

# ANTHROPOLOGY 2U03: PLAGUES AND PEOPLES

Summer 2020



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**Lecture:** Twice weekly online (recorded)

**Office:** Virtual  
**Office Hours:** Fridays 2:30-3:30  
(Live WebEx sessions)

## Contents

Course Description.....	3
Course Objectives.....	4
Required Materials and Texts .....	4
Class Format.....	6
Course Evaluation – Overview .....	8
Online Discussion Forum Posts (10%) .....	8
Exams (25% and 25% or 35%).....	9
Essay or Poster Assignment (30%) .....	9
Optional COVID-19 Live WebEx Sessions (10%).....	10
Course Evaluation.....	11
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings .....	12
Course Policies .....	14
Submission of Assignments.....	14

Grades.....	14
Late Assignments .....	14
Absences, Missed Work, Illness .....	15
MSAF (McMaster Student Absence Form) .....	15
Avenue to Learn .....	15
<i>Turnitin.com</i> .....	15
University Policies .....	16
Academic Integrity Statement.....	16
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	16
<b>Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)</b> .....	16
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy .....	17
<b>Privacy Protection</b> .....	17
Course Modification.....	17

## **Course Description**

*“Everybody knows  
that pestilences have a way of recurring in the world,  
yet somehow  
we find it hard to believe in ones  
that crash down on our heads from a blue sky.  
There have been as many plagues as wars in history,  
yet always plagues and wars take people equally by surprise.”*

*The Plague (La Peste), Albert Camus, 1947: 36-37*

In this course, we will explore a topic that is all too familiar today. Plagues, or infectious disease epidemics, have marked our shared humanity for thousands of years. They have shaped our bodies and societies. They are a major force of human biocultural evolution.

To better understand plagues and build resilience, social scientists recognize the importance of knowledge collaboration. Thus, we will embrace biocultural, ecological, and evolutionary approaches to examine the impact of infectious diseases on human health and history. With these perspectives, we will critically examine the many interrelated factors that play a role in disease occurrence and consider the various responses and approaches to mitigate epidemics.

Emphasizing anthropogenic, or *human-made*, factors, globalization, social, political-economic, and ecological processes are emphasized as important forces in the emergence and persistence of ancient and newly emergent diseases. Diseases of focus include cholera, TB, HIV/AIDS, Ebola, SARS and COVID-19. Issues of co-morbidity, epidemiological transitions, syndemics, and the impact of technological and ecological change on human disease experience will be discussed. Socio-political and economic context, social construction of epidemics, and the public health consequences of such events will also be examined. We will discover that anthropology provides the broad historical (time) and geographic (space) scope to effectively deconstruct and address epidemic processes.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course, you should demonstrate understanding of:

- Basic epidemiological principles regarding epidemics
- Anthropological perspectives of disease and epidemics
- The interrelatedness of human behaviour, environment and epidemics
- Ecological, biocultural, and evolutionary perspectives of disease
- The nature of epidemiological transitions in human history
- The role of climate, ecological & anthropogenic factors in disease emergence, evolution & persistence
- Social origins of epidemics and disease “visibility”
- Biosocial consequences of epidemics
- Survey of specific diseases (TB, HIV, Ebola, etc.)
- Effective critical thinking skills

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- Readings and article links posted on the course website on Avenue to Learn (A2L)

