Seminar Overview  Originally developed at the McMaster University medical school, the term ’evidence-based medicine’ has gained wide support over the last couple of decades. Indeed, ‘evidence-based’ has come to be more broadly applied to health care in general, including the fields of health promotion and disease and injury prevention. In this seminar, we will assess aspects of the quality of the evidence, and elements of the politics, surrounding the ‘health of populations,’ a term chosen in an effort to avoid any hidden assumptions, arguments and interests associated with the more conventional term ‘population health.’

Seminar Schedule  It is suggested that you obtain a copy of Sylvia Noble Tesh, Hidden Arguments, which is available from Octopus Books (116 Third Avenue, just west of Bank Street, phone 613-233-2589). Many of the other required readings are being placed in the box for PADM 5229 in the School of Public Policy and Administration student copy room (1006C, Dunton Tower). Articles and reports that are readily available in electronic form through the MacOdrum Library are not as a rule being placed in the seminar box. Optional readings are marked with an asterisk. If you wish to read a primer on the Canadian health care system, our perspective is to be found in the short book About Canada: Health Care (Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), which is likely available at Octopus Books and certainly at Britton’s on Bank Street close to the corner of Fifth Avenue.

Jan 6  Introduction

No required readings

Jan 13  Critical Foundations


Jan 20 Official Statements


Jan 29 Health Determinants


Feb 3 Promotion and Prevention

*Hidden Arguments*: 83-104

David Mechanic and Jennifer Tanner, “Vulnerable People, Groups, and Populations: Societal View” and comments by Bruce C. Vladeck and Tom Miller, *Health Affairs* 26:5 (September-October 2007): 1220-37


**Feb 10  Health and Class, Health and Work**

*Hidden Arguments*: 105-30


**Feb 24 Precaution and Risk**

*Hidden Arguments*: 131-53


Royal Society of Canada, Elements of Precaution: Recommendations for the Regulation of Food Biotechnology in Canada “Executive Summary” (Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 2001): vii-xv [www.rsc.ca]


Mar 3 Health and Place

CIHI, Improving the Health of Canadians: An Introduction to Health in Urban Places (Ottawa: CIHI, 2006): 3-17, 63-97

Canadian Population Health Initiative, How Healthy Are Rural Canadians? (Ottawa: CIHI, 2006): i-vi, 1-17


M. Judith Lyman and Sarah Cowley, “Understanding marginalization as a social determinant of health,” *Critical Public Health* 17:2 (June 2007): 137-49

**Mar 10 Intellectual Property, Globalization and Third World Health**


**Mar 17 Aboriginal Health**


Brian Schnarch, “Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research,” *Journal of Aboriginal Health* (January 2004): 80-95


Mar 24 Women and Health


Pat Armstrong, “Evidence-Based Health-Care Reform: Women’s Issues,” Armstrong, Unhealthy Times: 121-45


Tamara Daly et al., Contradictions: Health Equity and Women’s Health Services in Toronto (Toronto: Wellesley Institute, 2008), 71 pp. [www.wellesleyinstitute.com]*

Mar 31 Evidence Reconsidered

Hidden Arguments: 154-77


**Assignments and Evaluation** This seminar is designed to promote active, critical learning through active, critical participation. You are consequently expected to come to each session prepared to discuss the required readings, and on one occasion likely between January 27 and March 17 to help introduce and facilitate the discussion. Finally, you are required to submit a term paper of 5000-7000 words.

When you take the lead in introducing and facilitating the discussion, you will be expected to:

- keep your initial presentation brief (maximum 10 minutes)
- assume that the others in the seminar have read the material
- identify and locate the central argument(s)
- assess the strength(s) of the material
- pose theoretical, conceptual, policy and/or empirical questions arising from the material, and
- facilitate the ensuing discussion. 30%

Your active, informed participation in the other seminar sessions is also expected. 10%

Finally, you are to present a proposal for your term paper to me, and to arrange an appointment to discuss the proposal with me prior to February 3. The proposal (maximum 2 pages, preferably on a single sheet) is, in provisional terms, to state your research question, to indicate the central concept(s) from the current discourse on health reform to be ‘unpacked’ in your paper, to discuss your research strategy, and if possible to list a few key sources. A non-exhaustive list of central concepts for you to consider appears below. You are of course at liberty to propose a concept or concepts not on this list.

Some central concepts (in no particular order): accountability, integration, continuity, urgency, appropriateness, care/caring, community, medical model, medical dominance, trust, rationing, acuity (chronicity), patient satisfaction, informed choice/consent, choice, health industry, internal markets (purchaser/provider split), skill (deskilling/reskilling),
generic workers, hotel/ancillary services, health professions (professionalism), empowerment, sustainability, health, technology, medically necessary, risk, moral hazard

The paper itself is due in class on March 31. In it, you may wish to emphasize theoretical or empirical concerns, but in any case it should be both theoretically informed and disciplined by fact.  

At the graduate level, a grade of B or B+ indicates that you have a satisfactory understanding of, and demonstrated ability to work critically with, the seminar material. A grade of A- or A is normally awarded to students whose work is particularly well-structured, thorough and creative. The grade of A+ is reserved for students whose written work is worthy of serious consideration for publication and whose seminar participation complements this written work. A grade of less than B- is in effect a failure.

**Plagiarism**  Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, involving the presentation, intentionally or not, of ideas or writings of someone else as one’s own. It can be a matter of direct quotation or of paraphrasing. Any student found to have plagiarized will receive a grade of F for the course. For further details, consult the *Graduate Calendar 2008/2009*, p. 71.

**Accommodation**  Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this seminar should contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. After registering with the PMC, students are to make an appointment with the instructor early in the term to discuss implementation of the required accommodations.