

**NFS 490H1: International and Community Nutrition  
Course Syllabus**

**January 11 to April 5, 2022**

**Lectures:** Tuesdays 9:10am-12:00pm EST, in-person (OISE, 2214). Online until January 31.

**Course Description:** This course focuses on current issues in international and community nutrition and will consider relevant cultural and social determinants of health. Foundational concepts in nutrition will be introduced such as the role of micronutrients and macronutrients in health, food security, nutritional assessment methods and study design, followed by a selection of substantive topics including maternal and child health, communicable and noncommunicable diseases, climate change and epidemiological transition in Indigenous communities in Canada. Examples of both global and local approaches will highlight the complex considerations involved in addressing these issues. Students will be encouraged to think critically about major challenges to improving nutrition and health at a community and global level.

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Recognize current issues in nutrition in the community and globally, with a focus on the role of nutrition in maternal and child health, communicable and noncommunicable diseases and the environment through critical evaluation of the scientific literature and exploration of demographic, epidemiological, biological, social, political and economic factors.
2. Apply basic principles of nutrition and the role of nutrients in health to understand the nutritional status of specific populations and to assess nutritional status based on dietary, anthropometric, biochemical and clinical assessments.
3. Critically review the scientific literature on nutrition and health topics, examine the role of nutritional factors and health outcomes, and identify strengths and weaknesses of studies. Discuss the latest findings from epidemiologic studies on the role of nutrition in the prevention and treatment of key communicable, perinatal, and noncommunicable disease outcomes and consider the impact of diet on the environment and vice versa.
4. Integrate nutritional research findings and consider practical issues in intervention or program design and implementation.

**Instructor:** Vasanti Malik, vasanti.malik@utoronto.ca

Office Hours (virtual via zoom): Tuesdays 4:00-5:00 pm EST or by appointment

**Course Evaluation:**

Assessments*	Due Date	% of Final Grade
Midterm test	February 8	35
Individual assignment	March 8	35
Group presentations and peer evaluations	March 22 to April 5 (Topic Selection due Jan 25)	20
Online quizzes (5 out of 6)	January 25 to March 15	10

\*For students with religious observances on assignment due dates or scheduled tests, please speak with Dr. Malik in advance to arrange an alternate date.

**Course Expectations:** It is expected that students will attend lectures in-person when in-person instruction begins and attend online lectures synchronously. However, if a student is unable to attend lectures at the scheduled time, please contact Dr. Malik.

**Midterm test:** This will be an online test, and will be posted on Quercus and available to students at 9:10am on the day of the test (Feb 8). Within 24 hours (i.e. by 9:10 am on Feb 9), students must submit test responses on the Quercus test template and upload a document with all their responses to Ouriginal (plagiarism detection tool).

**Individual assignment:** Students will write a mock memo to a Minister of Health of a country of their choice on specific actions to take following the announcement of an important nutritional research finding published in a prominent scientific article (5 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font). A selection of articles will be provided from which students will select one for their memo. Submission of the assignment in Quercus and Ouriginal is required by the due date, March 8. More details will be posted on Quercus.

**Group Presentation (30 minutes):** An anonymous philanthropic donor has launched a global competition to fund one ground-breaking proposal to improve nutrition and population health. Students will work in groups of 4-6 to identify a specific nutritional problem and a single intervention or solution in a global or local setting of their choice and present their case. A list of suggested topics will be provided. Groups must submit their topic by January 25 on Quercus.

Groups will be given time to work on their presentations during class from 9am – 10am in our classroom (or virtual breakout rooms if we are online) starting after reading week. Presentations will take place during the final 3 lectures of the course and presentation dates will be determined by lottery. If a group member is unable to attend class on the date of their presentation, they will be permitted to prerecord their section of the presentation. Students will complete peer evaluations for all presentations except their own and submit these to Quercus. More details will be posted on Quercus.

**Quizzes on lecture material:** To reinforce key concepts from lectures and achieve learning objectives, students will be required to complete online quizzes based on lecture material. There will be 6 quizzes but only 5 will be counted towards the final grade so students may choose to skip one quiz.

**Discussion and interactivity:** To create an interactive learning environment in the virtual classroom, we will utilize a variety of tools including polling, chats and virtual breakout rooms. This will also apply to the in-person learning environment where we will have small group discussions and in-class activities. It is expected that students will engage in these activities.

