

SOCIAL SCIENCES 1SS3: INQUIRY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Course Details

Section Details

- Section C03
- Theme: Climate Change and Technology
- Winter, 2022
- Fridays 2:30 PM - 5:20 PM EST
- Room: LRW 1056

Instructor Details

Dr. Kelly Linton

Email: lintok4@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Fridays 1:00-2:00 PM EST (or by appointment via Zoom)

Inquiry Courses:

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 (e.g., social identity, globalization, health, and gender).

Course Theme: Climate Change and Technology

Climate change presents grave challenges for humanity, from the loss of land and livelihoods, to potential displacement, mass migration, and threats to culture. Attempts to address climate change include mitigation, adaptation, and green recovery models. Through the lens of technology, we will explore the potential benefits and pitfalls of each of these positions, as well as the social, political, and economic contexts that shape support for different proposals. Utilizing theories and concepts from diverse disciplines, we will explore topics such as geoengineering, ecomodernism, decarbonization, climate justice, and the role of the fossil fuel industry.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course you will be able to:

- develop and refine a research question;
- obtain relevant information to answer this question;
- critically evaluate the validity and relevance of academic research;
- collaborate with fellow students to undertake peer and self-assessment;
- communicate a reasoned response to research questions; and
- critically reflect on your learning process.

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What is 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.

Required Readings

The following materials are **required reading** for students in this section of Inquiry:

- Haig, J., MacMillan, V., Raikes, G., *Cites & Sources, An APA Documentation Guide*. Toronto: Nelson.
- Mann, Michael E. *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*. New York: Public Affairs (Hachette Book Group).

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.
- *Inquiry in the Social Sciences: An Inquiry Approach to Critical Thinking*. Soc Sci 1SS3 Custom Edition. McGraw-Hill. (Custom version of the first edition of

Reason in the Balance by Bailin and Battersby.)

Other Course Materials

Additional material (academic articles, 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.

University and Course Policies

Courses with an On-Line Element (University Policy)

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). 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, 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 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, found under the Assessments tab. Many file types are compatible with the submission system, including Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), or Rich Text (.rtf) files. If your word processing program uses a file type not listed here, please contact the instructor to check compatibility.

Written Assignments

All written assignments are to be typed, 12 point font, 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. Printed copies of assignments submitted through Avenue will not be necessary unless explicitly requested.

Submitting Assignments Electronically

Individual assignments submitted electronically must somehow include your last name in the filename, e.g. Smith_Assignment_5_Article_Assessments.pdf

Faculty of Social Sciences E-Mail Communication Policy

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.

Academic Integrity (University Policy)

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](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

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 (University Policy)

Some courses may use 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 go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Accommodations and Exceptions – University Policies

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

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 (University Policy)

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or 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) (University Policy)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO Policy](#). Students requiring a RISO accommodation 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 (University Policy)

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 (University Policy)

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 Avenue 2 Learn, 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 (University Policy)

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, please note that 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.

Additional Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

In order to pass this course, each student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course. In order to pass this course, students must submit the final writing assignment (research essay) and receive a passing grade.

Statement on Engaging in the Online Learning Environment

This course relies on the Avenue to Learn site to connect you with the syllabus, assignment outlines, and other course material. We will also meet weekly in person. Here, you will engage with me and your peers as we progress through the course. Please keep track of weekly tasks and contribute respectfully to online and in-person activities.

You may contact me by email, but it may take up to 24 hours for a response. If I cannot provide an immediate response, or if the matter is something we cannot address adequately through email, I will direct you to meet with me via Zoom. Please ensure that your emails are worded professionally and include the course number in the subject line.

Late Assignment Submission Policy

Unless a student receives academic consideration or has made arrangements with me prior to the due date, assignments will be penalized at the rate of 3%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days. Students who are unable to submit assignments on-time due to circumstances that warrant use of a “self-reported absence” will be expected to submit their assignments within 24 hours of the end of their absence period.

Attendance and Participation

Participation in this course is a requirement and serves as an opportunity for you to engage with course content, see the thoughts and opinions of your peers, contribute your own questions or ideas, present evidence from independent research, or to reflect on course concepts.

