

**Course Number MDSC 535  
Psychosocial Oncology**

**Instructors:**

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**Office Hours/Policy on Answering Student Emails**

Office hours are by appointment, e-mails will be answered as soon as possible, generally within 48 hours.

**Time and Location:**

Every Wed. from Sep. 11 to Dec. 4, 2019, 12:30 to 3:15 PM in Health Sciences G746

**Prerequisite/Co-Requisite:**

Permission of the instructors

**Course Description:**

Psychosocial oncology focuses on developing the understanding in health care practitioners of the central concepts related to caring for cancer patients and their families

**Overarching Theme**

Psychosocial Oncology is a course offered to graduate students and to advanced undergraduate students who are either enrolled in an Honours program or have a record of high academic achievement. The course is recognized by the Cumming School of Medicine and the Department of Psychology, and Faculties of Social Work and Nursing.

Psychosocial Oncology is the study of the psychosocial ramifications of cancer for patients and their families. Its foundations include the basic assumption that psychosocial sequelae are an integral part of the disease process for cancer patients and those who support them. The course will look at possible causes of psychosocial problems in cancer patients and families (biological, psychological, and social), and also at how patients and families are helped through the difficult transitions resulting from a cancer diagnosis, treatment, recurrent disease, and end of life care. The course is seminar-based and will consist in a series of presentations by various experts in the field. Each presentation will be accompanied by a reading list.

## Global Objectives

As much as possible, the course will encourage:

- critical and creative thinking
- effective oral and written communication
- the analysis of problems, the growth of insight and intuition in understanding psychosocial problems associated with cancer
- the acquisition of more advanced knowledge leading to the emergence of research ideas and to the development of interpretive, assessment, and treatment skills for active practitioners.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. understand basic concepts in psychosocial oncology
2. understand the impact of cancer from the patient, family, or caregiver perspective throughout the trajectory of the disease
3. formulate research hypotheses on the basis of detailed reviews of the literature
4. discuss interventions that help patients, families, and caregivers who experience emotional distress
5. understand the role of multidisciplinary interventions in working with cancer patients and their families

## Required Readings

There is no specific textbook required. The recommended readings for each lecture (often journal articles) will be available via the U of C library electronic journal access. If not otherwise accessible, readings will be distributed by the instructor(s) the week before the lecture. The U of C policy of acceptable use of material protected by copyright will be duly followed.

## A Note regarding readings

A list of required readings for all course sections will be posted on **Brightspace by Desire2Learn (D2L)** and links and documents will be made available, where possible. Required readings have been chosen carefully to inform you and enhance the lecture material. **Students are REQUIRED to complete assigned readings BEFORE each lecture.** Instructors will proceed in class on the assumption that students have read completely the assigned readings. Students should be aware that many of the readings they will be assigned may be of an unfamiliar nature and style.

## Evaluation

The University policy on grading and related matters is described in section F of the 2019-2020 Calendar.

In determining the overall grade in the course, the following weights will be used:

	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>	<b>Description (for both exams)</b>
1.	First mid-term take home exam <b>(Oct 02, 2019;</b> hard copy due in class <b>and</b> electronically in the D2L drop box on <b>Oct. 9, 2019</b> by 12:40 PM)	25%	Students will be required to answer <b>2 of 6</b> or more questions - <b>no more than 5 double-spaced pages/question</b> (Maximum total: 10 pages per assignment)
2.	Second mid-term take home exam <b>(October 31, 2019;</b> due electronically in the D2L drop box <b>and</b> hard copy in class by 12:40 PM <b>Nov 07, 2019)</b>	25%	<p>Questions will come from class material and assigned readings.</p> <p><b>Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thoroughness of the response to the question,</b></li> <li>• <b>Use of the literature to support the response,</b></li> <li>• <b>Understanding of key concepts and implications as demonstrated by critical analysis, logic, and synthesis of material.</b></li> </ul>
3.	written term paper (Due <b>Nov 21, 2019;</b> hard copy in class <b>and</b> electronically in the D2L drop box by 12:40 PM)	40%	<p>Students are expected to complete a written research proposal or paper. The topic is to be determined in consultation with the course instructors, and specific instructions about the structure of the paper will be presented in class. The project will be either a focused literature review or a formal research proposal relevant to psychosocial oncology.</p> <p>Evaluation will be based on the content of the paper and the presentation. The paper should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an academic discussion of the relevant literature</li> <li>• a statement of the problem being discussed or studied</li> <li>• the impact of the proposed interventions or research project</li> </ul> <p>the paper should follow academic standards as stated below</p>

