

**HISTORY 3735G  
Global History of Populism**

**Winter 2025**

**Instructor: Professor Keith Fleming**

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**Office: Department of History, Lawson Hall Room 1208**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

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This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course sit on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

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**Course Description:**

Populism is one of the most controversial and fervently discussed topics in the social sciences today. While there is much scholarly debate over how precisely populism should be defined, it is generally agreed that all forms of populism include a critique of ‘the establishment/the elite’ and adulation of the ‘common people.’ It is also conventional wisdom that populism originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as agrarian protest movements in Russia (where *narodnichestvo* or ‘populism’ appeared in response to hardships encountered by the peasantry in feudal tsarist Russia), and in the United States (where rural discontents were expressed politically via the People’s Party). Today, populism affects almost all continents and political regimes but is especially prevalent in the democracies of Europe and the Americas.

The course begins by considering how best to define ‘populism.’ Next, some recent and high-profile manifestations of populism, including Trumpism, Brexiters, France’s National Front, and Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez will be studied to provide a contemporary context. The principal focus of the course surveys the global history of populism and its main populist actors over the past 150 years, focusing specifically on Russia, the United States, Canada, Latin America (especially Argentina and Brazil), Australia and New Zealand, France, Italy, Africa (Ghana, Burkina Faso, South Africa, and Zambia), and India.

Each session of the course will begin with a contextual lecture by Professor Fleming, followed by a class discussion of the required readings facilitated by one or two designated students along with Professor Fleming.

***Prerequisite:***

1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to

- identify major events, concepts, and personalities associated with early manifestations of populism globally
- interpret information about a wide range of people, groups, events, and documents discussed in the assigned readings and explain their significance
- strengthen skills of oral and written communication
- analyze primary and secondary sources, including their origins, methods, arguments, strengths, limitations, potential implications, and significance for the study of the global history of populism

- solve research problems by identifying a topic, refining it to a significant and answerable historical question, determining the essential components of the argument, organizing the parts of the essay, and drawing conclusions
- effectively integrate primary and secondary sources within class presentations, discussions, and research essays
- analyze academically the impact of historical precedents that contextualize present day expressions of populism globally

### **Course Materials:**

All course **Required Readings** are available in digital format at the Western Libraries “Course Readings” site for History 3735G (<https://ares.lib.uwo.ca/ares/>) which can also be accessed via the “Resources” link of the course site on OWL Brightspace.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

Research Essay (due Friday March 14 <sup>th</sup> )	35%
Seminar Leadership	15%
Seminar Participation	20%
Lecture/Readings Written Responses (10 x 3%)	30%

### **Students must pass all components of the course (research essay; seminar leadership; seminar participation; lecture written responses) to achieve a passing grade in the course.**

Each student will write a **research essay** (13-15 typewritten pages in length) from the list of acceptable essay topics assigned by the instructor. An electronic copy of the completed research essay must be submitted via the course site on OWL Brightspace no later than **Friday March 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:55 p.m.** In addition, the essay must be submitted by the due date and time to Turnitin.com via the course site on OWL Brightspace. A late penalty of 5% for the first day and 2% per day thereafter (weekends included) will be assessed against any research essay submitted after the due date. Any accommodations for this assignment will require supporting documentation.

Each student will be assigned one seminar to assist the course instructor in **leading the class discussion** of the required readings for that week. Following the contextual lecture by Professor Fleming, the student will begin the discussion component of the session by providing a brief (approximately 5 minute) summation of the key themes arising from that session’s assigned readings. The student will then, together with Professor Fleming, facilitate the class discussion. In preparation for that responsibility, the student will submit to Professor Fleming at least six questions on which they intend to base the class discussion. Those questions must be emailed to Professor Fleming no later than 8:00 p.m. the Monday immediately preceding the seminar. Depending on class size, two students might be assigned to lead the same seminar session, in which case it is expected that the students will collaborate in developing the questions and facilitating the seminar discussion. The ‘**seminar leadership**’ assignments will be made immediately following Session One.

Students will submit each week a **written response** (maximum 500 words per weekly response) to a question **based on the lecture and readings** for that week. The response questions will be posted on the “**Assignments**” section of the course OWL website by 8:00 p.m. on the day of the class. Students will have twenty-four hours to submit their written answers via the course site on OWL Brightspace. Responses must also be submitted to Turnitin.com via the course site on OWL Brightspace. Late submissions (defined as after 8 p.m. the day following the posting of the lecture/readings question) will not be accepted or graded. The written responses **are not** a research assignment, and only information

derived from the class lectures and readings will be accepted and graded as the ‘Lecture/Readings Response’ component of the course.

Students are expected to attend and participate actively in all seminar discussions, thereby demonstrating their comprehension of the **Required Readings**. This course syllabus also lists numerous **Supplementary Readings** which students are **not** required to read but are useful for examining in greater detail the weekly discussion topics.

