

SPPH 381E: Work and Health

Winter Session, Term 2 (January-April 2023)

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Office hours: TBD

Teaching assistant: TBD

In-person sessions: Tuesday & Thursday, 2:00-3:20 PM

Location: [West Mall Swing Space](#), Room 207

Course description

The majority of adult life is occupied by work. Disability and illness related to work can have a serious impact, both on the individual and on society as a whole. Given the changing nature of work, with the growth of the “gig” economy, precarious work, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change, understanding the relationship between our work and health has never been more relevant. This purpose of this course is to introduce students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds to the field of work and health by exploring topics ranging from workers’ compensation through to broader understandings of working conditions, working life and how to create safe working conditions to promote worker health.

Learning objectives

After taking this course, you will be able to:

- Describe and discuss how work can both harm or benefit health
- Summarize approaches used to improve worker health
- Conduct a risk assessment of common occupational hazards/processes
- Explain and debate relevant government occupational health and safety and policies
- Locate, read and critique relevant scientific literature

Course materials

There is no required textbook for this course. All course readings and videos are available online through the UBC library (www.library.ubc.ca) and if not, direct links will be provided.

Course format and structure:

This course will be taught in a “blended” format. That means each week, you will participate in two types of activities: in-person classes and a set of online activities (available on Canvas). In-person classes will typically be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:20 pm but during some weeks there may only be one in-person class. Please see the “Course schedule” section for additional detail on the weekly course structure.

Learning activities and assessment of learning

Summary

#	Component	Weight
1	Discussion board participation	20%
2	Class project I	40%
3	Class project II	40%
	Total	100%

1. Discussion board participation

Participation marks will be awarded for the completion of short quizzes, weekly reading reflection, or discussion board posts on Canvas related to the required reading and viewing for that week's module. Each class will begin with reviewing the quiz together, followed by a lecture and then additional class activities (e.g., discussion, class project).

2. Class project I: Risk assessment

Student will undertake a risk assessment of a common occupational exposure or process, including all phases of the occupational hygiene paradigm of recognition, evaluation and control.

3. Class project II: Worker health strategy

Small groups will propose a strategy to improve worker health on one or a related topic covered in class. This will include a presentation component and written proposal.

Grading scheme

Grade	Percent	Level of achievement
A+	90-100	Exceptional
A	85-89	Exceptional
A-	80-84	Exceptional
B+	76-79	Competent
B	72-75	Competent
B-	68-71	Competent
C+	65-67	Adequate
C	60-63	Adequate
C-	55-59	Adequate
F	00-49	Inadequate

Course schedule:**Note:** This schedule is preliminary and is subject to change

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	Tue, Jan 10 th	Introduction to course	
	Thu, Jan 12 th	Work as a social determinant of health	
2	Tue, Jan 17 th	The burden of occupational injury and disease	
	Thu, Jan 19 th	Disciplinary approaches to work and health	
3	Tue, Jan 24 th	Workers' compensation and occupational health and safety prevention	
	Thu, Jan 26 th		
4	Tue, Jan 31 st	Fundamentals of occupational hygiene	
	Thu, Feb 2 nd	Occupational hazards	
5	Tue, Feb 7 th	Occupational injuries	
	Thu, Feb 9 th	Occupational diseases	
6	Tue, Feb 14 th		
	Thu, Feb 16 th	Psychological health and safety	
Mid-term break (February 20-24th)			
7	Tue, Feb 28 th	Return-to-work after work-related injury and illness	Class project I
	Thu, Mar 2 nd		
8	Tue, Mar 7 th	Occupational health and safety interventions	
	Thu, Mar 9 th		
9	Tue, Mar 14 th	Work and health during the COVID-19 pandemic	
	Thu, Mar 16 th		
10	Tue, Mar 21 st	Working arrangements	
	Thu, Mar 23 rd		
11	Tue, Mar 28 th	Gender, work and health and the ageing workforce	
	Thu, Mar 30 th		
12	Tue, Apr 4 th	Climate change and emerging hazards	
	Thu, Apr 6 th		
13	Tue, Apr 11 th	Student presentations	Class project II
	Thu, Apr 13 th		

Course policies

Attendance and participation:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Class will begin at 2:00 pm and end at 3:20 pm. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from joining class, please email the instructor and teaching assistant. These circumstances include but are not limited to illness, the need to care for an ill family member, and challenges in physically getting to UBC due to travel and quarantine restrictions. You will not be penalized for missing a class. However, the material we discuss during in-person classes will be relevant for the course assessment. Therefore, if you miss a class, please reach out to one of your classmates to see if they could share their notes. Materials used in class (e.g., handouts, discussion prompts, slides) will be posted on the Canvas site so that you can review them.

Late submissions

If you encounter medical or personal circumstances that affect your ability to attend class and/or submit assignments, please notify the instructor or teaching assistant as early as possible. Late submissions of the assessments will be accepted and given partial credit. Late submissions will be marked down by 5% for each day beyond the due date, down to a maximum deduction of 50%. All late work must be received by April 19th in order to receive partial credit.

University Policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to assess including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the [UBC Senate website](#).

Academic integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, instances of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on an assignment and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the [UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

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