## **Some Useful Resources:**

- Anthropological Journals: *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, *American Anthropologist*, *Current Anthropology*, *Annual Reviews in Anthropology*, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, etc.
- *Current Opinion in Infectious Diseases* – Electronic Resource (McMaster Library)
- *Epidemics and Pandemics: Their Impacts on Human History*, J.N. Hays, 2005
- Harvard Univ. Library Open Collections Program: *Contagion: Historical Views of Diseases and Epidemics* (<https://library.harvard.edu/collections/contagion-historical-views-diseases-and-epidemics>)
- *Journal of Infectious Diseases; Social Science and Medicine (journal)*
- [Open Anthropology \(A Public Journal of the American Anthropological Association\), Pandemic Perspectives](https://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/OAIssueTOC.aspx?ItemNumber=25609). Volume 8, Issue 1, April 2020  
<https://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/OAIssueTOC.aspx?ItemNumber=25609>
- Duke University Press, Free access to books and journal articles on pandemics:  
[https://www.dukeupress.edu/Explore-Subjects/Syllabi/Navigating-Pandemic-Syllabus?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=dup-NavigatingPandemic\\_Mar2020&fbclid=IwAR0EGYy99s-P6fRF7JAGT4QtGkWJYSw8xzYm1cexSoBjdvq7YQQRGcKqGmQ](https://www.dukeupress.edu/Explore-Subjects/Syllabi/Navigating-Pandemic-Syllabus?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=dup-NavigatingPandemic_Mar2020&fbclid=IwAR0EGYy99s-P6fRF7JAGT4QtGkWJYSw8xzYm1cexSoBjdvq7YQQRGcKqGmQ)

## **Related Interactive Resources**

- ***Solve the Outbreak*** (a “just-for-fun” online game designed by the CDC)

[From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\):](#)

“Your mission, if you choose to accept, is to get clues and analyze data to *Solve the Outbreak* and save lives. In this fun, interactive app you get to try your hand at becoming a Disease Detective. You’ll travel the world chasing outbreaks like the ones real-life CDC Disease Detectives help fight. Should you quarantine the town, send for more lab results, or alert the media? The better your answers, the faster you’ll climb the ranks and achieve Disease Detective status! Master Level 1 to unlock even more exciting scenarios and earn honors for your demonstrated expertise!”

<https://www.cdc.gov/mobile/applications/sto/sto-web.html>

- ***Collecting COVID-19***

A crowd-sourced digital ethnography of the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://anthrocovid.com/>

- ***Environment and Society Portal, “Pandemics in Context”***

<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/mml/pandemics-context>

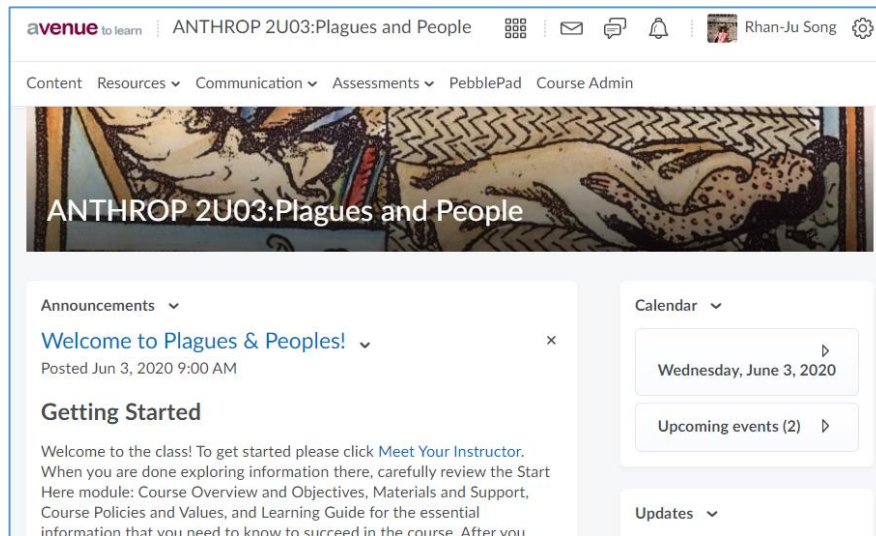
- ***Somatosphere, [COVID-19 Forum](#)*** (March 6) and ***[COVID-19 Forum II](#)*** (April 6)

“*Somatosphere*’s COVID-19 Forum brings together seventeen anthropologists and historians in an effort to share ideas, analytical frameworks and concerns about the ongoing epidemic from interdisciplinary perspectives.”

