

	School of Health, Education, and Human Services
	HCA 130
	HEALING 2A – COGNITIVE & MENTAL CHALLENGES
	Fall, 2026 2 Credits
Course Outline	

INSTRUCTOR: Kelsey Watts RN

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CLASSROOM: A2714

Class Dates/Times: Mondays: Sept 14-Nov 16 (1300-1600) & Thursday: Sept 10 (1300-1600)

No Classes during Fall Reading Week: Oct 12-16, 2026

HEHS Office: A2501 Ayamdigut Campus hehs@yukonu.ca (668-8845)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds on content from other courses to assist students to explore concepts and care-giving approaches that will allow them to work effectively with individuals experiencing cognitive challenges. Emphasis is on recognizing behaviours and identifying person-centered intervention strategies.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisite(s): None

Corequisite(s): Full-time enrollment in HCA program unless special permission provided by HCA Coordinator

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

Transfers not formalized through BCCAT. Receiving institutions determine course transferability. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe ways to organize, administer and evaluate person-centred care and assistance for clients/residents experiencing cognitive health challenges.
- Use an informed problem-solving process when caring for individuals experiencing cognitive health challenges.
- Demonstrate an understanding of effective approaches to disruptive or abusive behaviour.
- Describe types of abuse/abusive relationships and the cycle of abuse. (Abuse is mentioned as well in other courses; 101, 102 for example).
- Know when to exit a potentially unsafe situation.

COURSE FORMAT

Weekly breakdown of instructional hours

Each class will have 3 hours of direct instruction time over the total of 10 classes. It is expected that this course will require 2-4 hours/week of homework and additional reading. The time required will vary by individual.

Delivery format

This course is delivered on campus, in person. Students are expected to attend class and may be required to complete assignments and/or activities online or individually.

This course will consist of lectures, group work, learning activities, and may include guest speakers and other methods to optimise learning. The format for each class will include:

- Opportunity for questions on previous material
- Introduction and integration of new material
- Assignments & preparation for next class

EVALUATION

Participation	10 %
Assignments	30 %
Quizzes	25 %
Final Exam	35 %
Total	100%

ASSESSMENTS

Attendance & Participation

10%

This course is part of the HCA program which is experiential; therefore, attendance is essential. Attendance means being at class on time every day, prepared for the class and participating to the end of the class. If student cannot be at class, student must notify the instructor in advance and arrange to get the class notes and information from classmates. Students are responsible for the information and materials of every class.

Participation includes active involvement in the activities of the classroom and completion of assignments, reading, quizzes, etc. Coming to class regularly, being on time, being prepared for the class, speaking up in class and handing in assignments when due will contribute greatly to student's success.

Dementia Assignment

30%

In this assignment, students will demonstrate to the instructor and their classmates what they think it would be like for them to have dementia. This requires personal reflection and the evidence of integration of experience and knowledge/theory from this course.

Tests/Quizzes

25%

Quizzes will be completed throughout the course to assess the learning. There are no re-writes for quizzes.

Final Exam Nov 16 (1300-1600)

35%

The final exam is cumulative and will cover material and information presented in class, the readings and discussions.

NOTE: If a student should fail the final exam a re-write/supplemental exam is not guaranteed, but at the discretion of the instructor.

Other: **NO** Mid-term Exam

All evaluative components for this course are mandatory and must have a passing grade of minimum 50%

Missing or incomplete assignments will result in a course grade of 'Incomplete' or 'Fail' at discretion of the instructor based on overall course work completed

Late Assignments/Work: For every day an assignment **is late** (after assigned due date) 5% will be deducted from the original paper grade.

- No assignment will be accepted more than one week (7 calendar days) following the due date unless arrangements are made with instructor of that specific course in advance of due date. Assignments not handed in one week after due date will receive a 0 (failing) grade.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates.

Thursday, November 5th is the last day to withdraw or change to audit from credit courses without academic penalty.

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

McGill University Dementia Education Program, Gauthier, S., Webster, C., Moralis, J. (2023). Dementia, Your Companion Guide. McGill University Press: Toronto.

This book is available in print (recommended), or free online through the McGill website at:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/medsimcentre/community-outreach/dementia/dementia-your-companion-guide>

Worksafe BC. (2014). Dementia: Understanding risks and Preventing Violence. Available for free online through: <https://www.worksafebcmedia.com/media/WebBooks/Dementia/index.html#/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact [Accessibility Services](#) for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Cognitive Challenges in Older Adulthood

- Confusion and dementia.
- Common causes of reversible changes in mental functioning.
- Primary forms of irreversible dementia:
 - Alzheimer's disease
 - Other dementias
- Forms and causes of various dementias – pathology, processes and characteristics.
- Philosophies and models of care.
- Importance of life review in care of individuals with dementia.
- Stages of dementia and common behavioural manifestations and unique responses.
- Responsive behaviours – factors influencing behaviours (e.g. “triggers”).
- Importance of environment in relation to behaviours.
- Strategies for working with individuals exhibiting responsive behaviours.
- Appropriate activities for individuals experiencing differing levels of dementia.
- Working effectively with individuals experiencing early, moderate, or severe dementia.
- Supporting family members.
- Caregiver needs and support.

Abuse

- Types of abuse/abusive relationships.
- Cycle of abuse.
- Recognizing signs of abuse.
- Assessing situations and individuals.
- Responding to or preventing abuse, disruptive or out of-control behaviour.
- Knowing when to exit a potentially unsafe situation.

Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives

- Indigenous perspectives on cognitive and mental challenges