Sample discussion questions based on the **Required Readings** will be posted on the course site on OWL Brightspace (under the ‘Resources’ link) before each class to assist students in preparing to participate meaningfully in the seminar. All students will be assigned a participation grade on a 10-point scale following each seminar. Failure to attend a seminar will result in a score of “0” for that class. Merely attending a seminar without participating in the discussion will result in a score of “2” for that class. The assignment of a participation grade from “3” to “10” will be determined by the quality of the student’s contributions to discussion during any given seminar.

In instances when absence from class is unavoidable, students are expected, when possible, to inform the instructor in advance of their pending absence.

**Non-illness absences from seminars are unacceptable.** Any student attending fewer than nine of the twelve scheduled discussion seminars (an absence rate of approximately 25%) for non-illness reasons will be assigned a failing grade for seminar participation and a failing grade in the course.

## Course Schedule and Readings:

### **Session One:**

**Introduction to History 3735G**

### **Session Two:**

**Topic: What is Populism?**

### **Required Readings:**

Federico Finchelstein, “Populism without borders. Notes on a global history,” *Constellations* (vol 26, 2019), pp. 418–429.

[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/13510487/v26i0003/418\\_pwbnoagh.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/13510487/v26i0003/418_pwbnoagh.xml)

Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, “Populism,” in Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent, and Mark Stears, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 493-512.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.013.0026>

Yasmeen Serhan, “Populism Is Meaningless” in *The Atlantic* (March 2020). [**available on ‘Resources’ link**]

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/03/what-is-populism/607600/>

### **Supplementary Reading:**

Federico Finchelstein, “What is Populism in History?” in *From Fascism to Populism in History* (University of California Press, 2019), pp. 98-174.

Carlos de la Torre, “Global Populism: Histories, Trajectories, Problems, and Challenges,” in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 1-27.

### **Session Three:**

#### **Topic: Global Populism in 2025**

#### **Required Readings:**

*The Economist*, “Europe’s Hard Right,” 16 September 2023, pp. 18-20. [available on ‘Resources’ link]

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, “Trump’s America” in *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 331-367.

Larry M. Bartels, “The Populist Wave” in *Democracy Erodes from the Top: Leaders, Citizens, and the Challenge of Populism in Europe* (Princeton University Press, 2023), pp. 147-184.

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Tobias Cremer, “A Europeanisation of American Politics?: Trumpism and the populist radical right in the United States,” in *Journal of Language and Politics*, 22:3 (2023), pp. 396-414.

Chris Erl, “The People and The Nation: The ‘Thick’ and the ‘Thin’ of Right-Wing Populism in Canada,” *Social Science Quarterly* (Vol. 102, No. 1, January 2021), pp. 107-124.

[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/00384941/v102i0001/107\\_tpatnttorpic.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/00384941/v102i0001/107_tpatnttorpic.xml)

James Farney, “Canadian Populism in the Era of the United Right,” in James Farney and David Rayside, eds., *Conservatism in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 43-58.

Vedi R. Hadiz and Angelos Chrysosgelos, “Populism in World Politics: A Comparative Cross-regional Perspective,” in *International Political Science Review* (Vol. 38, No. 4, 2017), pp. 399–411.

[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/399\\_piwpaccp.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/399_piwpaccp.xml)

Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, “Explaining the Emergence of Populism in Europe and the Americas,” in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives* (University Press of Kentucky, 2015), pp.189-227.

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, “Brexit,” in *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 368-405.

Carter A. Wilson, *Trumpism: Race, Class, Populism, and Public Policy* (Lexington Books, 2021).

Laura Silver, “Populists in Europe – especially those on the right – have increased their vote shares in recent elections,” Pew Research Centre, October 6, 2022.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/10/06/populists-in-europe-especially-those-on-the-right-have-increased-their-vote-shares-in-recent-elections/>

### **Session Four:**

#### **Topic: Populism in Russia**

#### **Required Readings:**

Christopher Ely, “Introduction: Toward a Definition of Russian Populism” in *Russian Populism: A History* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), pp. 1-12.

Christopher Ely, “Origins” in *Russian Populism: A History* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), pp. 13-39.

Christopher Ely, “Populism in Action” in *Russian Populism: A History* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), pp. 99-125.

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Deepanshu Mohan and Abhina Padmanabhan, “From the Tsars to Gorbachev,” in *Strongmen Saviours: A Ben Eklof and Tatiana Saburova, A Generation of Revolutionaries : Nikolai Charushin and Russian Populism from the Great Reforms to Perestroika* (Indiana University Press, 2017), pp. 39-72

*Political Economy of Populism in India, Turkey, Russia and Brazil* (Routledge, 2023), pp. 115-128.  
Andrzej Walicki, "Russia," in Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp. 62-96.