Assignment Breakdown

Library and Academic Integrity Modules – 5%

Students will complete the Library and Academic Skills Modules on Avenue to Learn.

Assessment is based on completion of the assigned modules.

Due: January 23rd at 11:59 PM EST

Participation – 15%

All students must attend class regularly and come prepared to contribute through discussion. Please be sure you have read and reflected on the materials assigned for each class. I feel that classes are made successful by consistent participation and engagement with each other and with the material. I am sensitive to the fact that some students find class discussion difficult. You are welcome to submit comments or questions to me via email before class in order to show your ongoing participation.

Paper Proposal – 10%

Students will submit a one page paper proposal on a topic related to our course theme “Climate Change and Technology”. The paper proposal should include: a brief description of your topic and how it fits within the course theme; the issues central to your topic; a working thesis statement that states your position. Students are encouraged to focus on an issue that interests them and to introduce their own opinions on what they believe to be contributing factors, as well as their own ideas regarding alternative perspectives of the issue.

Due: January 30th at 11:59 PM EST

Annotated Bibliography – 15%

Students will submit an annotated bibliography that includes five peer-reviewed sources in order to identify where different writers stand on the central topic of their paper. The bibliography should utilize proper citation format (using APA) for each entry and include the following: a description of the author’s position/thesis; a brief discussion of the relevance of the source to your topic; a synthesis of the key points and lines of evidence. Detailed assignment instructions and marking rubric will be available on the course Avenue to Learn site.

Due February 18th at 11:59 PM EST

Counterargument Assignment – 15%

Evidence is only one way to strengthen your argument in a position paper. Another way is to consider possible counterarguments, or arguments against your thesis or claim, in order to pre-empt potential objections. Acknowledging opposing perspectives demonstrates that you have thought about your topic or issue from multiple angles and are not merely dismissing alternative points of view. It also allows you to show how your argument is superior to these alternatives. For this assignment, you will identify at least three potential counterarguments to the argument laid out in your position paper (your thesis). After you have identified potential counterarguments you will provide a rebuttal by explaining what is wrong with the argument. Is it grounded in faulty research? Is it based on unfounded assumptions? In your rebuttal, you may recognize the validity of

the argument but maintain that yours is superior (using supporting evidence), or you may discredit the argument using contrary research or identifying faulty logic. You should then return to your own argument, refining it to reflect the work you have done in refuting any opposition. The purpose of this assignment is to anticipate possible points of dissent and defend against them in advance. This demonstrates that you understand potential weaknesses in your own argument and have thought through how your argument stands in spite of them. Detailed assignment instructions and marking rubric will be available on the course Avenue to Learn site.

Due: March 6th at 11:59 PM EST

Paper Outline – 10%

Creating a paper outline is a great way of ensuring you stay on topic and helps the writing process by organizing your ideas. Start by determining the purpose of your paper – what are you trying to accomplish? Your outline should be well-organized and include the peer-reviewed research that you will use to support your ideas and arguments. Make sure to group related ideas together. Your outline should clearly demonstrate the logical progression of your argument and should reflect how your final essay will be structured. Detailed assignment instructions and marking rubric will be available on the course Avenue to Learn site.

Due: March 27th at 11:59 PM EST

Final Paper – 30%

Students will hand in their final research essay (1200-1500 words) based on their exploration of a topic relevant to the course theme. Your papers should demonstrate critical engagement with the course material and the core content of the paper should include both problem analysis and critical reflection. The research paper should be well organized, clearly written, and persuasively argued. Students must include a minimum of 5 scholarly sources beyond the course materials. These sources can either be those from your annotated bibliography or other peer-reviewed sources. Students are strongly encouraged to take into consideration the feedback received during each step of the process when composing their final papers.

Due: April 12th at 11:59 PM EST

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 14th – An Introduction to Inquiry: Climate Change and Technology

Assigned Readings:

Syllabus

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.
Introduction.

