

**SOC SCI 1SS3 (C04) – Inquiry in the Social Sciences: “Gender and Inequality”**  
**McMaster University**  
**Fall, 2021**

**Class Meets:** Mondays, 8:30-11:20am  
**Class Location:** Online (virtual class)  
**Instructor’s Office:** Online

**Instructor:** Dr. Julie Gouweloos  
**Email:** [gouwelj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gouwelj@mcmaster.ca)  
**Office hour:** Mondays, 3:30-4:30pm

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

#### **What is Inquiry?**

Inquiry is the process of effectively interrogating a problem or a social issue in order to develop one’s understanding of the given issue. Inquiry approaches are aimed at developing specific research skills including, asking good questions, searching for strong evidence, arriving at well-reasoned conclusions, and communicating findings. Inquiry courses are designed to teach students *how* to learn and share academic knowledge. As such, inquiry courses are both skill and content driven in an effort to develop transferable skills and approaches to learning will be useful in other university courses and beyond. At the core, the process of critical inquiry promotes self-directed learning, skill development, and critical thinking about the world around you.

#### **Course Theme: Gender and Inequality**

The theme, “Gender and Inequality” will drive the theory and content that we will use to develop analytical and critical thinking skills. The course will start by understanding the potential of critical theories of gender inequality, paying particular attention to *how* gender is socially constructed and how gender and its intersections inform experiences of inequality.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course students will have valuable experience in:

- Developing and refining a social science research question
- Demonstrating the ability to obtain relevant information to answer a research question
- Critically evaluating the validity and relevance of academic research
- Communicating a reasoned response to the researchable questions
- Critically reflecting on their learning process

Students will also work on developing academic skills that are transferable to other university courses, these skills include:

- Question formulation
- Critical reading and thinking
- Communication (oral, written and visual)
- Research skills

## Required Readings

- 1) All **required readings** can be accessed online via the [McMaster Library](#) or our [A2L](#) course site. Engaging with these materials will be necessary in order to actively participate in the course.

## Suggested Readings

The following suggested readings are **optional**. They may be helpful for assisting with research and writing in this class and/or throughout your university career. They are available in the bookstore for Inquiry students in all sections:

- Hubbuch, S., *Writing Research Papers Across the Curriculum*. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Northey, M. & Tepperman, L. *Making Sense. A Student's Guide to Research and Writing. Social Sciences*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

## Other Course Materials

Additional material (news stories, videos, websites, etc.), available at no cost, may be posted online throughout the course. Engaging with these materials will be necessary in order to actively participate in the course. Any assigned articles or eBooks can be found through the [McMaster library website](#), or through links in the content section of Avenue to Learn.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

In this class I will work to promote an environment committed to equity and rooted in a spirit of generosity. As an 'active learning' course, students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate during class meetings and be open to engage with challenging concepts and processes that help us to better understand the relationship between our personal experiences and larger social issues. Each of us enters the classroom with vastly different experiences and ideologies; therefore, it is important to acknowledge that diverse perspectives are valuable to classroom conversations; however, we must continually reflect on the how those perspectives can land for others. Further, while we will discuss *issues* including heterosexism, racism, classism, and ableism, behaviour that is heterosexist, racist, classist, and ableist will not be tolerated.

## Avenue to Learn

'Avenue to Learn' (A2L or Avenue) is the main portal we will use for our course. We will use A2L to distribute information about course assignments and expectations including handouts and assignment guides. Students are expected to access A2L frequently (at least twice per week) in order to keep up to date with our course. Any announcements about changes to assigned readings, office hours, or class cancellations will also be made through A2L. Students who are unfamiliar with the A2L system should familiarize themselves with the system as soon as possible. Students are encouraged to review the online tips and help available by visiting the [McMaster A2L webpage](#).

### **Virtual Instruction**

Instruction for this course will take place online via Zoom. Students are required to set up their McMaster Zoom account prior to our first class. Students are also encouraged to access the [training resources](#) prior to the onset of the course. The Zoom link require to attend our classes will be available on the homepage of our course A2L site.