### **Session Five:**

#### **Topic: Populism in the United States**

#### **Required Readings:**

Charles Postel, "Introduction: Modern Times" in *The Populist Vision* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 3-22.

Charles Postel, "Business Politics: State Models and Political Frameworks" in *The Populist Vision* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 137-171.

Charles Postel, "Conclusion: Populist Defeat and Its Meaning" in *The Populist Vision* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 269-289.

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Cornell University Press, 2017).

Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (Oxford University Press, 1978).

Ritchie Savage, "Populism in the U.S.," in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 402-415.

Joseph Lowndes, "Populism in the United States," in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 232-247.

### **Session Six:**

#### **Topic: Populism in Canada**

#### **Required Readings:**

James Farney, "Canadian Populism in the Era of the United Right," in James Farney and David Rayside, eds., *Conservatism in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 43-58.

Gordon Hak, "Populism and the 1952 Social Credit Breakthrough in British Columbia" in *The Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 85, No. 2, June 2004), pp. 277-96.

David Laycock, "Populism and the New Right in English Canada," in Francisco Panizza, ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (Verso, 2005), pp. 172-201.

Chris Erl, "The People and the Nation: The 'Thick' and the 'Thin' of Right-Wing Populism in Canada," in *Social Science Quarterly* (Vol. 102, No. 1, January 2021), pp. 107-124.

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Clark Banack, "American Protestantism and the Roots of 'Populist Conservatism' in Alberta," in James Farney and David Rayside, eds., *Conservatism in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 231-248.

Clark Banack, *God's Province: Evangelical Christianity, Political Thought, and Conservatism in Alberta* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

Dale Eisler, *From Left to Right: Saskatchewan's Political and Economic Transformation* (University of Regina Press, 2022), pp. 13-32.

David Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910-1945* (University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp. 203-266.

### **Session Seven:**

#### **Topic: Populism in Latin America (Brazil and Argentina)**

#### **Required Readings:**

Federico Finchelstein, "Populism in Latin America as Global History," in Nathan Stoltzfus and Christopher Osmar, eds., *The Power of Populism and People: Resistance and Protest in the Modern World* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), pp. 243-253.

Joel Horowitz, "Populism and Its Legacies in Argentina," in Michael L. Conniff, ed., *Populism in Latin America*, 2nd ed. (The University of Alabama Press, 2012), pp. 23-47.

Michael L. Conniff, "Brazil's Populist Republic and Beyond," in Michael L. Conniff, ed., *Populism in Latin America*, 2nd ed. (The University of Alabama Press, 2012), pp. 48-70.

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Enrique Peruzzotti, "Peronism and the Birth of Modern Populism," *Journal of Inter-Regional Studies: Regional and Global Perspectives* (Vol. 2, March 2019), pp. 3-15.

[https://www.waseda.jp/inst/oris/assets/uploads/2018/03/04\\_Peronism-and-the-Birth-of-Modern-Populism\\_Enrique-Peruzzotti.pdf](https://www.waseda.jp/inst/oris/assets/uploads/2018/03/04_Peronism-and-the-Birth-of-Modern-Populism_Enrique-Peruzzotti.pdf)

Federico Finchelstein, "Peronist Populism and Fascism," in *The Ideological Origins of the Dirty War: Fascism, Populism, and Dictatorship in Twentieth Century Argentina* (Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 65-92.

Carlos de la Torre, "Populism in Latin America," in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 195-213.

Deepanshu Mohan and Abhina Padmanabhan, "Brazil's Transitions" and "The Rise of Bolsonaro," in *Strongmen Saviours: A Political Economy of Populism in India, Turkey, Russia and Brazil* (Routledge, 2023), pp. 163-181.

Felipe Burbano de Lara, "Populist Waves in Latin America: Continuities, Twists, and Ruptures," in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 435-450.

Alistair Hennessy, "Latin America," in Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp. 28-61.

Alexandre Fortes, "World War II and Brazilian Workers: Populism at the Intersections between National and Global Histories," *International Review of Social History* (Vol. 62, 2017), pp. 165-190.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/BFCED0F82F4518248FA9B25EDE4289E3/S0020859017000608a.pdf/div-class-title-world-war-ii-and-brazilian-workers-populism-at-the-intersections-between-national-and-global-histories-div.pdf>

Juan Grigera, "Populism in Latin America: Old and New Populisms in Argentina and Brazil," *International Political Science Review* (Vol. 38, No. 4, 2017), pp. 441-455.

