

**INQUIRY 1SS3 Section C03
INQUIRY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
Pop Culture and Social Media
Winter 2018
Monday 11:30 – 2:20
LRW 1056**

**McMaster University
Faculty of Social Sciences**

**Instructor: Dr. David Penner
Office: KTH 208
Email: Through Avenue Website
Extension:
Office Hours: By Appointment**

What Do We Mean by Inquiry?

Inquiry is the process of developing skills to arrive at understandings of a problem, an issue, or a phenomenon, through the process of asking good questions, searching out good evidence, and arriving at well reasoned conclusions. The process of critical inquiry promotes self-directed learning, helping you to develop the skills necessary to acquire and reflect on new knowledge and understanding, and that will be invaluable in your other university courses and your academic, personal, and professional lives.

Course Description:

Inquiry courses are designed to teach students how to learn and how to share academic knowledge. The courses are skill-driven, rather than content-driven, with a ***focus on the skills required to perform effectively in university***. These personal, transferable skills and approaches to learning will be useful in other university courses, and beyond. Students will engage in a process to begin to learn how to formulate good academic questions, gather and interpret scholarly evidence, draw reasoned conclusions, and communicate these conclusions, using as content, topics central to research in the Social Sciences.

Course Objectives:

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

- developing a researchable question and refining it;
- demonstrating the ability to obtain relevant information to answer this question;
- critically evaluating the validity and relevance of academic research;
- communicating a reasoned response to the researchable questions; and
- critically reflecting on your learning process.
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Developing Transferable Skills

You will work on developing academic skills that are transferable to your other university courses as well as to the workforce. These skills include:

- question formulation;
- critical reading and thinking;
- communication (oral, written and visual);
- self and peer evaluation;
- research skills; and
- dialogical abilities. (Vajoczki, 2010)

Theme: Popular Culture and Social Expectations

While the focus of this course is on the ***process of inquiry***, the theme of our section is about what popular culture tells young adults about what to expect in adult life. Does popular culture provide false or realistic understandings of modern life, about work and success, romance, and anxiety? How do you feel about success? What does your culture tell you to expect? Do you feel doomed or entitled? What are you afraid of? What does culture tell you to be afraid of? How does popular culture inform of gender and sexual relationships? The relationship between yourself and modern popular culture will provide the content that we will use to develop analytical and critical thinking skills.

In our first class we will begin to identify what popular culture means to us, both as individuals and in the larger society. In subsequent classes and in your research paper/capstone assignment you will have the opportunity to further explore your own cultural sense of the hegemonic power of music, films, the internet and television to shape its audience. What does television tell you about being adulthood, being male or female, what it means to be educated? Do you buy into this understanding or are you a rebel? Did popular culture teach you how to rebel?

There are many ways that people in the social sciences seek to understand the concept of popular media and its connection to identity. Is it related to entertainment or economics? Is it a systemic force or a set of personal values? Why does it matter? What all agree upon is that social, cultural and economic factors influence aspects of who we are. Social structures such as family, work environment, political structure and our health care system to name a few as well as our cultural practices; what we eat, and how we live all have consequences for our lives and our health.

The theme of popular culture and future identity and the design of this course provide ample flexibility to enable you to engage your own ideas and interests with the topic, while demonstrating the skills of inquiry.

Optional Textbooks:

Hubbuck, S., (2005) *Writing Research Papers Across the Curriculum. 5th Ed.* Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.

Suggested Texts:

Haig, J., MacMillan, V., Raikes, G. (2010), *Cites & Sources, An APA Documentation Guide*, (3rd ed.), Toronto: Nelson.

Weston, A. (2010) *Creativity for Critical Thinkers*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Evaluation Components:

Assessment Activity	% of Grade	Date Due
Library Assignment/Quiz	15 %	TBA
Research Question	2.5 %	Jan. 15
Capstone Assignment: Proposal	7.5 %	Jan. 29
Annotated Bibliography/ Literature Review	10 %	Feb. 12
Final Assignment	30 %	April
Short Reflection Papers	5 x 5% = 25%	Weekly
Participation	10 %	

Written Assignments: All written assignments are to be typed and double-spaced. Please include a title page with your name, student number and email address, the topic title of the assignment and the date submitted. Your research paper should be at least 7 double spaced pages in length in 12pt Times New Roman font with 1” margins. It is to be submitted, as are all written assignments, to the electronic dropbox on Avenue.