### **Contacting your Instructor**

Please submit an email question or request only once; I will respond to your email within 2 weekdays. Email queries should be answerable with a “yes or no” response. For more complex or detailed queries please see me during office hours. Emails must include the course code in the subject line (e.g. SOCSCI 1SS3). Please also note that as per the Faculty of Social Sciences E-Mail Communication Policy, all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including to 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.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

### **Evaluation Breakdown**

*Class Participation and Contribution: 15% (see below)*

*Proposal & Research Question Assignment: 20% (Oct 18)*

*Research Skills and Online Library Modules: 5% (Oct 25)*

*Citation Chain and Annotated Bibliography Assignment: 25% (Nov 8)*

***Final Research Assignment: 35% (Dec 8 at 11:59pm)***

**Note:** Detailed expectations for all assignments will be posted on our [A2L](#) class website under the Content heading.

### **Class Participation and Contribution**

Class participation and contribution is a vital component of this course. Therefore, it is expected that all students will be ‘active’ participants in this course. This means attending all classes, being actively involved in class activities and thoughtful discussion, and completing all assignments (showing up is a good start but the quality of your participation will be most important in determining the value of your participation). The expectation is that each student will be an active and collegial member of their group.

## **UNIVERSITY AND COURSE POLICIES**

### **Courses with an On-line Element**

Our course uses on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), Zoom, Macvideo). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using

these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course Instructor.

### **Course Policy on Digital Submissions**

The written assignments in this course will be submitted via the digital Assignments function on Avenue to Learn (A2L), found under the Assessments tab. Many file types are compatible with the submission system; however, **all course assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format.** All McMaster students have access to the Microsoft 365 suite for no additional charge. The suite can be downloaded [here](#).

### **Course Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties**

For more information on our approach to grading written work in this course, download the handout *Written Assignments Marking Guide* on A2L. All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. All essays must be properly referenced and include a bibliography. Use the APA style for referencing. For information on these referencing styles, visit the [McMaster Library website](#). *Please note that students anticipating difficulty with English grammar, punctuation, paragraph development, thesis statement development, or source citation should consult the Student Success Centre early on by visiting the [SSC's writing support services](#).*

All written work must be submitted to the appropriate online folder and before the stated deadline. **It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the submitted file is readable. Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day (weekends will count as one day).** Late penalties will not be waived unless your Faculty/Program Office advises the Instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date. In cases wherein no arrangement has been made with the Instructor ahead of time, **assignments later than one week will not be accepted.**

Assignments will be returned in a timely fashion. Upon returning assignments, the Instructor will **not review or discuss grades within the first 24 hours following the return of the marked assignment.** After receiving the graded assignment, the first step is to carefully read through the comments provided. Should a student feel their assignment was incorrectly graded, they have the option to submit an application for a formal regrade. If a student requests a regrade, they must submit a 1-page (double spaced) document describing the character of the perceived marking error. Please submit this document and the original graded assignment to the Instructor. Please note that when a mark is submitted for regrade, the new mark may be lower than the original.

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

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 behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates **only** three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained
- improper collaboration in group work
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

## Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

This course uses a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please follow this [link](#) or go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS – UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work - McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the [Undergraduate Calendar](#) “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make

arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO policy](#). Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term*** in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **Copyright and Recording**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University Instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the Instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the Instructor if this is a concern for you.

### **Conduct Expectations**

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**. It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of A2L, Teams, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

### **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS – COURSE POLICIES

### Course Policy on Accommodation and Exception

All students, please note: If you need to request accommodation or exception for any reason, making your request as soon as possible will allow greater flexibility in making arrangements. Delaying your request will typically result in a progressively narrower range of options being available for accommodation.

Students registered with SAS are encouraged to note the guidance on the [SAS Website](#): “When your instructor reviews and acknowledges receipt of your accommodations, an auto generated email will be sent to you requesting you to communicate with your instructor. You are expected to communicate at the beginning of the term with each of your instructors for all courses with accommodations requested. SAS strongly recommends you meet with your instructors in person to discuss your accommodation plan and implementation.”

Early communication about whether, when and how your registered accommodations might apply to this course will help to identify options and make contingency plans. Please follow-up on the acknowledgment of your letter by making contact with the instructor, even if you do not yet wish to make requests based on your accommodations. Delaying this follow-up communication will typically result in a progressively narrower range of options being available for accommodation.

