Course Syllabus: MRPE 9500 - - Knowledge Mobilisation

Masters of Research in Policy and Evaluation (MRPE), The University of Western Ontario

THRIVE together	Although this academic year might be different, Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being. Additionally, the following link provides available resources to support students on and off campus: https://www.uwo.ca/health/.

Technical requirements

(icon)	Stable internet connection	(icon)	Laptop or computer
(icon)	Working microphone	(icon)	Working webcam
ZOOM	Zoom application installed		

Recommended technical specifications: https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/timetables.html

Western Zoom webpage, including privacy information: https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/index.html
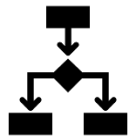
Course information:

Class: Mondays 9:30am to 12:30pm via Zoom meetings. Your instructor will send details about Zoom meetings separately.

Office Hours and Contact Information

Instructor: Prof. Michael Buzzelli, The University of Western Ontario
Office Location: SSC 2429
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: 5196612111x85329

Calendar description

The two overarching aims of this course are to (1) develop students' abilities to synthesise literature and evidence from a variety of sources and (2) communicate knowledge and insights to a range of audiences by alternative means. These aims are achieved by first focusing on the research process, including the questions asked, the methodologies used, and the quality of the evidence produced, noting its strengths and weaknesses. Knowledge mobilisation (KM) follows and is worked through a pedagogy that is collaborative and interactive including case studies and problem-based learning. Assessments structure the learning process and include weekly verbal and written reporting, policy briefs, social media, blogs and other methods reaching beyond traditional academic communication. Two term projects - - one completed in groups and the other individually - - are the main foci of the assessments in the course. Theory is introduced throughout the schedule however the course also has an applied/practical orientation. By the end of this course, students will be able to mobilise knowledge for policy and programme impact by collecting and assimilating relevant research, developing communication strategies to target specific audiences and employing alternative techniques and tools to deliver insights.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, you will:

- Have a general understanding of the interdisciplinary field of KM
- Be able to think critically and communicate the connections between research, evidence, policy and professional practice
- Develop your library and information/data research skills
- Be able to collaborate with peers on the development of a communication strategy
- Understand how to develop a KM plan and develop a simple plan of your own
- Develop your project planning skills, including proposal writing, design, project management, time management.
- Communicate more effectively in verbal, written and visual forms

Reference materials and readings:

A combination of articles, book chapters other media will be used. The assigned readings will be made available in web-accessible electronic journals or via OWL. All materials will be distributed via OWL. The course outline below is in draft and the final full list of readings will be provided at the start of the course.

Course format:

This course involves a combination of synchronous and asynchronous elements, specifically live seminars, case studies and individual and group project work. The course provides both an overview of the field of KM as well as complementary assessments that reinforce the concepts and professional practice.

Assessments and evaluation:

Assessment item	Value (%)
Weekly notes	10
Professionalism (includes attendance; see notes below)	10
Policy briefs and new media	20
Group project	30
Knowledge mobilisation plan (topic/sector of your choice)	30
TOTAL	**100**

A separate handout will detail the assessments of the course.

Participation, including professionalism

Attendance is expected each week for the full scheduled class time. The course is designed to be collaborative and interactive and we use the full scheduled time each week to be present and engaged.

As noted above, professionalism will form part of the evaluation in the course. It is much more than attendance. See https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/teaching-tips-learning-activities/student-guidelines-communicating-online-professional (external site) for guidelines on professional practices for working online, including:

- Treating others with respect
- Observing the conventions of professional writing
- Discussion groups
- Email

More details are appended at the end of this syllabus.

Tips for succeeding in this course

- Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
- Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
- Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Treat this course as you would a face-to-face course. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively than just reading or watching the videos.
- Connect with others. Try forming an online study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards or contact your instructor and/or teaching assistant.
- Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.

University Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offenses. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offenses in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offenses include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate, consult your instructor. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" will not be accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offense include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Procedures for Appealing Academic Evaluations

In the first instance, all appeals of a grade must be made to the course instructor (informal consultation). If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal must be sent to the Program Director. If the response of the Director is considered unsatisfactory to the student, he/she may then appeal to the Dean of the Faculty in which the course of program was taken. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean, may a student

appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office.

Support Services

The Registrar's office can be accessed for Student Support Services at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca. Student Support Services *(including the services provided by the USC listed here) can be reached at: http://westernusc.ca/services/.* Student Development Services can be reached at: *http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/.* 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.

Other Issues

Short Absences
If you miss a class due to minor illness or other problems, check your course outlines for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or exam. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow the missed lectures notes from a classmate.

Extended Absences
If you are absent more than approximately two weeks or if you get too far behind to catch up, you should consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses. The Academic Counsellors can help you to consider the alternatives. At your request, they can also keep your instructors informed about your difficulties.

Academic Concerns
If you are in academic difficulty, it is strongly recommended that you see your academic counsellor.

For The University of Western Ontario Senate Regulations, please see the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/

Class Schedule, topic, date and readings:

The first half of scheduled class time will normally be allotted to instructor-led interactive seminars. Seminars will be based on the teaching practice of problem-based learning (PBL; sometimes referred to as 'inquiry' learning). This is a facilitated learning approach where questions lead participants through the main points/lessons of the topic and readings. The second half of scheduled class time will be allotted to student-led seminars, presentations and group assignment time.