4.	Final assignment Given <b>December 4, 2019</b> , due electronically in the D2L drop box by 4:30 PM on <b>December 6, 2019</b> .	10%	<p>Students will be required to answer <b>1 of 3</b> or more questions - <b>no more than 5 double-spaced pages</b>.</p> <p>Questions will come from the last 3 lectures and assigned readings.</p> <p><b>Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thoroughness of the response to the question,</b></li> <li>• <b>Use of the literature to support the response,</b></li> <li>• <b>Understanding of key concepts and implications as demonstrated by critical analysis, logic, and synthesis of material.</b></li> </ul>
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Students who do not complete all major components of the course prior to the final exam will be considered as not having completed the course; this will be reflected on the students' official transcript as 'Incomplete'. Major components of the course include both midterm exams and the major term paper. In the absence of medical or other documented reasons, the instructor reserves the right to award an 'Incomplete'." A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course. There will not be a final exam scheduled during the final exam period.

**A Note regarding Writing Assignments:**

Writing skills are important to academic study in all disciplines. In keeping with the University of Calgary's emphasis on the importance of academic writing in student assignments (section E.2 of 2019-20 Calendar), writing is emphasized, and the grading thereof in determining a student's mark in this course. The Bachelor of Health Sciences values excellence in writing. Competence in writing entails skills in crafting logical, clear, coherent, non-redundant sentences, paragraphs and broader arguments, as well as skills with the mechanics of writing (grammar, spelling, punctuation). The University of Calgary offers a number of instructional services through the Students' Success Centre's Writing Support Services (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/writingsupport/>) for students seeking feedback on assignments or seeking to improve their general writing skills. Students are **strongly encouraged** to take advantage of these programs.

## Grading Scheme:

Letter Grade	Description	Percentage
A+	Outstanding performance	97-100
A	Excellent performance	90-96
A-	Approaching excellent performance	85-89
B+	Exceeding good performance	80-84
B	Good performance	75-79
B-	Approaching good performance	70-74
C+	Exceeding satisfactory performance	65-69
C	Satisfactory performance	60-64
C-	Approaching satisfactory performance	57-59
D+	Marginal pass	54-56
D	Minimal pass	50-53
F	Did not meet course requirements	0-49

### Missed Components of Term Work:

Students will lose 5% per day late past the deadline for all assignments. In this case, assignments will NOT be accepted more than 72 hours after the posted deadline and students failing to submit any assignment within this time frame will receive a mark of zero. Students who miss a quiz will receive a mark of zero unless the instructor has been previously notified. There will be NO exceptions to this policy.

It is the agreement of the instructors involved in MDSC 535 that extensions will NOT be granted on any assignment or quizzes. The only exceptions to this are those in keeping with the University Calendar (debilitating illness, religious conviction, or severe domestic affliction) that are received in writing and with supporting documentation. Please be advised that students should notify the instructor before the assignment deadline to discuss. Please note that while absences are permitted for religious reasons, students are responsible for providing advance (14-day) notice and adhering to other guidelines on this matter, as outlined in the University Calendar (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-4.html>).

### Brightspace by Desire2Learn (D2L)

Brightspace (by D2L) is located on the University of Calgary server and will be used extensively for communication with students. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they receive all posted communications and documents and that they receive emails sent by instructors or fellow students through D2L.** Only your @ucalgary.ca email address may be linked to D2L. Please ensure that you are regularly checking your @ucalgary.ca account.