Similarly, when you need to make a specific request regarding a course assignment based on your registered accommodations, getting in touch as early as possible will help ensure that a greater range of options for accommodation are available. Delaying your request until close to (or after) the assignment or test date will typically result in a progressively narrower range of options being available for accommodation.

### Accommodating Peers

Students may be asked to assist in making our learning environment accessible for all students. For example, in-class presenters may be asked to submit, in advance, a text summary of the presentation’s visual components to ensure the inclusion of students for whom those visuals would not otherwise be accessible.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS & LECTURES

In an effort to make the course more accessible, many of the readings can be accessed via our A2L course site. For readings not posted on A2L, students can access these readings via the McMaster Library website. The assigned readings are to be completed prior to class.

### Week 1 - Sept 13 - An Introduction to Inquiry and Gender Problems

- No Readings

## Week 2 – Sept 20 – Asking Questions / Thinking about Gender and Inequality

- Shaw, S. M. & Lee, J. (2020). Systems of Privilege and Inequality. In *Gendered Voices Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 41 – 58). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Intersectional Frameworks

## Week 3 – Sept 27 – Honing Our Questions / Gender & Masculinities

- West, C. & Zimmerman, D. (2018). Doing Gender. In J. Misra, M. D. Stewart, & M. A. Brown (Eds.), *Gendered Lives, Sexual Beings: A Feminist Anthology* (pp. 3-9). Sage. (Original work published 1987)
- Ridgeway, C. L. (2012). Framed Before We Know It. In J. Lorber (Ed.), *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics* (5th ed., pp. 212-218). New York: Oxford University Press. (Original work published in 2009).

## Week 4 – Oct 4 – Evaluating Resources / Rethinking Biology

- Fausto-Sterling, A. (2018). Duelling Dualisms. In M. Hobbs and C. Rice (Eds.), *Gender and Women's Studies: Critical Terrain* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. pp. 132-143). Toronto: Women's Press. (Original work published in 2000)
- Fausto-Sterling, A. (2000). The Five Sexes: Revisited. *The Sciences*, 40(4), 18-23.

## BREAK WEEK – Oct 11

## Week 5 – Oct 18 – Masculinities & Femininities

- Connell, R. W. & Messerschmidt, J. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender & Society* 19(6), 829-859.
- Additional Reading Posted on A2L
- **Proposal and Research Question Assignment DUE**

## Week 6 – Oct 25 – Beyond the Binary / The Writing Process

- Robinson, M. (2020). Two-Spirit Identity in a Time of Gender Fluidity. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 67(12), 1675-1690.
- **Online Modules DUE**

## Week 7 – Nov 1 – Analysis

- Ackerman, E. (2010). Analyze This: Writing in the Social Sciences. In G. Graff & C. Birkenstein (Eds.) *They say / I say: the moves that matter in academic writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 156-173). W. W. Norton & Co.



- Reading posted in A2L

#### Week 8 – Nov 8 – Developing a Thesis / Gender and...

- Readings posted in A2L
- **Citation Chain and Annotated Bibliography DUE**

#### Week 9 – Nov 15 – Incorporating Evidence & Strengthening Our Writing / Gender and...

- Hubbuch, S. M. (2005). How to and How Not to Incorporate Your Evidence into Your Paper. In *Writing Research Papers Across the Curriculum* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 170-193). Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Reading Posted in A2L

#### Week 10 – Nov 22 – Incorporating Feedback / Gender and...

- Reading Posted in A2L

#### Week 11 – Nov 29 – Fine Tuning our Writing / Gender and...

- Reading Posted in A2L

#### Week 12 – Dec 6 –Intensive Writing Workshop

- No Readings

**NOTE:** At certain points in the course, it may make sense to modify the schedule outlined above. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course. ***Please check Avenue to Learn for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on Avenue to Learn (A2L) will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.***

**COVID-19 Pandemic Statement:** This is a challenging time for everyone. Students are learning and working in less-than-ideal circumstances. The syllabus above reflects the current aspirations for the course; however, in light of these challenging times, I also recognize the importance of flexibility. I encourage you to communicate with me if there is something specific that I can be doing to better support your learning experience in this course. Please also note that Teaching Assistants and Instructors area also learning, teaching, and working in less-than-ideal circumstances and your patience and flexibility is appreciated.