Submitting Assignments Electronically: Individual assignments submitted electronically must include your last name in the filename: e.g. Smith_Assignment_5_Article_Assessments.rtf.

Late Submissions: All work is due on the date stated, at the beginning of class, unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. A late penalty of 5 percentage points per day will apply after the due date (weekends included).

Class Participation and Engagement: Class participation and engagement is an important component of this course (and of active learning). Therefore, I expect all students to be 'active' participants in this course. This means attending all classes, being actively involved in class activities and thoughtful discussion, and completing all assignments.

Your participation grade will be significantly influenced by your active involvement in class, and the quality of that involvement. Lack of participation, or 'negative participation', will also significantly influence your participation grade (but in a negative way)! And so you are aware of the types of activities or behaviours that will be considered 'negative' class participation, they include the following: missing classes, talking to classmates about things that are not a contribution to the class discussion, general nonparticipation in or disruption of class/class activities, sleeping during class, coming to class late or leaving early, and using any of the following electronic devices: cell phones, mp3 players, ipods, ipads, and other electronic devices. Computers may be used in class but ONLY for note taking purposes. Evidence of using the computer for anything other than note taking will be considered negative class participation.

The success of this course depends on you! And students who are most successful in this course fulfill these expectations, and engage in all aspects of the course!

Group Assignments: For all group assignments, ALL students in the group must be contributing members of that assignment. The expectation is that each student will be an active and respectful member of their group, and contribute to the assignment - in a fair and equitable way. Group work is sometimes challenging, but it can also be rewarding in a number of ways, including providing you with opportunities to develop valuable 'working-as-a-team' skills that will serve you well in this and other courses, as well as more broadly in your academic, professional, and personal life.

Reflection Papers: Five times during the course of the year you will be asked to write a short reflection paper on a topic assigned during class. You will have one week to complete the assignment. The aim of the papers are to develop your writing and argument skills.

Policy for Returning Assignments/Posting Grades: In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow the return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; all tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student.

And since it is important for student learning and skills development that students receive feedback on their assignments as they progress through the course, you can expect to receive feedback (comments and a grade) on each of your assignments in a timely fashion. This will allow you the opportunity to see how you performed on each assignment and time to discuss any questions you might have with your instructor.

The following are the methods for returning comments on student's work:

1. comments and grades made electronically on Avenue.

Grades for assignments may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. Final grades for the course will be posted on MUGSI.

Objectives of the Assignments:

- To consolidate and expand on the information students acquire in their readings and classes;
 - To increase student's self-awareness and self-evaluation skills;
 - To develop research skills that will assist the student in critically assessing the information they are provided;
 - To improve synthesizing the information into a coherent and interesting whole;
 - To develop their ability to communicate findings; and
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- Most importantly, to develop your ability to care for the ideas and feelings you are exploring therefore allowing you to do honest and sincere work that matters to you.

Your Assignment Path

This course is not demand heavy in terms of preparations for class-time. However, there are important tasks that you must keep up with in order to succeed. You must pay attention to the deadlines for assignments and you must take early assignments with seriousness in order to thrive in the course.

Your **research question** is due very soon. It can be a rough sketch of what you would like to think about and what you might think at this point. Because your thinking will develop and deepen, as you connect with your research, this question **will** change.

Your **research proposal** contains your improved research question and an outline of what your paper might look like. This is not a contract and you are able to change your position and your structure. However, your proposal is a combination of your inclinations, questions, and methods of structuring your approach and is not necessarily a reflection of a decided conclusion. The content of your research may alter all three of these aspects and should not be too quickly concluded.

Your **literature review** is to contain both an:

- In depth review of three (3) peer reviewed journal articles sources that will contribute to your paper, and...
- No fewer than two (3) more sources that offer potential but you have yet to examine thoroughly.

This step will confirm that the information needed to complete your assignment is available. If it does you'll proceed forward. If not, you must be prepared to both modify your research question and seek out other sources.

Your **final paper** is what we call your capstone assignment. Everything builds to produce it. It requires no fewer than five peer reviewed journal articles but may also be supported by other sources: books, films, government documents, etc. You can refer to any film(s) in your work.

After submitting each of your assignments (other than your final paper) I will get back to you with comments and suggestions and marks. I will attempt to provide this to you one week after your assignment was due.

Please don't hesitate to discuss your progress or the obstacles you encounter with me. I would be glad to meet with you at mutually acceptable appointment times. I will also respond to emails during the week on a daily basis.