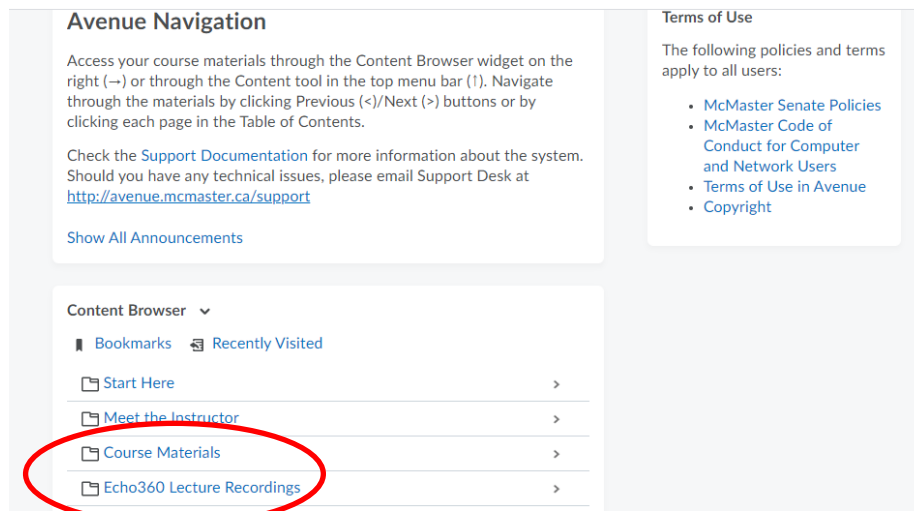
*A collaborative website covering the intersections of medical anthropology, science and technology studies, cultural psychiatry, psychology and bioethics.*

[http://somatosphere.net/2020/covid-19-forum:-introduction.html/?fbclid=IwAR1oDTpZ-EwCoPf-RadcG5q46KU3XLk0P0U\\_3fr-oinOOI49YLqNaD0fmnU](http://somatosphere.net/2020/covid-19-forum:-introduction.html/?fbclid=IwAR1oDTpZ-EwCoPf-RadcG5q46KU3XLk0P0U_3fr-oinOOI49YLqNaD0fmnU)

## Class Format



- **Lectures:** two weekly 60 minute recorded presentations (to view at your own convenience); uploaded on Mondays and Tuesdays. Please go to A2L: [Echo360 Lecture Recordings](#).



- **Avenue to Learn Graded Discussion Forum:** Weekly Forum where students will post critical thinking questions and answers for course readings. Posting of 2 questions and 2 answers will account for up to **10%** of your final grade (see below for more details). See [Course Materials](#) section of A2L site.

Access your course materials through the Content Browser widget on the right (→) or through the Content tool in the top menu bar (!). Navigate through the materials by clicking Previous (<)/Next (>) buttons or by clicking each page in the Table of Contents.

Check the [Support Documentation](#) for more information about the system. Should you have any technical issues, please email Support Desk at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/support>

[Show All Announcements](#)

The following policies and terms apply to all users:

- [McMaster Senate Policies](#)
- [McMaster Code of Conduct for Computer and Network Users](#)
- [Terms of Use in Avenue](#)
- [Copyright](#)

Content Browser ▾

- Home
- Course Materials
  - Week 5 (July 20-26, 2020)
  - Week 6 (July 27-August 2, 2020)
  - Week 7 (August 3-9, 2020)
  - Graded Discussion Forum: Critical Thinking Questions & Answers for Weekly Readings**
  - General Discussion Forum (ungraded)

