

SOCIAL SCIENCES 2SS3: INQUIRY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Course Details

Section Details

- Section C02
- Entertainment, Social Media, Education, and Identity.
- September to December 2022
- Wednesdays 2:30 PM
- LRW 1056

Instructor Details

Dr, David Penner
Email: Through Avenue
After Class or By Appointment

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 (critical thinking, maintaining interest in a topic, and writing) 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.

Our Theme: Entertainment, Social Media, Education, and Identity.

How we entertain ourselves is important in how we think of ourselves. Our popular culture, including social media, have a force in our lives. This course explores our popular culture by wondering what it is saying to us about who we are, and who we are supposed to want to be.

The course will discuss cultural phenomena that you are already aware of. What is unique in this course is the opportunity to deepen your present understanding and to develop critical thinking, research and writing skills, that will provide a foundation for you to find your education interesting and of personal value.

Course Objectives

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

- develop and refine a research question;
- obtain relevant information to pursue/deepen this question;
- critically evaluate the validity and relevance of academic research;
- critically reflect on your learning process.

SOCIAL SCIENCES 1SS3: INQUIRY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES	1
Course Details.....	1
Section Details	1
Instructor Details	1
Inquiry Courses:	1
Theme [Insert Theme Here in Header].....	1
Course Objectives.....	1
What is Inquiry?	4
Required Readings	4
Suggested Readings.....	4
Other Course Materials	4
University and Course Policies	5
Courses with an On-Line Element (University Policy)	5
Course Policy on Digital Submissions.....	5
Written Assignments	5
Submitting Assignments Electronically.....	5
Faculty of Social Sciences E-Mail Communication Policy.....	5
Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection (University Policy)	6
Accommodations and Exceptions – University Policies	7
Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work - McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) (University Policy).....	7
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities (University Policy).....	7
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO) (University Policy)	7
Copyright and Recording (University Policy)	7
Conduct Expectations (University Policy).....	7
Extreme Circumstances (University Policy)	8
Accommodations and Exceptions – Course Policies	9
[Suggested] Course Policy on Accommodation and Exception.....	9
[Suggested] Accommodating Peers	9
Additional Course Policies	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Assignment Breakdown.....	10
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Course Schedule	11
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Additional Heading as Heading 2.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Subheading as Heading 3.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

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:

- Readings and course materials will be posted on Avenue in advance of class discussion.

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. These are suggestions, not recommendations. 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.)
- Haig, J., MacMillan, V., Raikes, G., *Cites & Sources, An APA Documentation Guide*. 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)

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) and Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) 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 and double-spaced. Please include 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 might, somehow, include your last name in the filename, e.g. Smith_Assignment_5_Article_Assessments.pdf. To be honest, I do not think this is crucial.

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 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.

Assignment Breakdown

Research Question (2.5%): September 14th
Research Proposal (7.5%): September 28th
Citation Stream (10%): October 19th
Annotated Bibliography (10%): October 28th
Short Reflection Papers (6 x 5% = 30%): Throughout Term
Final Paper (30%) December 15th
Participation (10%)

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 **citation chain** is to contain three sources that refer to each other. I will explain this in more detail in class.

Your **annotated bibliography** 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 (2) 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.

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 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, general nonparticipation in or disruption of class/class activities, sleeping during class, coming to class meetings late or leaving early, or dominating class discussion.

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!

Reflection Papers: Every week you will be provided with reflection paper questions. You need to complete six papers. You can submit up to eight papers and your top five will count towards your grade. You will have one week to complete the assignment. The aim of the papers are to develop your writing and argument skills. They are to be, approximately, one single-spaced page in length.

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 do not 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 daily (excluding weekends).

Course Schedule

Each of our sessions will be divided into three sections, unequal in length.

Part One: Considering Student Questions and Comments about Academics.

Part Two: Critical Discussion of a Cultural Moment that has recently occurred.

Part Three: Mini-Lecture on the Theme for the Week (these are listed below) followed by a discussion.

The following outline should be considered a potential map and not a contract. It is open to negotiation and change. Course materials for you to read and/or watch will be posted on Avenue in advance of the Wednesday class.

Week by Week Course Themes

Sept. 7: Introduction

Sept 14: Is There a Separation Between Entertainment and Education?

Sept. 21: Digital Technology: Opening and Closing Worlds

Sept. 28: Social Media and Communication

Oct. 5: Educations about Success In Popular Culture

Oct 12: Reading Week

Oct 19: Wasting Time and Conquering Worlds: Video Game Culture

Oct 26: Screens and Power

Nov. 2: It is Fun To Make Fun of You: Movie Comedies and How We Treat Each Other.

Nov. 9: Could You Live in the Marvel Cinematic Universe? What Would That Take?

Nov. 16: Popular Music and Love Songs: Sex and Sadness

Nov. 23: Institutions are Corrupt and Corrupting According to Television Dramas

Nov. 30: Lining Up or Streaming From Home: Changes in Entertainment and Changes in Identity

Dec. 7: What Makes You Afraid? Do You Like It?