Course Format and Evaluation:

Inquiry 1SS3 is a multiple section course with individual section size not greater than 30 students. Students are expected to be **active participants** in every section. These classes meet once per week in either the day or the evening in a three-hour block of time. A different instructor facilitates each section of this class, so the exact classroom experience will vary. Across all Inquiry classes we have consistent expectations of students.

Library Training Sessions:

You are expected to master the McMaster library system by going through eleven "pod-cast-like" interactive training sessions on computer on your own time. These should take in total, about three hours. Each session contains material essential to your success in Inquiry and every other course taken at university. These sessions are scheduled in the reading and assignment schedule at the end of this document.

You must also take a Library Skills Test worth 15% of your final mark. It is based on these interactive training sessions and the experience you gain from using these skills. Please try to avoid the trap of completing these training sessions immediately before this test. Your practice with these skills is needed before, on test day and during the remainder of your university studies.

Library Skills Test: T.B.A.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

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. 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.

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 <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 other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

A NOTE ABOUT THE USE OF AVENUE TO LEARN IN THIS COURSE:

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn for the online components of the course. Students should be aware that when they 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.

A NOTE ABOUT THE USE OF TURNITIN.COM IN THIS COURSE

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 as well as in hard copy so that it can be checked for plagiarism. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a hard copy of their work 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 go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

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 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 at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link (Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010).

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

This on-line self-reporting tool is for undergrad students to report one absence of up to 3 days per term. The MSAF gives you the ability to request relief for any missed academic work during that one absence. Please note: this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit only 1 MSAF per term. This form should be filled out as soon as possible before you return to class after your absence. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately (within 48 hours of submitting the MSAF) in person or by email regarding the nature of the relief that is possible for the missed work.

If you are absent more than 3 days or exceed 1 request per term you MUST visit the office of the Associate Dean in your Faculty. You may be required to provide supporting documentation to the Faculty office. You must NOT submit any medical or other relevant documentation to your instructor. Your instructor may NOT ask you for such documentation. All documentation requests will only come from the Faculty office.

You must visit the following link to locate the MSAF to report your absence:

<https://pinjap01.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>

Access Copyright Regulations:

McMaster University holds a licensing agreement with Access Copyright, the Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency. Information on current regulations for copying for education purposes can be found at the following website:

<http://www.copyright.mcmaster.ca/>

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) formerly Centre for Student Development (CSD):

If you have an accommodation letter from SAS, you are required to provide a

copy of that letter to your instructor. Please be sure that you arrange academic accommodations through SAS as early as possible in order that the instructor can receive the accommodation letter as early as possible in the term.

What are my responsibilities as a student registered at SAS? Students are responsible to identify themselves to Student Accessibility Services on an annual and regular basis in order to receive accommodations and services. Students are responsible for:

- meeting their SAS Program Coordinator prior to, or at the start of each academic term (September, January and summer sessions);
- providing their SAS Program Coordinator with relevant and professional medical or psychological documentation;
- notifying their SAS Program Coordinator if courses are dropped or added, or if accommodations require a change;
- meeting with individual course instructors to discuss specific needs in relation to the course and their disability; and
- providing the course instructor with their accommodation letter from SAS.

For more information, see the SAS website: <http://csd.mcmaster.ca/sswd/faqs.html>

****IMPORTANT****

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are attending the correct section of Inquiry 1SS3. Each section of Inquiry has a specific theme chosen by the instructor so you cannot attend a section in which you are not registered.

If you do continue to attend a section of the course in which you are not registered, you will not be permitted to register in that section and so may be at risk of failing the course.

Consult your personal timetable and the Registrar's course timetable to ensure that you are attending the correct section.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following outline should be considered a potential map and not a contract. It is open to negotiation.

Date	Topic	
Jan. 8	Introduction	
Jan. 15	Does the Internet Make Young People Dumb?	

Jan. 22	What is Technology? Is it a way of controlling the world or opening it?	
Jan. 29	Communication and Social Media	
Feb. 5	What is Success in Today's World?	
Feb. 12	Romance and Relationships	
Feb. 26	What Does It Mean To Be Civilized?	
Mar. 5	Our Relationship to Screens	
Mar. 12	Rights, Privileges and Obligations	
Mar. 19	Politeness in Culture	
Mar. 26	How Are We Entertained Today?	
Apr.2	Getting Old	

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