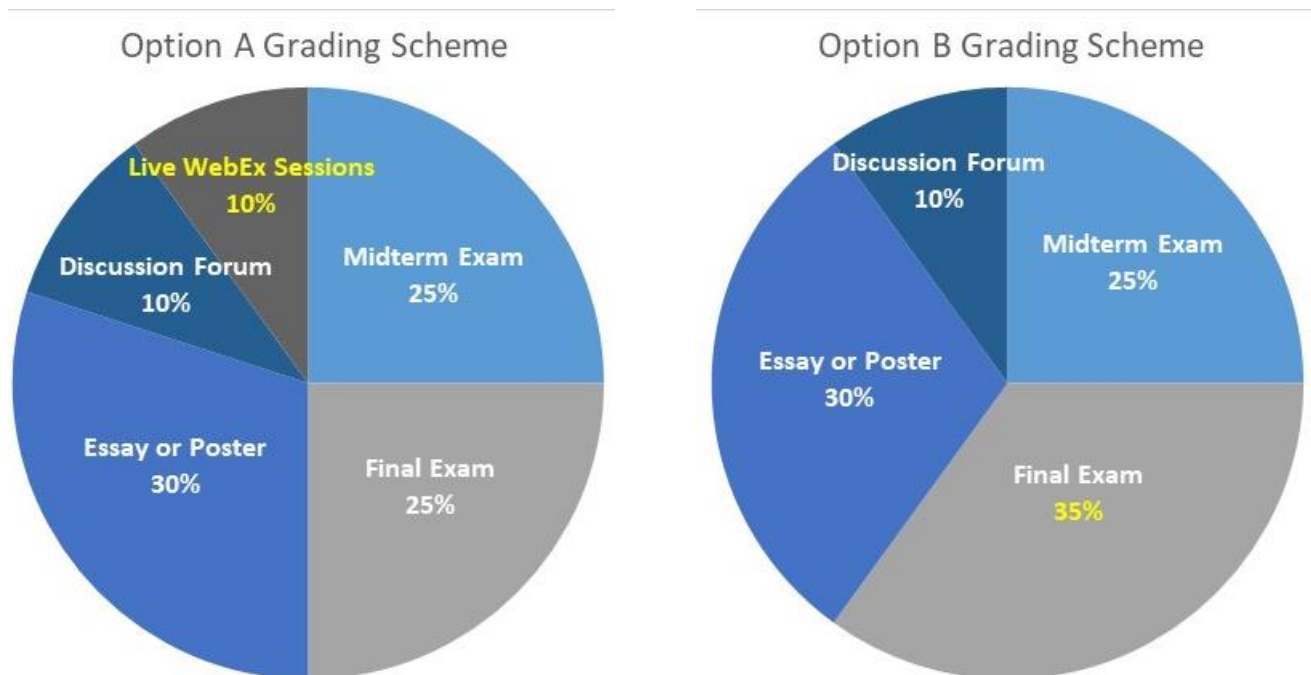
- ***Avenue to Learn General Discussion Forum (ungraded)***: An open forum where students can post any questions or comments they may have regarding course materials. All students can participate. See [Course Materials](#) section of A2L site.
- ***Optional Graded COVID-19 Live WebEx Sessions***: in Weeks 2-5, there will be two identical 30 minute live WebEx sessions each week to address different aspects of COVID-19 related to the writing assignment: Epidemiology, Biocultural Determinants, Micro- and Macro-Challenges, Solution-Building (Thursdays 2-2:30 pm / Fridays 2-2:30 pm, July 2-24, 2020). Thursday and Friday sessions of each week will address the same topic; you can attend either one, or both. Attendance grades (**10%**) will be given if you attend at least 3 different sessions/weeks. (Attendance in 0-2 different weeks will not receive 10%, which will be re-weighted to the final exam instead.) Instructions for attending the sessions will be posted as announcements at the start of each week.
- ***Course Review Live WebEx Session***: On Thursday July 30, from 2-3 PM, there will be a one-hour live session to address any questions regarding course material, in preparation for the take-home final exam (in Week 7). Instructions for attending the session will be posted in an announcement at the start of the week.
- ***Weekly Live WebEx “office hours”***: 2 x 30-minute WebEx live sessions to address any student concerns. These will take place on Fridays, 2:30-3 pm, for student numbers ending in an odd number; and Fridays, 3-3:30 pm, for student numbers ending in an even number, starting on June 26, 2020. Students can also schedule private appointments via email request at: [songr17@mcmaster.ca](mailto:songr17@mcmaster.ca). Instructions for attending office hour sessions will be posted at the start of the semester.



## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

Two grading schemes are possible, with the main difference being optional participation in Live WebEx Sessions = 10%, and different weighting of the final exam = 35% (instead of 25%) if you opt out of WebEx Sessions.

Please see below:



### **Online Discussion Forum Posts (10%)**

A graded online Discussion Forum has been set up on the course website (A2L). It is called “**Discussion Forum Posts (Critical Thinking Questions & Answers for Weekly Readings)**” and it can be found in the **Course Materials** section. It is intended to help you exercise your critical thinking skills, aid your comprehension of course readings, and provide additional review material for the exams.

Importantly, for **10% of your final grade**, you are required to post 4 Discussion Forum posts pertaining to weekly readings over the semester. **Specifically**, students must post: **2**



**unique *critical* thinking questions from the weekly readings** (2 questions @ 2.5% each = 5%) **AND 2 detailed responses to *other students'* questions on the forum** (2 answers @ 2.5% each = 5%).

Detailed guidelines for Discussion Forum posts and critical thinking (formulating critical questions) will be posted in the Course Materials section of A2L.

## **Exams (25% and 25% or 35%)**

There will be two exams: a **Midterm Exam worth 25%** and a **Final Exam worth 25%, or 35%** if students opt out of attending Live WebEx Sessions on COVID-19. The online Midterm on July 14, 2020, which will take 1.5-2 hours to complete, will cover all material in Weeks 1-3 of the semester. The format will be announced in the first week of the semester. The Final Exam will cover all material in Weeks 4-6. It will be a “take-home” exam consisting of short essay questions that must be submitted to *Turnitin* on A2L. The questions will be posted on A2L on August 4, with a deadline of August 5, 5PM.

## **Essay or Poster Assignment (30%)**

This mandatory assignment will examine the current COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, you will examine the disease and public health event from an anthropological and critical perspective. Like the live WebEx Sessions, you will address topics like Epidemiology, Biocultural Determinants (“upstream” and “downstream” factors), Micro- and Macro-Challenges, and Building Solutions. Other important aspects to examine include historical analogies, biosocial implications, and global consequences.

Since the management of any epidemic event - or any anthropological study - is a collaborative effort, students will ***work remotely in small groups to complete this assignment***. Considering current work and study environments, this group requirement is meant as an exercise in remote collaboration that you can hopefully apply to other contexts. Instructions for how to facilitate group discussions and videoconferencing (e.g., Zoom, WebEx) will be provided on A2L.

Each group can submit an essay or a virtual poster. By June 28, 2020, I will randomly assign group members based on those who wish to submit an essay versus those who want to submit a poster. Assignment instructions and guidelines for proper citation and poster formatting will be available in the Course Materials section of the course site on A2L, as well as in a course Announcement at the start of the semester.

## **Optional COVID-19 Live WebEx Sessions (10%)**

In Weeks 2-5, there will be two identical 30-minute live WebEx sessions each week to address different aspects of COVID-19 related to the mandatory writing or poster assignment: Epidemiology, Biocultural Determinants, Micro- and Macro-Challenges, Solution-Building (Thursdays 2-2:30 pm / Fridays 2-2:30 pm, July 2-24, 2020). Thursday and Friday sessions of each week will address the same topic; you can attend either one, or both.

Attendance grades (10%) will be given if you attend at least 3 different sessions/weeks. (Attendance in 0-2 different weeks will not receive 10%, which will be re-weighted to the final exam instead.). Instructions for attending the sessions will be posted as announcements at the start of each week.