A laptop, desktop, tablet or mobile device is required for D2L access. If you need help accessing or using D2L, please visit the Desire2Learn resource page for students: <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/d2l-student/>.

## **Policies Governing the Course:**

### **Attendance**

Because the group is quite small and discussions are valued, it is rather important that everyone attend the lectures, even if some students are auditing the course. We would like to discourage the tendency with some students to 'pick and choose' the lectures they decide to attend. The course has its own integrity and subjects have been chosen on the basis of their relevance and importance to psychosocial oncology. Participation via questions and discussions will be expected, although attendance and participation are not marked.

### **Conduct During Lectures**

The classroom should be respected as a safe place to share ideas without judgement - a community in which we can all learn from one another. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and courteous manner during ALL lectures. Students are expected to frame their comments and questions to lecturers in respectful and appropriate language, always maintaining sensitivity towards the topic.

**Students are expected to take notes during class and should not rely solely on material supplied by the instructors.**

### **Electronic Devices**

The Bachelor of Health Sciences program aims to create a supportive and respectful learning environment for all students. The use of laptop and mobile devices is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. However, research studies have found that inappropriate/off-topic use of electronic devices in the classroom negatively affects the learning of both the user and those sitting nearby. Students are to refrain from accessing websites that may be distracting for fellow learners (i.e. personal email, Facebook, YouTube).

Students are responsible for being aware of the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/electronic-communications-policy.pdf>

Cell phones (or similar devices) should **be turned off** (not merely silent) upon entering the classroom. Sending/receiving text messages or leaving the class to take calls is disruptive to the entire class and will not be tolerated unless absolutely necessary. Students who disregard this rule during lectures or tutorials will be asked to leave. These items are not permitted under any circumstance during exams/quizzes, etc.

### **Copyright**

It is the responsibility of students and professors to ensure that materials they post or distribute to others comply with the Copyright Act and the University's Fair Dealing Guidance

for Students ([library.ucalgary.ca/files/library/guidance\\_for\\_students.pdf](http://library.ucalgary.ca/files/library/guidance_for_students.pdf)). Further information for students is available on the Copyright Office web page (<http://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright>)

### **A Note Regarding Instructor Intellectual Property**

Generally speaking, course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may **NOT** be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. **The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited.** Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course **at the same time** may be allowed under fair dealing.

### **Academic Accommodations Based on Disability or Medical Condition**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

### **Accommodations on Protected Grounds other than Disability**

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor or to the designated BHSc program contact, Mrs. Jennifer Logan ([jljlogan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jljlogan@ucalgary.ca)), or to Dr. Ebba Kurz, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Health and Science Education, Cumming School of Medicine. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. The University of Calgary has created rules to govern all its members regarding the creation of knowledge and the demonstration of knowledge having been learned. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html> Students are expected to be familiar with these standards and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Please know that the University and the Cumming School of Medicine take these rules seriously. **All incidences of academic dishonesty in this course, such as cheating and plagiarism, will be reported to the Associate Dean for investigation;** infractions will be noted on the record of a student found to be guilty.

### **Recording of Lectures**

Audio or video recording of lectures is prohibited except where explicit permission has been received from the instructor.

### **Other Important Information**

#### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary

### **Appeals**

If there is a concern with the course, academic matter or a grade, first communicate with the instructor. If these concerns cannot be resolved, students can proceed with an academic appeal, as per Section I of the University Calendar. Students must follow the official reappraisal/appeal process and may contact the Student Ombuds' Office (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds>) for assistance with this and with any other academic concerns, including academic and non-academic misconduct. Students should be aware that concerns about graded term work may only be initiated **within 10 days** of first being notified of the grade. <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

### **Resources for Support of Student Learning, Success, Safety and Wellness**

Student Success Centre	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/</a>
Student Wellness Centre	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/</a>
Distress Centre	<a href="http://www.distresscentre.com/">http://www.distresscentre.com/</a>
Library Resources	<a href="http://library.ucalgary.ca">http://library.ucalgary.ca</a>

### **Wellness and Mental Health Resources**

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370 MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

### **Student Ombuds' Office**

The Student Ombuds' Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/) or email [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca)

### **BHSc Student Faculty Liaison Committee (SFLC)**

The BHSc SFLC, with elected representatives from all majors, serves to raise issues of interest to BHSc students to the program administration, including items pertaining to curriculum, scheduling and events. A list of current representatives can be found on the BHSc website.

