

2018-9-NFS301 Nutrition Literacy: Sorting Science From Snake Oil

Course Description: The course will help students learn to recognize the strengths and limitations of various nutrition research methods, find reliable nutrition information on the Internet and develop systematic thinking skills to critically evaluating the quality of nutrition information in both the scientific literature and popular media. *Prerequisite:* NFS284H1

Learning Objectives:

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

- recognize the strengths and limitations of various nutrition research methods
- find reliable nutrition information on the Internet
- critically evaluate the quality of nutrition information in both the scientific literature and popular media

Instructor: Debbie Gurfinkel

e-mail: debbie.gurfinkel@utoronto.ca

Phone: 416-978-3621

Office: MS 5267 Medical Sciences Building, 1 King's College Circle

Office Hours: Fri 1-5 pm Sept 7-Dec 7, 2018 inclusive. If you cannot make Friday hours, please e-mail for an appointment at another time.

Course time, location, website:

Lecture: Friday 9-12 MS 2170

Course website: available on Quercus

Textbook: There is no required textbook for this course.

Course Schedule:

Week	Date	Topic	Before next class
1	Sept 7	Review of Syllabus; Nutrition Research: PICOS & Quality Appraisal Tools Introduction to Observational studies; Nutrition in the Media: How things go wrong Practice Group Work (not for credit)	Complete pre-class quiz on <i>Halton et al 2006</i> due Sept 13 at 9 AM . See Reading List Below for link to paper
2	Sept 14	Observational Study 1: <i>Halton et al 2006</i> Quality Appraisal Tool for Observational Studies Confounding, Effect Modification, Mediation Nutrition in the Media: Headlines and Clickbait Group Work 1 <i>Discussion of Comparison Assignment</i>	Complete pre-class quiz for <i>Pantavos et al 2015</i> : due online Sept 20 at 9 AM See Reading List Below for link to paper
3	Sept 21	Observational Studies 2: <i>Pantavos et al 2015</i> Nutrition in the Media: Fact Checking Group Work 2	

4	Sept 28	Systematic Review of Observational Studies Quality Appraisal Tool for Systematic Reviews How to search PubMed for a systematic review <i>Discussion of PubMed Assignment</i> Group Work 3	Complete pre-class quiz for Shin et al 2013: due online Oct 4 at 9 AM See Reading List Below for link to paper
5	Oct 5	Systematic Review of Observational Studies: <i>Shin et al 2013</i> Nutrition in the Media: Health-related Websites Quality appraisal tool for health-related websites Group Work 4	
6	Oct 12	Introduction to RCTs: Nutrition in the Media: How Nutrition Studies are reported. Quality Appraisal Tool for Media Articles Comparison Assignment Due <i>Discussion of Media Article Assignment</i> Group Work 5	
7	Oct 19	TERM TEST 1-Open book: On course content from Sept 7 to Oct 5 inclusive	Complete pre-class quiz for <i>Jenkins et al 2011</i> due online Oct 25 at 9 AM See Reading List Below for link to paper
8	Oct 26	Randomized Controlled Trial: Discussion of <i>Jenkins et al 2011</i> Group Work 6 PubMed Assignment Due Nutrition in the Media: University Press Releases	Complete pre-class quiz for <i>Li et al 2012</i> due online Nov 1 at 9 AM See Reading List Below for link to paper
9	Nov 2 Nov 5-last day to drop	Paper 7: Systematic Review of RCTs: Discussion of <i>Li et al 2012</i> When scientists get it wrong: PREDIMED retraction Group Work 7	Complete pre-class quiz due for <i>Ulven et al 2017</i> online Nov 15 at 9 AM See Reading List Below for link to paper
10	Nov 9	NO CLASS – NOVEMBER BREAK	
11	Nov 16	Randomized Controlled Trial: <i>Ulven et al 2017</i> Nutrition and the Food Industry Group Work 8 Media Article Due	
12	Nov 23	TERM TEST 2 – Open Book: On course content from Oct 12, Oct 26, Nov 2, Nov 16	
13	Nov 30	Nutrition on the Web-Keeping up with the discipline Group Work 9	

Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Group Work	Sept 14, 21, 28, Oct 5,12,26, Nov 2, 16, 30	9 = (9 X 1%)
Pre-class Quizzes	Sept 13, 20, Oct 4, 25, Nov 1, 15	12 = (6 X 2%)
Comparison Assignment	Oct 12	25
Term Test 1- Open book	Oct 19	15
Searching PubMed	Oct 26	10
Media Article	Nov 16	14
Term Test 2-Open book	Nov 23	15
TOTAL		100

Reading List:

Pre-class quiz due online at 9 AM	Journal article
Sept 13	Halton TL, Willett WC, Liu S, Manson JE, Stampfer MJ, Hu FB. 2006. Potato and french fry consumption and risk of type 2 diabetes in women. Am J Clin Nutr: 83(2):284-90. http://ajcn.nutrition.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/content/83/2/284.long
Sept 20	Pantavos A, Ruiters R, Feskens EF, de Keyser CE, Hofman A, Stricker BH, Franco OH, Kieft-de Jong JC. 2015. Total dietary antioxidant capacity, individual antioxidant intake and breast cancer risk: the Rotterdam Study. Int J Cancer. 136(9):2178-86. doi: 10.1002/ijc.29249. https://doi-org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.1002/ijc.29249
Oct 4	Shin JY, Xun P, Nakamura Y, He K. 2013. Egg consumption in relation to risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Am J Clin Nutr. 98(1):146-59. doi: 10.3945/ajcn.112.051318. https://doi-org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.3945/ajcn.112.051318
Oct 25	Jenkins DJ, Jones PJ, Lamarche B, Kendall CW, Faulkner D, Cermakova L, Giguere I, Ramprasath V, de Souza R, Ireland C, Patel D, Srichaikul K, Abdunour S, Bashyam B, Collier C, Hoshizaki S, Josse RG, Leiter LA, Connelly PW, Frohlich J. 2011. Effect of a dietary portfolio of cholesterol-lowering foods given at 2 levels of intensity of dietary advice on serum lipids in hyperlipidemia: a randomized controlled trial. JAMA. 306(8):831-9. doi:10.1001/jama.2011.1202. http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/443659
Nov 1	Li SS, Blanco Mejia S, Lytvyn L, Stewart SE, Viguiliouk E, Ha V, de Souza RJ, Leiter LA, Kendall CWC, Jenkins DJA, Sievenpiper JL. 2017. Effect of Plant Protein on Blood Lipids: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. J Am Heart Assoc. 6(12). pii: e006659. doi:10.1161/JAHA.117.006659. https://doi-org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.1161/JAHA.117.006659
Nov 15	Ulven SM, Leder L, Elind E, Ottestad I, Christensen JJ, Telle-Hansen VH, Skjette AJ, Raael E, Sheikh NA, Holck M, Torvik K, Lamglait A, Thyholt K, Byfuglien MG, Granlund L, Andersen LF, Holven KB. 2016. Exchanging a few commercial, regularly consumed food items with improved fat quality reduces total cholesterol and LDL-cholesterol: a double-blind, randomised controlled trial. Br J Nutr. 116(8):1383-1393. https://doi-org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.1017/S0007114516003445

Important Course Policies:

Assignment Submissions:

All assignments in this course **require both an online submission and a hard copy**. The hard copy is being requested so that TAs can read your assignments from paper – which is much easier than from a screen. All feedback to students, however, will be provided online, so the hard copy is not returned to students; instead it is shredded shortly after final marks are submitted. **Students should download their marked assignments and associated feedback, from Quercus**, for their personal files so they have complete record of their assignment and its grading.

