



AGE1000H

MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS IN
PALLIATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CARE RESEARCH –
INVESTIGATING A GLOBAL HEALTH PRIORITY

INTRODUCTION

The Collaborative Specialization in Palliative and Supportive Care Across the Life Course was established by Dr. Gary Rodin and the Institute for Life Course and Aging at the University of Toronto. This multidisciplinary Masters and Doctoral training program includes the course, Multidisciplinary Concepts in Palliative and Supportive Care Research: Investigating a Global Health Priority (AGE1000H). This course will allow students from a wide range of disciplines* to receive specialized research training in Palliative and Supportive Care. This is one of the first research training programs of its kind in Canada and is training a new generation of interdisciplinary investigators in this field. To date, over 200 students have enrolled since its inception and many have gone on to launch clinical and academic careers in the field. These include fellows and graduate students from Canada, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Australia and South America.



Adult Education & Counseling
Psychology, Anthropology, Public
Health Sciences, Dentistry,
Exercise Science, Health Policy
Management & Evaluation,
Information Studies, Medical
Science, Nursing, Pharmacy,
Rehabilitation Sciences, Social
Work, Sociology,
Speech/Language Pathology,
Psychology



WHAT TO EXPECT

Clinician-Scientists and Researchers with expertise in the field are invited to lead seminars and to engage students in a group discussion. These interactive presentations will explore research related to palliative care in lower and middle-income countries, pediatric palliative care, the psychology of death and dying, geriatric palliative care, advance care planning, bioethics, qualitative and mixed-method research methodologies, randomized trials and more.

Over the course, students are encouraged to actively participate and will submit two papers and take part in final presentations to the group.

Please see attached course syllabus, essay guidelines and presentation rubric.





MEET OUR TEAM



GARY RODIN, MD

Course Director
e: Gary.Rodin@uhn.ca



STEPHANIE NANOS, MPH

Teaching Assistant
e: Stephanie.Nanos@uhn.ca

New!

YOUR PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

**STEPHANIE NANOS, MPH**

Teaching Assistant
e: Stephanie.Nanos@uhn.ca

We are delighted to engage **Stephanie Nanos, MPH** to assist you with your assignments. As we move into a virtual world, it is even more important to ensure that our students are given every advantage. This is your opportunity to discuss your topics for papers, presentations and strategies for success in AGE 1000H course.

Stephanie is a mixed methods researcher dedicated to improving supportive care for families affected by cancer. Her research focuses on the experience of family caregivers of pediatric and adult patients with cancer across the disease and life course trajectory to understand the need for— and scope of— psychotherapeutic interventions that will prevent or alleviate burden associated with their role.

You can attend standing office hours after class to discuss your papers and presentations or book a private appointment with Stephanie.

COURSE PRESENTERS



Jennifer Bell, MA, PhD

Bioethicist, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Scientist, Department of Supportive Care, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Member, Joint Centre for Bioethics, University of Toronto



Breffni Hannon, MB BCh

Palliative Care Physician
Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Division of Medical Oncology & Hematology, University of Toronto



Jayna M. Holroyd-Leduc MD

Professor and Head, Department of Medicine, Cumming School of Medicine;
Clinical Department Head, AHS Calgary zone;
Brenda Strafford Foundation Chair in Geriatric Medicine, University of Calgary



Rinat Nissim, PhD, CPsych

Psychologist
Department of Supportive Care, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry, University of Toronto



Adam Rapoport, MD

Associate Professor, Department of Paediatrics, University of Toronto
Medical Director, Pediatric Advanced Care Team, The Hospital for Sick Children
Medical Director, Emily's House Children's Hospice

COURSE PRESENTERS



Gary Rodin, MD

Director, UHN Cancer Experience
Staff Psychiatrist, Dept. of Supportive Care, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry,
Director, Global Institute of Psychosocial, Palliative and End-of-Life Care (GIPPEC), University of Toronto



Alyssa E. Tilly, MD

Alyssa E. Tilly, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics
UNC Palliative Care Program
Division of General Medicine and Epidemiology
UNC School of Medicine



