

SOCIAL SCIENCES 1SS3: INQUIRY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Course Details

Section Details

- Section: C02
- Theme: Social Justice and Non-Violence
- Winter, 2023
- Class time and dates: Wednesdays, 11:30 am – 2:20 pm
- Room: LRW 1055

Instructor Details

Instructor: Dr. Olga Skarlato

Email: skarlato@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:00-2:00 pm 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).

Theme: Social Justice and Non-Violence

The course theme, Social Justice and Non-Violence, will be used for exploring the theoretical and the case study aspects of this course and for developing analytical skills, academic writing and critical thinking. It will also provide a framework and an opportunity to practice presentation skills and write peer evaluations. The course will begin with a discussion of the key theoretical and practical aspects related to Social Justice and will use specific examples and case studies to illustrate these issues. We will then introduce Non-Violent Conflict Resolution strategies and will discuss ways that they can be used for achieving Social Justice through effective communication, specific negotiation techniques, conflict transformation and reconciliation.

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 and

- incorporate the research of others to support your own argument;
- collaborate with other students to undertake peer and self-assessment;
- communicate a reasoned response to research questions; and
- critically reflect on your learning process.

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:

Northey, M. (2019). *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing* (9th ed). Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Other required readings indicated in the Course Schedule are available on Avenue and electronically.

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

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

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.

University and Course Policies

Courses with an On-Line Element (University Policy)

This course uses on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), web pages, macvideo, 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, 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, found under the Assessments tab. Many file types are compatible with the submission system, including Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) and Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). The program will not recognize many of the Apple programs (.pages). It is strongly recommended that students hand in assignments using Microsoft Word software (.doc or .docx). McMaster students have access to the Microsoft Office 365 package at no additional cost. It is recommended that students download the package [here](#).

Course Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties

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 reference list. 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 3% a day including weekends.

Assignments will be returned in a timely fashion (within 2 weeks of submission). 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 assessed, 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.

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 their 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 in person and 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 potential 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.

Contacting your Instructor

I will respond to emails within 2 weekdays.

Emails must include the course code (SOCSCI 1SS3) in the subject line and be clearly worded.

Assignment Breakdown

Evaluation Breakdown

Brainstorming, Research Question & Essay Proposal Assignment: 15% (week 5)

Annotated Bibliography Assignment: 25% (week 7)

Final Research Assignment: 35% (week 11)

Presentation: 10% (weeks 10, 11 & 12)

Class Participation and Contribution: 15% (ongoing)

Note: Detailed expectations for all assignments will be posted on our A2L class website under the Content heading.

Class Participation and Contribution

Class participation is a vital component of this course. Therefore, it is expected that all students will be 'active' contributors in this course and have all assigned readings done before class. 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). At times, students will be required to complete in-class tasks as part of their participation grades. These tasks will be assessed on completion and quality of work. Additionally, students will be required to create and lead discussion in a group setting at specific moments throughout the semester. The details of this will be further explained in class.

Course Schedule

Weekly Breakdown

Week 1: January 11

Topics:

- Introduction to the course, course objectives and methods of assessment, keys to success
- Introducing the topic of Social Justice and Non-Violence

Readings:

- Read *the entire* Course Outline in preparation for our first class

Week 2: January 18

Topics:

- Intro to Academia
- Theoretical Frameworks for Social Justice

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 1 (“Writing and Thinking”)
- Maiese, M. (2003) *Justice Conflicts*, <https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/justice-conflicts>
- Borrás Jr. et al. (2018) Converging social justice issues and movements: implications for political actions and research. *Third World Quarterly* 39:7, 1227-1246.

Week 3: January 25

Topics:

- The Essentials of Constructing a Good Proposal
- The Theory and Practice of Nonviolence

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 2 (“Writing an Essay”) & Chapter 6 (“Using Illustrations”)
- Dugan, M. (2020) *Nonviolence and Nonviolent Direct Action*, <https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/nonviolent-direct-action>
- *Nonviolent Resistance Proves Potent Weapon* (2019) <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/02/why-nonviolent-resistance-beats-violent-force-in-effecting-social-political-change/>

Week 4: February 1, 2023

Topics:

- Developing Basic Research Skills
- Thesis Statements
- Social Justice and Human Rights

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 3 (“Writing a Book Report”) & Chapter 5 (“Writing a Business report”)

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- Maiese, M. (2003) Principles of *Justice and Fairness*, <https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/principles-of-justice>

Week 5: February 8

Topics:

- Credible Sources
- Documentation and Citation

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 7 (“Documenting Sources”)

Assignment due on February 8:

Brainstorming, Research Question & Essay Proposal Assignment (15%)

Week 6: February 15

Topic:

- Writing with Style and Proofreading Your Work
- Conflict transformation

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 11 (“Writing with Style”), & Chapter 12 (“Common Errors in Grammar and Usage”)
- *Conflict Transformation...* by Johannes Botes
https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol8_2/botes.htm#:~:text=Conflict%20transformati on%20refers%20to%20the,its%20focus%20on%20systems%20change

Mid-Term Recess February 20-26, 2023

Week 7: March 1

Topics:

- Critical Reading and Thinking
- Reconciliation
- Case Study: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Readings:

- *Reconciliation*, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reconciliation/>
- *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*,
https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Assignment due on March 1:

Annotated Bibliography Assignment (25%)

Week 8: March 8

Topics:

- Academic Honesty
- Grammar and Punctuation
- Self-evaluation and peer evaluation

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 13 (“Punctuation”), & Chapter 14 (“Misused Words and Phrases”)

Week 9: March 15

Topics:

- Effective Communication
- Oral Presentations Workshop

Readings:

- *Making Sense*, Chapter 8 (“Giving an Oral Presentation”)
- *Effective Communication* reading TBA

Week 10: March 22

Topics:

- Student Presentations and Critiques

Week 11: March 29

Topics:

- Student Presentations and Critiques

Assignment due on March 29:

Final Research Assignment (35%)

Week 12: April 5

Topics:

- Student Presentations and Critiques

Week 13: April 12

Topics:

- Review, Evaluation, and Conclusions

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.*