



# ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND LEGAL STUDIES

SOCIOLOGY 436 001 Alcohol and Well-Being

Fall 2022

Class Time: Tuesday 11.30 – 1.30 pm Room SJ1 3020

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Kieran Bonner

Office: SJU SH 2005

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

**Office Hours:** I will (on request) hold office hours on Tues, Weds and Thursdays 2 – 2.30. I can also arrange individual meetings outside of those times. **I strongly encourage you to arrange to meet individually.**

Email: [kmbonner@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:kmbonner@uwaterloo.ca)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar proposes to develop an understanding of the relation between culture, law, and alcohol consumption in light of what Gadamer calls **the enigma of health** or what reflexive analysis calls the **grey zone of well-being**. This grey zone is 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, in the face of which decisions have to be made with regard to the health of a person, a system, or a society. This grey zone haunts all understanding and knowledge, including the facts of health and illness, and the course seeks to create an understanding of the relation between well-being and alcohol in light of that background. Along the way we will examine concerns regarding conflicting disciplinary conclusions, prohibition, sociability, thinking, learning, addiction, mental health, and so on. 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, cultural discourses concerning alcohol consumption highlight the grey zone by presenting alcohol both as an aid to and detriment to well-being. 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; 2. Responding online to a Discussion question on the reading; 3. Reading other discussion responses and replying to one online; 4. Attending the class which discusses the reading. 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. As a nurtured Socratic perplexity (aporia) is part of the experience**

of learning, you will need to be able to sustain your spirit despite at times feeling you do not know what is going on nor where the course is headed. In short, perplexity/confusion is a course objective.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- A. Understand the idea of ambiguity as fundamental in both life and theory
- B. Address the case of the relation between culture and alcohol consumption as an example of the ambiguity or grey zone of life
- C. Develop an understanding of the notion of well-being.
- D. Address the idea of euphoria in terms of drinking, thinking, thoughtlessness and learning
- E. Address the socio-cultural understandings that led to the idea of 'the demon drink' and prohibition.
- F. Address the relation between addiction and the AA solution
- G. Address the wider issue of the relation between addiction, obsession 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 6/7                       | 30%       |
| Take-Home Paper/Exam  | Dec 9 (Posted on Nov 30)      | 40%       |
| Online Assignment (10 Responses to Readings@ 1% each = 10%,<br>10 Replies to Responses@ 0.5% each = 5%) | Ongoing                       | 10%       |
| Participation (10/12 class attendance and participation@ 0.5% per class = 5%)                           |                               | 5%        |
| Total   |                               | 100%      |

### The 4-Stage Learning Process

#### Online Assignments: 1. Reading

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 (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. They are completion assignments; the attempt earns the grade.

## **2. Discussion: Response to Question on Readings**

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 alcohol use, regulation, intoxication, prohibition, desire, well-being, ambiguity and so on; **each response is worth 1% with all 10 being worth a total of 10%**. This is a completion exercise. The questions will be posted on Tuesday/Weds after the class and **the Responses to the Reading is due on the following Tuesday by 1pm**.

## **3. Replies to Student Posts on Readings**

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 Tuesday by 3 pm**. These are completion assignments are worth 0.5% each **and you will get 5% for completing all 10 responses**.

## **4. Participation**

Students should attend at least 10 of 12 or so classes. During class I will often call on students 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 classes**. Class attendance at the class is expected.

## **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 Monday before class. Each group will post questions from the readings to be used in leading the discussion in 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, alcohol and 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. 7<br>Introductions      | Overview of the Course and its Requirements. – Knowledge Creation: Discovery vs. Interpretation | Course Outline.<br>Student self-intro  |
| 2    | Sept. 14 Class 2              | The methodological/ theoretical issues of the study of well-being.                              | Blum <i>Grey zone in health and wellness</i> . 9-15; Bonner, <i>Gadamer, the Phaedrus and the Arts of Healing</i> ”? |
| 3    | Sept. 21 Class 3              | The Grey Zone: Med Sc and Anthr on Alcohol. ( <b>Organize Seminar Presentations</b> )           | Bonner, Ch. 1. “Drinking Discourses.” <i>E-Reserve</i>   |
| 4    | Sept. 28 Class 4              | The Grey Zone Continued: Plato Laws on Alcohol Consumption. <b>Mid-Term Review?</b>             | Bonner, Ch. 1. “Drinking Discourses.” e-reserve;   |
| 5    | Oct. 5 Class 5                | Desire for Progress: The American Prohibition Experiment <b>Mid-Term Oct 6 -7</b>               | Bonner Ch. 2. “Desire for Progress;” Sanneh, New Yorker article;   |
| 6    | <b>Oct. 8– 16</b>             | <b>Reading Week - No Class</b>  |  |
| 7    | Oct. 19 Class 6               | Desire for Good Company: Health vs. Well-being e- reserves                                      | Bonner Ch. 3. “Desire for Good Company;” Simmel, ‘Sociability’ Edwards Ch. 13  |
| 8    | Oct. 26 Class 7               | Desire and Euphoria: Drinking, Thinking, Thoughtlessness. Gadamer Seminar 1                     | Bonner Ch. 4. “Desire and Euphoria” (E-Reserve)  |
| 9    | Nov 2 Class 8                 | ‘Desire, Use, Repeat’: Addiction and AA Gadamer Seminar 2.                                      | Bonner Ch. 5 “Desire, Use, Repeat;” Edwards, Ch. 7 (E-Reserve)   |
| 10   | Nov. 9 Class 9<br>*Socrates?? | Desire to Learn and Self-Development Gadamer Seminar 3.   | Bonner, Ch. 6. “Desire to Learn.” e-reserves   |
| 11   | Nov 16 Class 10               | Desire, Madness and cultural addiction Gadamer Seminar 4.                                       | Bonner Ch. 7. “Desire and Ironic Intoxication”   |
| 12   | Nov 23 Class 11               | Erotic Thinking, Love and Addiction. Gadamer Seminar 5  | Bonner, Ch. 8. “Erotic Thinking, Love, Addiction.” (E-Reserve)   |
| 13   | Nov 30 take-home Class 12     | Course Review and Take-Home exam – Due Dec. 9   |  |

**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. **This course is registered on UW LEARN. Please activate your UW email account.**

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

| <i>Event</i>   | <i>Date</i>                    |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Classes begin  | Wed., Sept. 7                  |
| Last day to add a class  | Tues., Sept. 20                |
| Last day to drop, no penalty                                       | Tues., Sept. 27                |
| <i>Reading Week</i> (no course activity or assignments can be due) | Sat., Oct. 8 - Sun., Oct. 15   |
| <i>UW Holiday (Thanksgiving Day &amp; "Thank you" day)</i>         | Mon., Oct. 10 & Tues., Oct. 11 |
| <b>Last day to drop, receive a WD</b>                              | Tues., Nov. 22                 |
| Lectures end   | Tues., Dec. 6                  |
| Last day to drop, receive a WF                                     | Thurs., Dec. 8                 |
| Pre-final assessment study days                                    | Wed., Dec. 7 & Thurs., Dec. 8  |
| Final exam/assessment period                                       | Fri., Dec. 9 - Fri., Dec. 16   |
| <i>UW Holiday Closure</i>  | Dec., 24 - Jan. 2              |

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

Late Penalty on graded assessments - 2% (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](https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/sites/ca.arts/files/uploads/files/group_assignment_disclosure.pdf)

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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; each attendance is worth 0.5% each. **You will get a maximum of 5% for attending 10 of 12 classes.**

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

Uses of electronic devices should not interfere with student learning.

**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).

## **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/](http://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/](http://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.