### **Student Union (SU) Information**

The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca); the SU representatives for the Cumming School of Medicine can be reached at [medrep1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:medrep1@su.ucalgary.ca) or [medrep2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:medrep2@su.ucalgary.ca).

**Student Success Centre:** The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success>

### **Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points**

As part of the University of Calgary Emergency Evacuation plan, students, faculty, and staff should locate the closest Assembly Point in case of Fire Alarm. Safety signage is posted throughout the campus showing the locations and the possible route to these locations. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to promptly make their way to the nearest Assembly Point if the Fire Alarm is activated. No one is to return into campus facilities until an all clear is given to the warden in charge of the Assembly Area. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/55>  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/building-evacuation/assembly-points>

### **Safewalk**

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.

### **Class Schedule**

The following is a list of topics for class and assignment / exam due dates. Please note that unforeseen circumstances may cause changes to the schedule with respect to the timing of topics and readings. Students will be notified of all changes in a timely manner by way of email and D2L announcements. **The exam dates and assignment due dates are firm and will not be altered.**

## MDSC 535 tentative lecture schedule 2019

<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	11-Sep	Barry Bultz, Guy Pelletier	Introduction to psychosocial oncology and Overview
2	18-Sep	Janine Giese-Davis	Psychobiological aspects of cancer
3	25-Sep	Guy Pelletier	Developmental issues and family dynamics in adults with cancer
4	02-Oct	Bernie Dunlop	Resources for cancer patients and their family
	02-Oct	Nicole Culos-Reed	Exercise and cancer
	<b>02-Oct</b>		<b>First Mid-term take home exam given</b>
	02-Oct		<b>Students to consider a final paper topic and discuss it with the facilitator if not yet done</b>
5	9-Oct	Devesh Oberoi and Utkarsh Subnis	Psychosocial aspects of complementary and alternative therapies in Cancer
	<b>9-Oct</b>		<b>First Mid-term take home exam due</b>
6	16-Oct	Kyle Anstey	Medical ethics and the well-being of patients and families
	16-Oct	Andrea Feldstain	Medical assistance in dying (MAiD): implications for psychosocial oncology
7	23-Oct	Celestina Martopullo	Stress and anxiety management in cancer patients
	23-Oct	Debra Carnat	trauma and Cancer Spiritual care and cancer
8	30-Oct	Sara Beattie	Psychosocial aspects of hematological cancers and bone marrow transplantation
	30-Oct	Steve Simpson	Psychopharmacology for psychosocial oncologists
	<b>30-Oct</b>		<b>Second mid-term exam given</b>
9	06-Nov	Guy Pelletier	Cognition and cancer
	06-Nov	John Robinson	Sexuality and Cancer: Using examples from gynecological and prostate groups

	<b>06-Nov</b>		<b>Second mid-term due</b>
	13-Nov	<b>FALL BREAK WEEK</b>	<b>No Class</b>
10	20-Nov	Wendy Pelletier and Fiona Schulte	Pediatric Oncology and young adults and cancer
	20-Nov	Fiona Schulte	Young adults and cancer
	20-Nov		<b>Term paper due</b>
11	27-Nov	Lyle Galloway	Psychosocial aspects of hematological cancers and bone marrow transplantation Psychosocial aspects of palliative and end of life care
	27-Nov	Shane Sinclair	Spiritual care and cancer
12	4-Dec	Michael Specca	Psychotherapeutic issues: coping with cancer and its treatment throughout the disease trajectory
	4-Dec		<b>Final assignment given, due on Friday Dec 6 in D2L dropbox no later than 11:59 PM</b>