social interactions and the human body at work: linking organizations and physiology. *Academy of Management Review*, 33, 137-162.

Other

- Elfenbein, H. (2014). The many faces of emotional contagion: An affective process theory of emotional linkage. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 4, 326-362.

11. Physical activity

- Leonard, K. S., Mullane, S. L., Golden, C. A., Rydell, S. A., Mitchell, N. R., Koskan, A., ... & Buman, M. P. (2022). Qualitative comparative analysis of the implementation fidelity of a workplace sedentary reduction intervention. *BMC public health*, 22(1), 1-11.
- Calderwood, C., Gabriel, A. S., Ten Brummelhuis, L. L., Rosen, C. C., & Rost, E. A. (2021). Understanding the relationship between prior to end-of-workday physical activity and work-life balance: A within-person approach. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 106(8), 1239.

Other

- Lock, M., Post, D., Dollman, J., & Parfitt, G. (2021). Efficacy of theory-informed workplace physical activity interventions: A systematic literature review with meta-analyses. *Health Psychology Review*, 15(4), 483-507.

12. Critical and ethical perspectives

- Terry, P. E. (2019). Workplace health promotion is growing up but confusion remains about what constitutes a comprehensive approach. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 33, 845-849.

Case – JAMA paper involvings intervention at BJs

- Reif, J., Chan, D., Jones, D., Payne, L., & Molitor, D. (2020). Effects of a workplace wellness program on employee health, health beliefs, and medical use: a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA internal medicine*, 180(7), 952-960.
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/workplace-wellness-programs-return-few-benefits-study-suggests-1.5109388>
- Terry, P. E. (2021). External validity and worksite wellness: lessons from China and Illinois. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 35(1), 9-12.

13. Writing workshop