[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/441\\_pilaoanpiaab.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/441_pilaoanpiaab.xml)

### **Session Eight:**

#### **Topic: Populism in Australia and New Zealand**

#### **Required Readings:**

"Introduction: The Rise and Fall of One Nation" in Michael Leach, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ian Ward, eds., *The Rise and Fall of One Nation* (University of Queensland Press, 2000), pp. 1-13

Geoffrey Stokes, “One Nation and Australian Populism,” in Michael Leach, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ian Ward, eds., *The Rise and Fall of One Nation* (University of Queensland Press, 2000), pp. 23-41.

Benjamin Moffitt, “Populism in Australia and New Zealand” in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 121-139.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Benjamin Moffitt, “Contemporary Populism and ‘The People’ in the Asia-Pacific Region: Thaksin Shinawatra and Pauline Hanson in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives* (University Press of Kentucky, 2015), pp. 293-316.

**Session Nine:**

**Topic: Populism in France and Italy**

**Required Readings:**

Jens Rydgren, “France: The *Front National*, Ethnonationalism and Populism,” in Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McConnell, eds., *Twenty-First Century Populism: The Spectre of Western European Democracy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 166-180.

“Two Steps Forward, One Step Back?: Marine Le Pen and the National Front in France,” in John Agnew and Michael Shin, *Mapping Populism: Taking Politics to the People* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), pp. 91-96; 106-111.

“Populist Totalitarianism and/or Fascist Mysticism Under the Duce” in R.J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini and the Eclipse of Italian Fascism: From Dictatorship to Populism* (Yale University Press, 2021), pp. 148-179.

“When in Rome ... Populism and the Five Star Movement in Italy,” in John Agnew and Michael Shin, *Mapping Populism: Taking Politics to the People* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), pp. 113-123; 130-136.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Paul Taggart, “Populism in Western Europe,” in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 248-263.

Gianluca Passarelli, “Populism and the Lega Nord” in *The Oxford Handbook of Italian Politics*, (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 224-239.

Marco Tarchi, “Italy: A Country of Many Populisms,” in Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McConnell, eds., *Twenty-First Century Populism: The Spectre of Western European Democracy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 84-99.

**ESSAY DUE FRIDAY MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> @ 11:55 p.m.**

**Session Ten:**

**Topic: Populism in Africa**

**Required Readings:**

Danielle Resnick, “Varieties of African Populism in Comparative Perspective,” in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives* (University Press of Kentucky, 2015), pp. 317-348.

Nic Cheeseman, "Populism in Africa and the Potential for 'ethnically blind' Politics," in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 357-369.

Donald Rothchild and E. Gyimah-Boadi, "Populism in Ghana and Burkina Faso," *Current History* (Vol. 88, May 1989), pp. 221-244.

Louise Vincent, "Seducing the people: Populism and the challenge to democracy in South Africa," in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* (Vol. 29, No. 1, January 2011), pp. 1-14.  
[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/02589001/v29i0001/1\\_stppatctdisa.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/02589001/v29i0001/1_stppatctdisa.xml)

### **Supplementary Readings:**

Danielle E. Resnick, "Populism in Africa," in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 101-120.

Danielle Resnick, "The Influence of Populist Leaders on African Democracy," in Carlos de la Torre, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 267-278.

Brian J. Peterson "From Political Prisoner to Populist Prime Minister, 1982-1983," in Brian J. Peterson, *Thomas Sankara: An African Revolutionary* (Indiana University Press, 2021), pp. 89-111.

Alastair Fraser, "Post-populism in Zambia: Michael Sata's Rise, Demise and Legacy," in *International Political Science Review* (Vol. 38, No. 4, 2017), pp. 456-472.  
[https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/456\\_pizmsrdal.xml](https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/456_pizmsrdal.xml)

### **Session Eleven:**

**Topic: Populism in India**

#### **Required Readings:**

Christophe Jaffrelot and Louise Tillin, "Populism in India," in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 179-194.

Narendra Subramanian, "Populism in India," *SAIS Review of International Affairs* (Vol. 27, No. 1, Winter-Spring 2007), pp. 81-91.  
<https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/article/212483/pdf>

#### **Supplementary Readings:**

Deepanshu Mohan and Abhinav Padmanabhan, *Strongmen Saviours: A Political Economy of Populism in India, Turkey, Russia and Brazil* (Routledge, 2023), pp. 21-67.

### **Session Twelve:**

**Topic: Flotsam and Jetsam**

#### **Additional Statements:**

**Communication policies:** The best way to contact me is via email ([kfleming@uwo.ca](mailto:kfleming@uwo.ca)). I also will hold office hours in Lawson Hall 1208 on Tuesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. when you can stop by to discuss course related matters.

**Use of electronic devices:** No use of audio or video recording devices is permitted in the seminar.



**Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):** The use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for activities such as brainstorming and refining your ideas, drafting an outline to organize your thoughts, or checking grammar and style. Any use of such tools should be clearly acknowledged and explained. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: [https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_module\\_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html) for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.