



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND LEGAL STUDIES

SOCIOLOGY 436 041 Alcohol and Well-Being

Fall 2021

Class Time: Tuesday 11.30 – 12.50 pm SYNCHRONOUS REMOTE on MS Teams (via Quest)

Attending the synchronous class is worth a .5% completion grade for a total of 5% for attending 10 classes of 12 or so classes. For pedagogical reasons, I strongly encourage students to attend with their cameras on. For this reason, there will be a .25% bonus mark for attending with the camera on, for a total of 2.5% bonus for 10 of 12 or so classes. (If for some reason you can provide some documentation for not being able to attend class or attend with the camera on please get in touch with me to make alternative arrangements.) While attendance at the synchronous class is expected, it will be recorded and be made available **through Quest on MS Teams.**

Please consult this link below on privacy during recording. Here you will find information on [instructions on how to disable cameras and microphones](https://uwaterloo.ca/keep-learning/privacy-recordings), and if desired provide a pseudonym.
<https://uwaterloo.ca/keep-learning/privacy-recordings>

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Kieran Bonner

Office: SJU SH 2005

Office Phone: 884-8111/888-4567 # 28242

Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 5.30 – 6.00pm or by appointment

Email: kmbonner@uwaterloo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar proposes to develop an understanding of the relation between culture and alcohol consumption in light of what Gadamer calls **the enigma of health** or what Blum and colleagues call **grey zone of well-being**. It will be argued that the idea of well-being is fundamentally ambiguous, a grey zone. For this course a grey zone will be treated as an interpretive area referring to the irremediable zone of ambiguity that haunts even the most apparently resolute discourse. This idea points to an ontological indeterminacy; the ambiguity can never be once and for all resolved. This idea of the grey zone haunts all understanding and knowledge, including the facts of alcohol consumption, health, and illness. Rather than assuming ambiguity is bad and needs resolution, this course will take up the ambiguity embedded in discourses regarding alcohol consumption and examine the various positions taken up regarding that ambiguity. No discourse, including the dominant discourse of medical science, is automatically privileged. All discourses on alcohol consumption are examined in order to develop a strong relation to understanding and living a good life. An overall theme is the phenomenon of

euphoria. Along the way we will examine concerns with, prohibition, thinking, learning and addiction. In the case of all topics, the analysis will be used to tease out the way ambiguity is embedded in practices and in understandings made available through a variety of disciplinary traditions. For example, one of the cultural discourses concerning alcohol consumption highlights the ambiguity of the grey zone by presenting alcohol both as an aid to health (in moderation) and a source of illness (in excess). During the nineteenth century, the addiction paradigm was developed using alcohol consumption as the paradigmatic case; this paradigm is now applied to a myriad of behaviours.

As with my other courses, this course has a 4-stage learning process: 1 Reading the assigned text; 2. Responding to a Discussion Question on the reading; 3. Reading other Discussion Replies and replying to one; 4. Attending the class which discusses the text, the posts and the replies. Each stage builds on the previous stage and thus enabling students to build on their learning. Again, as with my other courses, the course has a strong reflexive character. By reflexivity I mean developing our knowledge of the subject matter and our ability to take responsibility for that knowledge. That is (and more formally), we want to develop our knowledge of well-being and our knowledge of what makes that knowledge possible. **Because of this reflexive character, there will be times when the issues seem convoluted and the questions difficult and challenging.** Thus, as with all my courses, **perplexity (aporia) will be a necessary experience in this class.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Understand the idea of ambiguity (the grey zone) as a practical and theoretical issue
- B. Address the case of the relation between culture and alcohol consumption as an example of the grey zone of life
- C. Develop an understanding of the notion of well-being.
- D. Address the idea of euphoria in terms of both drinking and thinking
- E. Address the socio-cultural understandings that led to the idea of 'the demon drink.'
- F. Address the relation between addiction and the AA solution
- G. Address the wider issue of the relation between addiction, insanity, and self-understanding
- H. Develop the art to think critically, analytically, and reflexively.