Week 2: January 21st – Understanding Climate Change

Required Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 1: The Architects of Misinformation and Misdirection

Liz-Rejane Issberner and Philippe Léna (2018). Anthropocene: The Vital Challenges of a Scientific Debate. Unesco 2018-2. <https://en.unesco.org/courier/2018-2/anthropocene-vital-challenges-scientific-debate>

Week 3: January 28th – Technological Innovation and its Consequences

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 2: The Climate Wars

Winner, L. (1980). Do Artifacts Have Politics? *Daedalus* (Cambridge, Mass.), 109(1), 121–136.

Week 4: February 4th – Barriers to Combatting the Climate Crisis

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 3: The “Crying Indian” and the Birth of the Deflection Campaign

Carroll, W., Graham, N., Lang, M. K., Yunker, Z., & McCartney, K. D. (2018). The Corporate Elite and the Architecture of Climate Change Denial: A Network Analysis of Carbon Capital’s Reach into Civil Society. *The Canadian Review of Sociology*, 55(3), 425–450.

Week 5: February 11th – The Politics of Climate Change

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 4: It’s YOUR Fault

Naomi Klein, “Let Them Drown: The Violence of Othering in a Warming World,” *London Review of Books* 38, no. 11 (June 2016). <https://positionspolitics.org/episteme-1-1-1klein/>

Week 6: February 18th – Oil, Energy, and Power

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 5: Put a Price on It. Or Not.

Franta, Benjamin. (2021). What Big Oil Knew About Climate Change, in its Own Words. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/what-big-oil-knew-about-climate-change-in-its-own-words-170642>

Week 7: Reading Week

Week 8: March 4th – Decarbonization Strategies

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 6: Sinking the Competition

Boon, M. (2019). A Climate of Change? The Oil Industry and Decarbonization in Historical Perspective. *Business History Review*, 93(1), 101–125.

Week 9: March 11th – Addressing Climate Change in Agriculture

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 7: The Non-Solution Solution

Mercer, K. L., Perales, H. R., & Wainwright, J. D. (2012). Climate change and the transgenic adaptation strategy: Smallholder livelihoods, climate justice, and maize landraces in Mexico. *Global Environmental Change*, 22(2), 495–504.

Week 10: March 18th – Ecomodernism

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 8: The Truth is Bad Enough

Isenhour, C. (2016). Unearthing human progress? Ecomodernism and contrasting definitions of technological progress in the Anthropocene. *Economic Anthropology*, 3(2), 315–328.

Week 11: March 25th – Geoengineering

Assigned Readings:

Corner, A., Parkhill, K., Pidgeon, N., & Vaughan, N. E. (2013). Messing with nature? Exploring public perceptions of geoengineering in the UK. *Global Environmental Change*, 23(5), 938–947.

Week 12: April 1st – Climate Justice

Assigned Readings:

Mann, Michael E. (2021). *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back our Planet*.

Chapter 9: Meeting the Challenge

Timperley, Jocelyn. (2021) The World's Fight for 'Climate Justice'. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20211103-the-countries-calling-for-climate-justice>

Week 13: April 8th – Tackling Climate Change in the Anthropocene

Assigned Readings:

Shiva, V. (2009). Soil not oil: environmental justice in an age of climate crisis.

Alternatives Journal (Waterloo), 35(3), 18–.

Course Delivery and Time Commitment

Course Delivery

This course is designated as in person, meaning we will meet every week for class time. This will provide the opportunity for us to interact, share ideas, and learn from one another. This critical exchange of ideas is an integral part of learning.

In addition to our weekly meetings, students will complete assigned readings, engage with other course materials (such as short videos, mini-quizzes, etc), and complete assignments during the week at their own pace. ***Students will be asked to complete all course readings prior to meeting each week.***

Course materials for each week will be released at 12:00 AM EST on Sundays on A2L. While the format allows for some flexibility, students should plan for an even workload and utilize time management to complete tasks within the weekly timeframe.

Time Commitment

Students should expect to spend 6-9 hours per week outside of class time for an undergraduate course. The recommended time budget is:

Assigned Reading: 2 hours per week x 12 weeks = 24 hours

Assignments: 3 hours per week x 12 weeks = 36 hours