**Ouriginal:** Students will be required to submit their term test and assignment to Ouriginal for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In so doing, students will allow their term tests and assignments to be included as source documents in the Ouriginal reference

database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. Ouriginal is accessed through the online submission of assignments on Quercus, where you can review and opt to agree to the terms of use. If a student is unable to use Ouriginal, please contact Dr. Malik. All students are expected to submit to Ouriginal, or provide an alternative. Failure to do so could result in a grade of zero for the test or assignment. For those who do not submit to Ouriginal, as an alternative they will be expected to meet with Dr. Malik virtually for a short **oral test** about the process of writing the term test or assignment and knowledge of the content. Based on this oral test, the grade on the assignment or test may be modified.

**Re-read policy:** If a student has substantial concerns about their grade on the test or assignment, they may submit a written request for a re-read within the allotted time period. Details on how to do this and deadlines will be described in class, and posted on Quercus.

**Missed Work:** If a student is unable to complete course work or the term test, please contact Dr. Malik within 48 hours, ideally prior to the test/class date, and no later than one week after the test/activity to discuss options. Students will be asked to provide a reason for missing the test/activity and this can be a written explanation from the student or a medical certificate. <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>. Verbal discussions can also be arranged. All discussions are treated as confidential. Students dealing with 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. Failure to write a supplemental test/activity will result in a mark of zero for that component. It is the student's responsibility to contact Dr. Malik to schedule a make-up test/activity.

**Late work:** Assignments submitted late, without satisfactory reasoning (e.g., illness, personal distress, family emergency), will be penalized 10% of the final mark each day, including weekend days. Lateness is defined by the digital time stamp on online submissions. Please contact Dr. Malik as soon as possible if an extension to the assignment deadline is required. Students will be asked to provide a reason for the extension and this can be a written explanation from the student or a medical certificate. <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>. Verbal discussions can also be arranged. All discussions are treated as confidential. It is the student's responsibility to contact Dr. Malik to arrange an extension.

**Course Materials:** Reference materials: There is no assigned textbook for this course. Prior to each lecture, recommended readings will be posted on Quercus.

Course notes and lecture slides: Class materials can be obtained through Quercus. This site will continue to be updated throughout the term.

Lecture material, audio/visual recordings, and intellectual property: Lecture presentations and course materials are the intellectual property of the instructor. All students enrolled in NFS490 are permitted to use the material, for personal study only. Re-posting of lecture material online is not permitted without permission of the instructor.

Course Schedule: Date	Topic	Facilitator(s)	Assessment
Jan. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course overview</li> <li>Introduction to nutrition and health</li> <li>Overview of micronutrients and macronutrients in health</li> </ul>	V. Malik	
Jan. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social determinants of health</li> <li>Overview of assignments</li> <li>Food security in the Canadian context</li> </ul>	V. Malik / V. Tarasuk	
Jan. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutritional Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dietary assessment</li> <li>Anthropometric assessment</li> <li>Biochemical assessment</li> <li>Clinical assessment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	V. Malik / J. Hulst	Online quiz 1  Group presentation topic due
Feb. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Epidemiological studies</li> <li>Interventions</li> <li>Meta-analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>Overview of midterm test</li> </ul>	V. Malik	Online quiz 2
Feb. 8	<b>Term Test - Online</b>		
Feb. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maternal and child nutrition in low- and middle-income countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concepts and measurement</li> <li>Implementing nutrition interventions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	A. Daniels	Online quiz 3
Feb. 21-25	<b>Reading Week</b>		
Mar. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Epidemiological Transition in low-and middle-income countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global burden of chronic diseases</li> <li>Environmental sustainability</li> <li>Developmental Origins of Health and Disease (DOHaD)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	V. Malik	Online quiz 4
Mar. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dietary interventions for risk factor management and chronic disease prevention</li> <li>Technological innovations including apps in risk factor and disease management</li> </ul>	L. Chiavaroli	Online quiz 5  Individual assignment due
Mar. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Epidemiological Transition among Indigenous Canadians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutritional Perspectives and programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	A. Hanley/ H. Montieth	Online quiz 6
Mar. 22	Group Presentations	Students	
Mar. 29	Group Presentations	Students	
Apr. 5	Group Presentations Course Conclusion	Students V. Malik	

**University of Toronto Policies:**

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct. Plagiarism (the presentation or paraphrasing of another person's work as if it was one's own) is a form of academic fraud with potentially serious consequences. All university policies regarding plagiarism will be upheld in this course. Refer to - <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>

Accessibility: The University provides support and accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure equitable access to opportunities and achievement of students' full potential. Refer to - <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>

**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>