*In light of the current public health environment, I understand that each of you have personal experiences and responses to events playing out around you. While it's not required, if you are comfortable doing so, you are invited to share your experiences during these live WebEx Sessions.*

**Course Evaluation**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
<p><b>Midterm Exam</b>                      July 14, 2020</p>	<p>“Open-book”, timed, online submission (<i>Turnitin</i> on A2L)                       Format: TBA                       Includes material from Weeks 1-3</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p><b>Writing / Virtual Poster Assignment</b>                      July 24, 2020, 5 PM</p>	<p>Document submission online (<i>Turnitin</i> on A2L)</p>	<p>30%</p>
<p><b>Final Exam</b>                      August 5, 5 PM</p>	<p>Take-home, online submission (<i>Turnitin</i> on A2L)                       Format: short essay questions                       Includes material from Weeks 4-6</p>	<p>25% or 35% (no WebEx sessions)</p>
<p><b>Discussion Forum</b>                      Weeks 1-6</p>	<p>Online submissions of critical thinking questions and answers (A2L)</p>	<p>10%</p>
<p><b>Live WebEx COVID-19 Sessions (optional)</b>                      Thurs/Fri, Weeks 2-5</p>	<p>Online attendance of at least 3 out of 4 <i>different</i> WebEx sessions/weeks (Thursdays/Fridays, July 2-24, 2020)</p>	<p>10%                       (optional)</p>

## Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week	Topic	Readings
<p>Week 1 June 22-28</p>	<p><i>Introduction</i> <i>Plagues, Epidemiology &amp; Anthropology</i></p>	<p>Brown et al. 2011; Loomis 2018  Sattenspiel &amp; Slonim 2012: 387-406 (<i>optional</i>: pg. 407-450)</p>
<p>Week 2 June 29 - July 5</p>	<p><i>Epidemics: Biology, Ecology, Culture</i> <i>Health Transitions and Human (Pre)History</i>  Live WebEx COVID-19 Session 1 (<i>Epidemiology</i>), Thurs/Fri July 2/3, 2-2:30 PM (see announcement for details)</p>	<p>Sherman 2017; Wolfe et al. 2007; Zuckerman et al. 2014  <a href="http://www.environmentandsociety.org/exhibitions/another-silent-spring/epidemics-and-ecology">http://www.environmentandsociety.org/exhibitions/another-silent-spring/epidemics-and-ecology</a>  <a href="https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/coronavirus-habitat-loss/">https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/coronavirus-habitat-loss/</a>  <a href="https://ensia.com/features/covid-19-coronavirus-biodiversity-planetary-health-zoonoses/">https://ensia.com/features/covid-19-coronavirus-biodiversity-planetary-health-zoonoses/</a></p>
<p>Week 3 July 6-12</p>	<p><i>Social Determinants of Epidemics</i> <i>HIV, TB</i>  Live WebEx COVID-19 Session 2 (<i>Biocultural Determinants</i>), Thurs/Fri July 9/10, 2-2:30 PM (see announcement for details)</p>	<p>Castro &amp; Farmer 2005; Mukherjee &amp; Farmer 2019  Burke 2011; Keshavjee &amp; Farmer 2012</p>
<p>Week 4 July 13-19</p>	<p><i>Newly Emergent Infections</i> <i>Ebola, SARS</i>  Live WebEx COVID-19 Session 3 (<i>Micro and Macro Challenges</i>), Thurs/Fri July 16/17, 2-2:30 PM (see announcement for details)  <b><u>“Open-book” Online Midterm Exam: Tuesday July 14, 2020 (details TBA)</u></b></p>	<p>Benton &amp; Dionne 2015; Jones 2011; Walker and Whitty 2015  Khabbaz 2013; Singer et al. 2003; Svoboda et al. 2004</p>

