



## MRPE 9500B - Knowledge Mobilisation M.A. in Research for Policy and Evaluation

Winter Term 2022

The University of Western Ontario

Faculty Name: Prof. Michael Buzzelli

Department of Geography and Environment, SSC 2429

Class: Thursdays, 9:30am-12:30pm

Office Hours: TBA

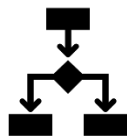
Contact Details: Messages within OWL

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/>.

### Course 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. Term projects completed in groups and 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.

## Learning Outcomes

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
- Be able to 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
- Have developed your project planning skills, including proposal writing, design, project management, time management.
- Communicate more effectively in verbal, written and visual forms

## Course Materials



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 Evaluation

This course involves seminars, case studies and individual and group project work. A defining feature of this course is community engaged learning (CEL) with partners in London and region. The course provides both an overview of the field of KM as well as complementary assessments that reinforce the concepts and professional practice.

| Assessment item  | Value (%)  |
|--|------------|
| Weekly notes   | 10         |
| Professionalism (includes attendance; see notes below) | 15         |
| Policy brief and news media or new/social media        | 35         |
| Group project – CEL knowledge mobilisation plan        | 40         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>100</b> |

A separate document details the assessments of the course.

## Western's grade distribution and descriptors

|    |          |  |
|----|----------|--|
| A+ | 90-100   | One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level. Often attributed to graduate-level work |
| A  | 80-89    | Superior work which is clearly above average   |
| B  | 70-79    | Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory  |
| C  | 60-69    | Competent work, meeting requirements   |
| D  | 50-59    | Fair work, minimally acceptable  |
| F  | below 50 | Fail   |

## 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 and includes:

- 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 similar digital 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. 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.



## Important Policies

**Assignment Deadlines.** Students must submit their assignments by the date and time stated in the course outline and on the OWL website. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each day they are late. Any assignment not received within 5 days of the due date will not be accepted, except in the event of a documented medical or family emergency. If a student anticipates an issue with an assignment, they are recommended to speak to the professor as early as possible to make alternative arrangements.

**Plagiarism.** Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar). All required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for 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 ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**Standards of Professional Behaviour.** It is the responsibility of all to adhere to and promote standards of professional behaviour that support an effective learning environment. These include:

- Respect for others both in and out of the classroom through words and actions (be professional, fair, and respectful in interactions with people on-line and in-person; understand and respect differences among classmates and colleagues; avoid disrupting the learning environment; respect others' expectations of confidentiality and privacy).
- Active engagement in learning and commitment to quality (being prepared for classes; participating and listening actively to other; using technology and social media appropriately, striving to do your best). Take responsibility for your own learning by: relating course content and projects to your own professional interests; monitoring your own understanding; seeking clarification and assistance when necessary.
- Personal integrity (following through on commitments; doing one's own work).

Students should also be aware of the UWO Student Code of Conduct found at:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf>

**Copyright of Lectures and Other Course Materials.** Any materials created by the instructor (e.g., videos, notes, handouts, summaries, slide decks, assignments, exams, etc.) are protected by copyright law and may not be copied or distributed in any form without the explicit permission of the instructor. Any non-authorized use of these materials constitutes an academic offence.

**Scholastic Offences.** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence ([https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/appealsgrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsgrad.pdf)).

**Accommodation.** 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 grad. progr..

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are encouraged to register with Student Accessibility Services, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both SAS 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. For more information, see <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/>.

**Completion of Course Requirements.** Course requirements must be completed by the end of the term in which the course is offered (Fall–December 31; Winter–April 30, Summer–August 31). Only in exceptional circumstances may a student take additional time to complete the course requirements. In such a case, the student must first meet with the Graduate Chair to request permission to carry the incomplete. Medical documentation, where required, will be kept on file in the graduate program office.

**Accessibility Options.** Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2111, x82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html).

**Mental Health.** Students in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

**Health and Wellness.** As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. The Wellness Education Centre (lower level UCC) assists students in finding mental health and other related resources best suited to their needs (<http://se.uwo.ca/wec.html>). Western's School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' Living Well website provides tips for thriving at grad school and other helpful information ([http://grad.uwo.ca/current\\_students/living\\_well/index.html](http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/living_well/index.html)). Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Also, we encourage you to check out the Faculty of Music web page (<http://www.music.uwo.ca/>), and our own McIntosh Gallery (<http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>).

**Disputing a Grade.** Students who wish to dispute an assignment, exam, or course grade must write a one-page explanation justifying why their work should be re-evaluated. Work will not be re-evaluated on the basis that students were sick or feeling stressed when completing the assignment. Please be advised that a student's mark may go up or down upon re-evaluation.

**Extraordinary Circumstances.** The content and/or evaluation of this course is subject to change in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's or instructor's control.

## Course Schedule



Please note: This schedule is subject to change over the course of the term in order to meet the needs of the class and our community partners. Any changes will be announced in class and through our OWL course website.

| Week     | Dates                 | Seminar topic   | Seminar structure / notes   | Readings/materials   |
|----------|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| 1        | January 10-14         | Welcome: course introduction  | Library research refresher; in-class exercise (ungraded)            | <a href="#">Podcast: CBC Quirks and Quarks, 26 Nov. 2021</a> |
| 2        | January 17-21         | KM: What is it? Definitions, types, processes, practices  | PBL seminar; assignment time, incl. first discussion of the KM Plan | Phipps et al., 2012  |
| 3        | January 24-28         | Research, evidence and the policy cycle   | PBL seminar; Individual and group project time                      | Lavis et al., 2010<br>[Nakamura, 1987]                       |
| 4        | January 31-February 4 | Assignment time   | Community partner introductions                                     |  |
| 5        | February 7-11         | Evidence 2: research ethics, data/information and KM roles (researcher, advocate, broker, user) | PBL seminar; assignment time  | Cooper, 2014   |
| 6        | February 14-18        | KM context and networks   | PBL seminar; policy brief feedback                                  | Levine, 2020   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>February 21-25</b> | <b>Reading Week</b>   |   |  |
| 8        | February 28-March 4   | KM priority-setting, narratives and strategies  | PBL seminar; assignment time  | Christensen, 2012  |
| 9        | March 7-11            | KM processes and practices, focus on 'toolkit' and plan   | PBL seminar; assignment time  | Bradford and Bharadwaj, 2015                                 |
| 10       | March 14-18           | Assignment time   | Community partner meetings  | NA   |
| 11       | March 21-25           | KM impact and evaluation  | PBL seminar; assignment time  | Penfield et al., 2014  |
| 12       | March 28-April 1      | On being a professional & community partner meetings  | In class exercise; individual and group assignment time             | NA   |
| 13       | April 4 - 8           | Group/student project presentations   |   |  |

## Further notes on professionalism including professionalism

### 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 as well as classroom/in-person interaction.

#### 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 endeavour 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. abc@uwo.ca) not a personal email address (e.g. funky\_poodle@gmail.com).
- It is 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!



## About your professor:

Michael Buzzelli, B.A. (Hons.), M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D.

Director, Centre for Urban Policy and Local Governance

Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Environment

Western Teaching Fellow

Chair, DIAAC - Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-oppression Advisory Committee, City of London

After completing graduate school 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 (Australia, Summer 2007), Glasgow (Scotland, Summer 2008), UBC (Vancouver, Summer 2011) and Bologna (Italy, 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 London region (Member 2014-17, Chair, 2017-18). Since 2019 I have served on the City of London's Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-oppression Advisory Committee (DIAAC) and the London Community Foundation's Social Finance Committee.