Kayla Wolofsky, MBBS

Kayla Wolofsky, MBBS
Lecturer, Department of Medicine University of Toronto
Attending Physician, Toronto General Hospital, Department of Supportive Care, University Health Network



Christian Ntizimira, MD, MSc

Christian Ntizimira, MD, MSc
Executive Director, African Centre for Research and End of Life Care (ACREOL)



Kirsten Wentlandt, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto
Staff Physician, Department of Supportive Care/Medical Affairs
University Health Network



Camilla Zimmermann, MD, PhD

Head and Lederman Chair, Department of Supportive Care, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
Head, Division of Palliative Care, University Health Network
Professor and Director, Division of Palliative Medicine, Dept. of Medicine, University of Toronto

REGISTRATION & IMPORTANT DATES

This course is *Virtual* and will be held
Wednesdays, beginning September 6, 2023, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

REGISTER IN ADVANCE

[ZOOM LINK HERE:](#)

01.

Course Drop Date
2023

[November 6, 2023](#)

02.

1st Essay is Due *

October 11, 2023

03.

Final Essay is Due *

November 29, 2023

04.

Presentations

November 22, 2023



IMPORTANT

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED for all midterm and final paper topics - minimum two weeks *before the due date and before you begin to write.*

Please email your request to [Gary Rodin](#) + cc [Stephanie Nanos](#) (TA)

COURSE SYLLABUS

September 6, 2023

Palliative and Supportive Care: Local and Global Perspectives

Gary Rodin, MD

September 13, 2023

Qualitative and mixed-method research methodology in palliative care

Rinat Nissim, PhD, CPsych

September 20, 2023

Geriatric Palliative Care

Jayna Holroyd-Leduc, MD

September 27, 2023

Pediatric palliative care research: Navigating the methodological and ethical challenges

Adam Rapoport, MD

COURSE SYLLABUS

October 4, 2023

Psychology of Death and Dying

Gary Rodin, MD

October 11, 2023

**Palliative Care and Palliative Care Research
in Lower and Middle-Income Countries:
Case Examples of Malawi and India**

Alyssa E. Tilly, MD
Kayla Wolofsky, MBBS

With special guest
Dr. Christian Ntzimira
Executive Director,
African Centre for Research
and End of Life Care
(ACREOL)

October 18, 2023

**Ethical Problems and Solutions in Palliative Care
Research**

Jennifer Bell, PhD

October 25, 2023

**Advance Care Planning: Clinical & Research
Opportunities**

Breffni Hannon, MB, BCh

COURSE SYLLABUS

November 1, 2023

Randomized Trials with Complex Palliative Care Interventions: Challenges and Solutions

Camilla Zimmermann, MD, PhD

November 8, 2023

Palliative Care Research in a Non-Cancer Setting

Kirsten Wentlandt, MD, PhD

November 15, 2023

Pathway to Success - papers & presentations

Stephanie Nanos, MPH

November 22 & 29, 2023 - Presentations
December 6, 2023 - General Wrap Up

ESSAY GUIDELINES

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GENERAL GUIDELINES

To illustrate these guidelines, we will use the following example of a topic: psychosocial interventions in patients with advanced cancer

1) The Essay should be structured around the following headings:

- a. **Introduction:** provide a brief summary of the content of the essay
- b. **Background:** summarize the existing literature to discuss the topic of choice. Define any main concept as necessary (e.g. in our example we would define advanced cancers as cancers with a prognosis of 12 to 18 months). Provide information to position your problem in the existing literature (e.g. 1 out of 5 Canadians will be diagnosed with advanced cancer in their lifetime; Advanced cancer causes severe psychological distress, including anxiety, depression and demoralization). Discuss the problem you would like to address (e.g. distress in advance cancer causes multiple consequences, including low quality of life, increased risk for suicide, non-adherence to treatment. Psychotherapeutic interventions in advanced cancer have been shown to decrease distress in this population). Connect the problem to your research question (e.g. what are the psychotherapeutic interventions available for patients with advanced cancer?)
- c. **Methods:** provide a rationale for your search strategy (e.g. why you chose certain words; what databases you searched, etc.). Please append a screenshot of your search strategy. Provide a summary of the results and the eligibility criteria for the articles included in your essay. That is, explain what articles you will and will not include in your essay and why. If the search returns a large number of articles (e.g. in our example 120), students cannot choose to focus on a subset of them (e.g. 20), unless a rationale is provided. The number of excluded articles as well as the reasons for exclusion should be detailed in this section. In our example, students could choose to focus on articles reporting evidence from phase III Randomized Controlled Trials.
- d. **Results.** Provide the final number of articles included and a brief summary of them. Note any preliminary commonalities/differences (e.g. most articles had small samples).
- e. **Discussion.** This is probably the most important section of the essay. Critically appraise the literature and highlight your understanding of the literature, strengths, gaps, possible mechanisms underlying findings, indication for future directions, etc. Please do not limit your essay to a summary of each article. Think outside the box!

ESSAY GUIDELINES

2) **Each section of your paper should be related to the other.** For example, do not discuss topics in the background that won't be addressed in the methods or discussion section.

3) **Essays should include enough articles that are focused on the specific topic** (e.g. other than the articles that are required for the background section). A good number of relevant articles is between 8 and 12.

4) **Mainly use original research articles.** If review articles (scoping, narrative, or systematic reviews) on the selected topic are available, students cannot focus their essay on them. Systematic reviews can only be used as a reference for the background section (e.g. "Systematic reviews have also cautioned that additional well-designed clinical trials are needed to clarify the effectiveness of CBT on depression in [patients with advanced or metastatic cancers]" – Rodin et al, in press).

a. An exception to this is allowed. Students can do a review of reviews if there are enough systematic reviews or meta-analyses. However, students should not be mixing reviews papers with original research papers in their essays (i.e. do either a review of original research or do a review of reviews only).

5) When referring to research studies, **please cite the primary source only** (e.g. if author A has cited author B in their background section, please cite author B and not author A)

ESSAY RUBRIC

IMPORTANT

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED for all midterm and final paper topics - minimum two weeks *before the due date and before you begin to write.*

Please email your request to [Gary Rodin](#) + cc [Stephanie Nanos \(TA\)](#)

FOR THE MIDTERM & FINAL PAPERS:

These papers should be structured as follows: Introduction/Background, Methods, Results, Discussion. Please see below for what is expected to be included in each section. Please note that inclusion of the points below does not guarantee full marks, as additional points are awarded based on the quality of critical analysis, creative synthesis, and style throughout the paper.

- Midterm Paper Submission Date is *no later than* **Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 11:59 pm**
- Final Paper Submission date is *no later than* **Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 11:59pm.**

Background:

- Include a clear definition of the construct(s)/topic(s) based on current scientific literature
- Clearly identify gap/problem in the literature, policy, or clinical practice
- Clearly identify the relevance/importance of the topic
- Clearly define aim(s) of the paper

Methods:

- Include databases searched
- Summarize search strategy (you can append a screenshot of the search as an appendix, but enough information should be included in this section to stand alone)
- Indicate selection criteria used
- State the final number of papers included in the review

Results:

- Summarize findings
- Comment on methodologies
- Limit summary to topic(s) of interest/aim(s) of the paper
- Consider grouping results by themes, if appropriate

Discussion:

- Critically evaluate findings and provide interpretation
- Discuss limitations of the literature and impact on interpretation of findings
- Situate findings within broader field

Conclusions:

- Conclusions should address aims and stem directly from results/discussion

PRESENTATION RUBRIC

SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION:

Present on a topic of your choice related to research in palliative and supportive care. Presentation is 8 minutes in length (10 slides max) followed by a 4-minute discussion. Below is the suggested format for the presentation.