Date	Seminar topic	Seminar structure / notes	Readings/materials
11 January	Welcome: course introduction	Library research refresher; in-class exercise	Hache and Greenwood, 2017
18 January	KM: What is it? Definitions, types, processes, practices	PBL seminar; assignment time, incl. first discussion of the KM Plan	Phipps et al., 2012
25 January	Research, evidence and the policy cycle	PBL seminar; Individual and group project time	Lavis, 2010 [Nakamura, 1987]
1 February	Evidence 2: research ethics, data/information and KM roles (researcher, advocate, broker, user)	PBL seminar; assignment time	Cooper, 2014
8 February	Project progress presentations	Student presentations	
13-21 February	**Reading week/spring break – no classes**		
22 February	KM context and networks	PBL seminar; policy brief feedback	Levine, 2020
1 March	KM priority-setting, narratives and strategies	PBL seminar; assignment time	Christensen, 2012
8 March	KM process and practices	In-class exercise; assignment time	NA
15 March	The KM 'toolkit' and plan	PBL seminar; assignment time	NA
22 March	KM impact and evaluation	PBL seminar; assignment time	Penfield et al., 2014
29 March	On being a professional	In class exercise; individual and group assignment time	NA
5 April	Group/student project presentations		

About your professor:

After completing graduate work at McMaster University, I held academic appointments at UBC and Queen's. I have been at Western since 2007. Along the way I have taught undergraduate and graduate courses and supervised students at all graduate/postdoctoral levels. In terms of scholarship and practice, I have led several national and international research projects on a range of issues and developed and supervised applied graduate policy training programmes. My current work focuses on higher education institutional and system policy and planning, including research on teaching and learning.

In addition to these rewarding experiences, I have also held visiting appointments at the Universities of Melbourne (Summer 2007), Glasgow (Summer 2008), UBC (Summer 2011) and Bologna (January – June 2016). Among the most important things I have done professionally is serve on the Board of Directors of the London and Middlesex Housing Corporation, the largest social housing provider in the region (Member 2014-17, Chair, 2017-18). Since 2019 I have sat on the City of London's Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-oppression Advisory Committee (DIAAC) and the London Community Foundation's Social Finance Committee.

Michael Buzzelli, B.A. (Hons.), M.A., Ph.D., M.Ed., Associate Professor at the University of Western Ontario.

Further notes on participation, including professionalism

Adapted from https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/teaching-tips-learning-activities/student-guidelines-communicating-online-professional

Guidelines for Communicating in Online/Professional Contexts

The notes below provide guidance on appropriate ways of interacting with your classmates, teaching assistants, and instructors in online and professional contexts. It applies to email, online discussion groups, and online chats.

Treat others with respect

- Use your instructor's proper title, such as "Dr." or "Professor." Don't call instructors by their first names unless they have invited you to do so.
- Use the preferred names of your classmates. If someone signs their name as "Melanie," don't address them as "Mel" in your response.
- For those individuals who have indicated preferred pronouns (such as "he," "she," or "they"), use those preferred pronouns when referring to them.
- Do your part to maintain a professional environment. For example, if your instructor has you use an online tool where you can make up your own username, don't create a username that is silly or offensive. Use your real name or something similar and appropriate.
- Be respectful of others' opinions. Being open to new perspectives is one of the objectives of academic discussions. However, if someone writes something that you think is genuinely offensive or hateful, immediately draw it to your instructor's attention.
- Before you write something, ask yourself: "Would I say this out loud in class?" If not, don't write it.
- If you're angry about something, wait a day (to cool off) before you communicate with the person or persons who've angered you. This is a good idea in the real world, too!

Observe the conventions of professional writing

- Write in a clear and concise manner. Write in sentences, not fragments.
- In professional communications, you should endeavor to use correct spelling and grammar.
- Avoid using short forms such as "u" instead of "you." Those abbreviations are fine when texting friends but not in a professional context. Likewise, avoid abbreviations such as "ROFL" and "WTF."
- Avoid using all caps because it can be interpreted as YELLING.
- Be careful about responding with humorous or ironic statements: they might be misinterpreted and cause offence. If you do inadvertently offend someone, apologize immediately.

Discussion Groups

- In discussion groups (and email), make your subject line specific and descriptive: "Next Wednesday's midterm" is a better subject line than "Question."
- Stay on topic. If the topic of a given thread is "Napoleon's rise to power," don't bring in the movie "The Fast and the Furious" (unless you are making a genuine and thoughtful connection).
- Don't reply to someone's post with just "I agree." Instead, explain why you agree, or explain why you mostly agree but have a slightly different perspective on certain aspects of the topic.
- It's become acceptable to use common emoticons such as a smiley face or sad face. Such emoticons can help convey the tone of your statement. But avoid overusing them and avoid using outlandish ones (like a winking badger).
- Don't share personal information pertaining to others (and be prudent about the personal information you share about yourself).

Email

- Don't start an email to an instructor with "Hey" or similar informalities.
- If you need to email your instructor or teaching assistant, use your university email address (e.g. abc123@uwo.ca) not a personal email address (e.g. funky_poodle@gmail.com).
- It's often a good idea provide some brief context for what you are emailing about, such as, "I'm in your Tue/Thu Stats course. Last Thursday I asked you after class about bivariate distributions. I have a follow-up question..."
- Use a standard font such as Ariel, Calibri, or Times New Roman. Avoid "silly" fonts like Comic Sans. As for font size, choose 12 pt. or 14 pt.

Remember: You are part of a professional learning community. That community is enhanced or undermined by each person's behaviour. Help to enhance it!