<p>Week 5 July 20-26</p>	<p><b><i>Cultural Responses: Resistance and Resilience</i></b></p> <p><b>Live WebEx COVID-19 Session 4 (Solution Building), Thurs/Fri July 23/24, 2-2:30 PM</b> (see announcement for details)</p> <p><b><u>Writing / Poster Assignment DUE: Friday, July 24, 2020, 5PM</u></b></p>	<p>Dube et al. 2013; Nations &amp; Monte 1996; Natrass &amp; Kalichman 2010; Pellecchia et al. 2015</p> <p><a href="https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/psych-unseen/201902/antivaxxers-and-the-plague-science-denial">https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/psych-unseen/201902/antivaxxers-and-the-plague-science-denial</a></p>
<p>Week 6 July 27-Aug 2</p>	<p><b><i>Life in the Time of COVID-19</i></b></p> <p><i>PLEASE NOTE: Lectures 6A/B will be posted after Thurs. July 30, 2020</i></p> <p><b>Course Review Live WebEx Session, Thurs. July 30, 2-3 PM</b> (see announcement for details)</p>	<p>Bruns et al. 2020; Manderson &amp; Levine 2020; Stellmach et al. 2018</p> <p><a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html?utm_campaign=gc-hc-sc-coronavirus2021-ao-2021-0005-10020125402&amp;utm_medium=search&amp;utm_source=google-ads-107800103024&amp;utm_content=text-en-434525470053&amp;utm_term=%2Bcovid">https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html?utm_campaign=gc-hc-sc-coronavirus2021-ao-2021-0005-10020125402&amp;utm_medium=search&amp;utm_source=google-ads-107800103024&amp;utm_content=text-en-434525470053&amp;utm_term=%2Bcovid</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ncov-daily-lit.pdf?la=en">https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ncov-daily-lit.pdf?la=en</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019">https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019</a></p> <p><a href="http://somasphere.net/2020/our-covid-museum-notes-from-physician-anthropologists-on-the-frontlines-of-an-evolving-pandemic-in-seattle-and-new-york-city.html/">http://somasphere.net/2020/our-covid-museum-notes-from-physician-anthropologists-on-the-frontlines-of-an-evolving-pandemic-in-seattle-and-new-york-city.html/</a></p> <p><i>Also see resources listed on pages 4-5</i></p>
<p>Week 7 August 3-7</p>	<p><b><u>Take-home Final Exam DUE: Wednesday, August 5, 2020, 5PM</u></b></p> <p><i>(Exam questions will be posted on A2L on Tuesday, August 4, 2020, 9AM)</i></p>	

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

All assignments (essay, poster, exams) must be submitted online via A2L. Detailed instructions will be posted with each assignment's instructions.

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

The essay or poster assignment is due online via *Turnitin* on A2L by **Friday, July 24, 2020, 5 PM**. Extensions will not be considered. Late submissions are subject to a deduction of 10% *each day* after 5 PM of July 24, 2020, with no acceptance after Wednesday, July 29, 2020 (thereafter, a grade of "0" will be given).

Except for SAS accommodations, exams that are not submitted on time (July 14 / August 5, 5PM) will only be accepted for medical reasons, provided official documentation is submitted. In the event of late submission due to illness, all late exams are still subject to a deduction of 25% per day after July 14 / August 5 @ 5PM.

If, however, you are ill prior to the exam and anticipate not being able to complete it on time remotely, please contact me directly to schedule an alternative exam deadline (with a different exam).

*Please treat the online exam deadlines as seriously as you would a sit-down exam at the University.....if you were still writing and didn't hand in your exam at the end of the scheduled time, your exam would not be accepted.*

## **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

In the event of absence due to illness that results in a late exam or essay/poster, please see above (“late assignments”). Deductions will apply.

### **MSAF (McMaster Student Absence Form)**

The MSAF can be used for limited medical and non-medical (personal) situations where students seek relief for missed academic work. Approval of the MSAF is automatic, i.e. no documentation is required. Rules governing the MSAF are as follows: The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid is up to 3 days. The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted is ‘less than 25%’ of the course weight, i.e., the assignment for which a student seeks relief must be worth less than 25% of their final grade. There is a ‘one MSAF per term’ limit. As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructor. Failure to do so may negate their relief.

The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work, or click here: <https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn (A2L). Students should be aware that, when you access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

### ***Turnitin.com***

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (*Turnitin.com*) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).



## **University Policies**

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

## **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

## **Privacy Protection**

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

## **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.