REQUIRED TEXTS [AND OTHER REQUIRED/SUGGESTED READINGS]

Hans G. Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health* (Available on Electronic Reserves)

There will be other readings including Simmel, Weber, Blum, Valverde, Bonner, etc. These also will be available on Course Reserves.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
5 - ½ hour Seminar Presentations	Throughout term (5*2% each)	10%
Mid-term assignment	Oct. 28.	30%
Take-Home Paper/Exam	Dec. 15 (Posted on Dec. 7)	40%
Online Assignment (10 Response to Readings@ 1% each = 10%, 10 Response to Responses@ 0.5% each = 5%)	Ongoing	10%
Participation (10 remote class attendance @ 0.5% per class = 5%)		5%
Bonus (10 remote attendance with camera's on @ 0.25% per class = 2.5%)		2.5%
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Total		102.5%/100%

Online Assignments

The purpose of the online discussion assignments, as part of the 4-stage learning process, is to generate dialogue among the students as well as to prepare students for the lecture/class. As the main point is to encourage attempts at responding to questions on difficult readings (stage 1), they are not graded for accuracy nor are they responded to by the instructor. Rather, any issues and questions they raise are addressed in the class. As completion assignments, the attempt earns the grade.

Discussion: Response to Question on Readings (Stage 2)

Over the course of the term, each student will respond to 10 of 12 or so questions on the readings. These responses should be in the range of 180 - 200 words in length. (Note, anything less than this length is in risk of not counting.) The questions will be based on the theories, readings, concepts, as they apply to the grey zone, alcohol use and regulation and/or intoxication; **each response is worth 1% with all 10 being worth a total of 10%**. This is a completion exercise. The questions will be posted by Friday after the class and **the Responses to the Reading is due on the following Monday by 1 pm.**

Replies to Student Posts (Stage 3)

Students are also required to reply to one other students' post once a week. You must do 10 replies over the course of 12 weeks and they need to be a paragraph in length, 80 - 100 words approximately. (Note, anything less than this length is in risk of not counting). These **Replies to Posts are due on the following Monday by 3 pm.** These are completion assignments are worth 0.5% each **and you will get 5% for completing all 10 responses.**

Attendance (Stage 4)

Though the class is delivered remotely, as much as is possible we will try to develop the dialogical atmosphere of an in-person seminar experience. While we cannot do that completely with a digital environment, we can aim for that as the standard. Students should attend at least 10 of 12 or so

classes. During class I may call on you to read a slide, or interpret a slide, or to further discuss class content. This is a completion assignment, and each attendance is worth 0.5% each. **You will get 5% for attending 10 of 12 or so synchronous classes, ideally with your camera on.** While attendance at the synchronous class is expected, it will be **recorded and be made available through Quest on MS Streams.** There is also a **.25% bonus mark for each class** of 10 of 12 or so total classes you **attend with camera on** for a **total of 2.5% bonus** grade. Again, this is for pedagogical reasons to enhance solidarity.

Seminar Presentations

Depending on enrolment and class preference, there are approximately 5 seminar presentations in the latter section of the course. As the class is being delivered remotely, the presentations will happen online. (The feasibility and details have yet to be worked out.) These presentations are on chapters from Gadamer's *The Enigma of Health*. You are encouraged to take notes on the readings. All students will participate in groups that lead the class for a ½ hour. The grade will not be on the presentation *per se* but on the level of participation of all students, including presenters. Each group has **the option of locating one additional scholarly reading (min 7 pages, max 15 pages)** and one **additional** news item, and **post these works to the relevant LEARN discussion group** by noon on the Friday before class. **Each group will post questions from the readings to be used in leading the discussion in class by Friday before Tuesday's class.** If you chose the option of an extra reading or article (note this is not required) it must illuminate some aspect of the class focus of alcohol, well-being, euphoria, law, grey zone and ideally relate to the chapter in Gadamer that you are addressing. The additional reading can be from a scholarly journal or book, while the additional news item can be from a news source, a reputable blog or website, magazine; focus on finding timely sources that speak to a current event.

Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Sept. 14 Introductions	Overview of the Course and its Requirements. – Knowledge Creation: Discovery vs. Interpretation	Course Outline. Student self-intro
2	Sept. 21	The methodological and ontological issues involved in the study of well-being.	Reading Blum 9 – 15; Bonner on Gadamer, E-reserves
3	Sept. 28	Euphoria – Drinking and Thinking	Bonner <i>E-Reserve</i>
4	Oct. 5	The American Prohibition Experiment Gadamer Seminar 1 (Ch. 2 and 3)	New Yorker article, Bonner e-reserve.
5	Oct. 9 – 17	Reading Week - No Class	
6	Oct 19	Science, Self-Understanding, Addiction, and AA . (Organize Seminar Presentations) Oct. 28 Assign. Review	Bonner, e-reserve, Edwards Ch.7; Valverde Ch 5.
7	Oct 26	The Grey Zone: Med Sc and Anthr on Alcohol. Mid-Term Oct. 28/29	Bonner e- reserves
8	Nov 2	The Grey Zone Continued: Plato Laws on Alcohol Consumption.	Bonner (E-Reserve)
9	Nov 9	Motivation and the Desire to Learn Gadamer Seminar 2. (Ch. 4 and 5)	Bonner (E-Reserve)
10	Nov 16	Health, Well-Being, Intoxication. Gadamer Seminar 3. (Ch. 6 and 7)	Simmel, 'Sociability' Edwards Ch. 13
11	Nov 23	Desire, Folly and cultural addiction. Gadamer Seminar 4 (Ch. 8 and 10)	Bonner e -reserves
12	Nov 30	Thinking, Desire, Euphoria and Addiction. Gadamer Seminar 5 (Ch. 12 and 13)	Bonner, <i>Ironic Intoxication</i>
13	Dec 7	Course Review and Take-Home exam	

This is a tentative course outline in the sense that student interest and the emerging course conversation may require the introduction of new material, spending more time with existing material or even returning to material covered earlier. The outline, therefore, is not so much a contract as a proposal.

Notes:

Email is not conducive to discussion and not an alternative way to receive class material. Discussion of assignments, class material or sociological questions is welcome at class, during office hours or by appointment. Appointments should be made by email and include your student id.

POLICY ON LATE WORK, MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, AND MAKE-UP TESTS

Late Penalty on graded assessments -3% (out of 100%) per day including weekends

RULES FOR GROUP WORK IN ASSIGNMENTS

When working on a group assignment, a Group Assignment Checklist must be completed and submitted with the assignment:

https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/sites/ca.arts/files/uploads/files/group_assignment_disclosure.pdf

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ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY – Again for pedagogical reasons, multi-tasking while attending classes (e.g., reading social media posts; watching other programs; communicating with friends online) is not allowed.

CORRESPONDENCE

My preference for contact is by email to the email address above. Please include the nature of the issue and your student ID in the email.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student's educational experience. **However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).**

Permission from an instructor is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Classes begin</i>	<i>Wednesday, September 8</i>
<i>Last day to add a class</i>	<i>Tuesday, September 21</i>
<i>Last day to drop, no penalty</i>	<i>Tuesday, September 28</i>
<i>Reading Week (no course activity or assignments can be due)</i>	<i>Saturday, October 9 to Sunday, October 17 inclusive</i>
<i>UW Holiday (Thanksgiving Day)</i>	<i>Monday, October 11</i>
<i>Last day to drop, receive a WD</i>	<i>Tuesday, November 23</i>
<i>Lectures end</i>	<i>Tuesday, December 7</i>
<i>Last day to drop, receive a WF</i>	<i>Wednesday, December 8</i>
<i>Pre-final assessment study day</i>	<i>Wednesday, December 8</i>
<i>Final exam/assessment period</i>	<i>Thursday, December 9 to Thursday, December 23</i>
<i>Grades due period</i>	<i>TBA -- Instructors will receive email from RO with more details in late November</i>
<i>Grades due, if final assessment</i>	<i>7 days after final assessment</i>
<i>Grades due, if no final assessment</i>	<i>TBA -- Instructors will receive email from RO with more details in late November</i>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION [REQUIRED LANGUAGE APPROVED BY SJU SENATE COUNCIL]

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the St.

Jerome's University Policy on [Student Petitions and Grievances](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check the [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the St. Jerome's University policy on [Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

[INCLUDE THE NEXT SECTION IF USING TURNITIN; <https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-instructors-and-tas/turnitin-and-ithenticate>]

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.