Late submission of assignments:

NO ASSIGNMENT WILL BE ACCEPTED after the due date and time for online submission except for compelling reasons such as illness, personal distress, family emergency or other unforeseen circumstance. Please contact Dr G by e-mail (debbie.gurfinkel@utoronto.ca) to request an extension, prior to the due date, if possible. A very brief explanation of why you are requesting an extension is required. This can be a written explanation from you or a medical certificate:

<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php> Verbal explanations can also be provided either in face-to-face discussion or by phone (Dr. G's phone: 416-978-3621). All information is treated as confidential. Students dealing with intense or ongoing personal distress or chronic illness, who may need special and continuing accommodation, may be asked for additional documentation and are advised to discuss their situation with their college registrar.

Please note that poor time management, having several assignments due at the same time, having to study for term tests, etc are generally NOT compelling reasons for an extension. Extensions, for such reasons, are granted only in rare situations. Students are expected to complete their assignments as best they can, hand them in on time, even if incomplete, and accept that they may not get as high a grade as they would like.

If you feel you have a compelling reason that cannot be easily documented or are uncertain if your reasons are compelling, you should ideally discuss this with Dr G before the assignment due date. If this is not possible then **FIRST** hand-in as much of the assignment as you possibly can on the due date and **THEN** contact Dr G to discuss your situation. All discussions are kept confidential.

Accessibility Services: If you are registered with Accessibility Services, extensions are provided in accordance with the terms of your letter of accommodation.

Assignment re-reads: If you have concerns about your grading, a re-read can be requested. Instructions on how to submit re-read requests will be provided during the term.

Turnitin

"Normally students will be required to submit their assignments to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their assignments to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site."

All students are expected to either submit to Turnitin, which is voluntary, or provide an alternative. On Quercus, online submissions will automatically be submitted to Turnitin, but you will have to agree to

the Turnitin service agreement. If you have issues with Turnitin, please contact Dr G to arrange an alternate submission. Briefly, for those who do not submit to Turnitin, as an alternative you will be expected to meet with Dr Gurfinkel for a short **oral test** during which you will be asked questions about the writing of the assignment and its content. Your assignment grade may be changed based on how well you answer these questions.

Dr. Gurfinkel reviews the Turnitin submissions and will e-mail students if there are any concerns about their writing. Often this is no more than a discussion of how to properly paraphrase and/or cite references, but the deduction of marks may also result. Failure to respond to such an e-mail **will** result in the deduction of assignment marks. If a serious case of plagiarism is suspected, the student's assignment will be forwarded to the Office of Academic Integrity for review and possible sanction.

Policy for missed term tests:

Except for compelling reasons such as those described in the policy regarding late assignments, all students will be given a grade of ZERO if they miss a term test. When compelling reasons are provided, a make-up test will be arranged. **Contact Dr G as soon as possible, but NO LATER than 1 week after the missed test**, so that a make-up test can be arranged in a timely fashion.

Lecture material, audio recordings, and intellectual property

Lecture presentations and course materials are the intellectual property of the instructor. All students enrolled in NFS301 are permitted to use the material for personal study. You may also make audio recordings of the lecture for personal use. Note that if you bring a recording device to the front of the classroom, you do so at your own risk. These devices do get lost or stolen. The distribution, transmission, reproduction or re-posting of the NFS301 course materials, in whole or part, is NOT permitted without the consent of the instructor.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to conduct themselves with academic integrity. The Code of Behaviour clearly describes activities that are considered academic misconduct:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm> Student are urged to regularly review the code as ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse.

Help with Academic Skills:

Academic Success Centre: The Academic Success Centre provides workshops, peer mentoring, and other resources to help all students improve their academic skills. Check out the available services at:

<http://www.asc.utoronto.ca/>

English Language Learning: Provides support to students for whom English is a second language. It also supports native speakers who would like to improve their language skills. Check out available services at:

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>

Writing Centres: Writing Centres provide assistance with writing assignments for all students. Check out available services at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres>

Accessibility Needs:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>