Introduction/Background (1-2 slides):

- Set the scene: provide a brief overview of the larger field where your topic is situated
 - o E.g. If the topic is “interventions to reduce demoralization in patients with Acute Leukemia” start with a brief overview of demoralization in this population (prevalence, impact, etc.)
- Clearly define construct(s)/topic(s) and relevance
 - o E.g. explain what acute leukemia is; perhaps include its prevalence and impact on the general population (e.g. leukemia is a cancer of the blood cells; it is the sixth most common cause of Cancer death in Canada; it is characterized by acute onset with immediate hospitalization and threat to life). Include what definition of demoralization you are using for your presentation (based on the literature)

Evidence/Results (2-3 slides slides):

- Summarize the literature; limit findings to topic(s) of interest/aim(s)
 - o E.g. if you are discussing demoralization in patients with acute leukemia, there is no need to discuss anxiety (unless it is linked to your definition of demoralization)

Discussion (1-2 slides):

- Critically evaluate findings and provide your interpretation
- Discuss limitations of the literature and impact on your interpretation
- Brief, general comment on methodologies (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, mix-method; study designs; etc.) and methods (if relevant: e.g. questionnaires used)

Conclusions (1 slide):

- Conclusions address aims and stem from results/discussion

PRESENTATION TIPS

Convey clear, focused information on your idea

- Define, explain novel/difficult concepts in simple terms, with examples if necessary
- Avoid being too technical, jargon-heavy
- People will remember only maybe 3-4 things, so focus on 3-4 most important points

Rule of thumb: 1 slide per minute

- Do not rush through your presentation to meet the time limit

Do practice your talk with others for feedback, timing, getting comfortable with presenting

PowerPoint slides with concise bullets of main points

- Do not have wordy/busy slides

Do not simply read from your presentation

- Your slides are NOT the presentation

ESSAYS & GRADING

GRADING

This course will assign a letter grade.

Grading will be based upon the following criteria:

1. Seminar Participation - 10%

Course participation will be assessed on the trainee's active participation in seminars. Note that a doctor's note is required for missed classes, in order to avoid a penalty in the mark.

2. Midterm Paper- 30%

Students will be required to submit a scholarly critique on a subject related to the seminar series. The potential topic for this paper must be pre-approved by the Course Director prior to submission. The paper should be approximately 1,500 words, and must be submitted *no later than* **Wednesday, October 11, 2023**. Grades will be returned prior to the **course drop date, November 6, 2023**.

All essay submissions should be submitted via Quercus

3. Class Presentation – 10%

On **Wednesday, November 22 and 29, 2023**, students will present on a topic of their choice related to research in palliative and supportive care - 8 min presentation (10 slides max) and 4 min discussion.

4. Final Paper - 50%

Students will submit a 4,000-word essay exploring one of the seminar topics in further depth.

Topics for this essay should be pre-approved by the Course Director + cc: Stephanie.Nanos@uhnresearch.ca prior to submission.

Submission date is *no later than* **Wednesday, November 29, 2023**.

All essay submissions should be submitted via Quercus in WORD.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR MIDTERM AND FINAL PAPER:

12 pt font in Arial or Times New Roman, double-spaced and with 1-inch margins

Your paper should include the following:

1. Essay Title
2. Name and Student number
3. References should follow the style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
4. Word count (number of words required does not include references)

LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK

1. For overdue assignments, half of a letter grade per day will be deducted for five days (eg. an A+ will become an A), after which a grade of zero is assigned.
2. Students should contact the course director as soon as possible if they anticipate they will not be able to meet a deadline (at least within 48 hours of the deadline of assessment). The student may request special consideration based on health problems (a physician's letter is required). The course director may extend evaluation deadlines at their own discretion in such circumstances.

MARKING SCHEME, AGE 1000H, 2022

Criteria (assigned 0-20 points each)

- Application of topic to palliative and supportive care
- Scientific content
- Critical analysis
- Clarity and coherence
- Creative synthesis

Marks will be deducted for lateness – as described in course handout on grading.

Letter Grade	Points	Numerical Scale of Marks
A +	90-100	90 - 100%
A	85 - 89	85 - 89%
A -	80 - 84	80 - 84%
B+	77 - 79	77 - 79%
B	73 - 76	73 - 76%
B-	70 - 72	70 - 72%
F	0 - 69	0 - 69%