

## COURSE OUTLINE

### SOC SCI 2US3E (Winter 2017)

#### Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder

Day of the Week: Mondays – 19:00 - 22:00 PM

Location: Burke Science Building (BSB) Room 136

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**McMaster University**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences**

**Instructor:** Helen Athanasiou  
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**Office:** Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH) 208

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1800-1900 or  
by appointment

#### **Course Description:**

This course examines the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and associated diagnoses including Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Rett's Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder NOS according to their core features and their diagnostic criteria. This course provides an introduction to a neurodevelopmental and behavioural understanding of children with ASD.

#### **Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the diagnostic criteria used for ASD in the DSM IV and 5, and relevant diagnostic assessments used in the field of ASD.
2. Identify key assessments used to measure cognitive, adaptive and academic skills in order to contribute to the development of the child's profile and/or treatment plan.
3. Explain the neurological, behavioural, and developmental characteristics of children with ASD

4. Identify various treatment approaches used for young children with autism and methods to assess their efficacy.
5. Survey and identify available community services for children with ASD and their family's, issues and barriers for individuals with ASD throughout their lifespan.
6. Conduct research and evaluate scientific literature and determine its relevance and application to clinical practice in ASD.

### **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:

- critical reading and thinking;
- communication (oral, written and visual);
- self and peer evaluation;
- research skills; and
- group work skills.

### **Required Textbooks:**

<b>ISBN</b>	<b>Textbook Title &amp; Edition</b>	<b>Author &amp; Publisher</b>
<b>ISBN-10:</b> 0761962123 <b>ISBN-13:</b> 978-0761962120	<i>The autistic spectrum: Characteristics, causes and practical issues.</i>	Boucher, J. (2009) Sage Publications Ltd.

NOTE: Additional journal articles and research abstracts will be introduced as the course progresses. Each of these will be posted on the Avenue course site.

### **Evaluation Components:**

<b>Assessment Activity</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>	<b>Date Due</b>
Online Forum Discussions (4)	<b>20%</b>	#1 – January 18, 2017 #2 – February 8, 2017 #3 – February 17, 2017 #4 – March 15, 2017

Assignments (2) Assignment 1 Assignment 2	<b>10%</b>	#1 – January 27, 2017 #2 - March 27, 2017
Midterm Exam	<b>20%</b>	in-class- February 27, 2017
Team Research Project Assignment	<b>20%</b>  (15% research project final submission & 5% peer evaluation)	Research proposal – February 3, 2017  Final submission – March 31, 2017
FINAL EXAM Cumulative	<b>30%</b>	Exam week April 11-27

### **Forum Discussions:**

On-line forum discussions will take place between students on different topics or statements of question related to the field of ASD. Forums will have posted opening and closing times.

### **Midterm Exam (cumulative) :**

The midterm exam will include content derived from the lectures and readings from the beginning of the course up to the time of the exam. The midterm exam will be administered at the beginning of class on the date indicated.

### **Group Research Assignment and Presentation:**

In small groups students will be required to complete a research project on a key topic in the field of ASD.

### *Research Proposal:*

A brief 2-page proposal will be submitted with the following: your team's members, an overview of the topic your team has chosen and narrowing your focus of inquiry, and an initial literature review.

### *Final Research Submission:*

Each team of students will develop a Power Point or Prezi presentation ( 5-7 mins.) to summarize your research in addition to a final submission paper that details your team's background research, a synthesis of your research topic, and literature review sources deliver to the class. 1 copy per team to the Dropbox in Avenue2Learn March 31<sup>st</sup>, and 1 paper copy handed in at the start of class April 3rd. Content will be graded as described on Avenue2Learn.

Peer evaluation 5%

### **Final Exam (cumulative):**

The final exam is cumulative and will include content covered in class and in the readings over the course of the semester. The final exam will be administered through the testing centre on the date provided.

### **Assignment Submission Guidelines**

**Written Assignments:** All written assignments are to be typed and double-spaced. Use APA formatting. Please include a title page with your name, student number and email address, the topic title of the assignment and the date submitted. Please submit a paper copy to the Instructor at the start of class on the due date as well as submit one file copy per group to the appropriate Dropbox in Avenue2Learn.

**Submitting Assignments Electronically:** Individual assignments submitted electronically must include your last name in the filename: e.g. Smith\_Assignment\_2\_Lifespan.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, we 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 will be significantly influenced by your active involvement in class, and the quality of that involvement. Negative class participation includes 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.

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

**Group Research Assignment:** For your group assignment, 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.

**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 examinations and the group assignment 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 possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope when submitting the assignments for return by mail and
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements will be finalized for the return of assignments from the options listed above by the instructor during the first class.

Grades for examinations and the group assignment will be posted in Avenue2Learn. Final grades for the course will be posted on MUGSI.

## **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 2 LEARN IN THIS COURSE:**

In this course we will be using Avenue 2 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 may be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. If announced by the Instructor, 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](http://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.

### **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 (that is less than 25% of the course grade). 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 5 days or exceed 1 request per term, are absent for a reason other than medical, or have missed work worth 30% or more of your final grade, 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.

### **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://sas.mcmaster.ca/>



## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic, Lecture Details & Homework	Chapter
Week 1 - January 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>Introduction to course and course requirements</b>  <b>Introduction to the diversity of ASD</b></p> <p>Chapter 1 &amp;2: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Supplementary Articles:</b></p> <p>Fombonne, E., 2003. Prevalence of Autism. <i>Journal of American Medical Association</i>, 289 (1), 87-89.</p>	1 & 2
Week 2- January 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>Diagnosis of ASD, Assessment and Screening</b></p> <p>Chapter 4 (p.71-74), 5, 13: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Supplementary Articles:</b></p> <p>Zwaigenbaum et al. (2005)</p> <p><b>Forum Discussion 1 closes January 18<sup>th</sup></b></p> <p><b>Develop teams for Research Project</b></p>	4 (p.71-74), 5 & 13
Week 3- January 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2017	<p><b>The Dyad of Impairments: Social Communication</b></p> <p>Chapter 8, 10 (200-204): <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Assignment 1 due January 27<sup>th</sup></b></p> <p><b>Each team should meet regularly to decide on a research topic and begin background research</b></p>	8, 10 (200-208)
Week 4- January 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>The Dyad of impairments: Restricted and Repetitive Behaviour</b></p> <p>Chapter 9, 10: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Team research proposal due February 3<sup>rd</sup></b></p>	9, 10 (p.189-200)
Week 5-February 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	<p><b>Co-morbid conditions and ASD</b></p>	3

	<p>Chapter 3: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Supplementary Articles:</b></p> <p>Autism and Mental Health Issues. The Center for Autism &amp; Related Disabilities (CARD), University of South Florida</p> <p><b>Forum Discussion 2 closes February 8<sup>th</sup></b></p>	
Week 6- February 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>Explaining ASD, Neurodevelopment &amp; Mid-term exam review</b></p> <p>Chapter 7, &amp; 11 : <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Forum Discussion 3 closes February 17<sup>th</sup></b></p>	7, 11
February 20-26, 2017	<b>Midterm recess</b>	
Week 7- February 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<b>Midterm Exam – In class</b>	
Week 8- March 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>Guidelines for Evaluation and Assessment of therapeutic programs</b></p> <p><b>Supplementary Articles:</b></p> <p>Odom S.L., et al., (2009) Article: National Standards Project (2015)</p>	Posted on Avenue 2 Learn
Week 9- March 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>ABA and Alternative Approaches and Interventions: a closer look</b></p> <p>Chapter 14: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Supplementary Articles:</b></p> <p>Article: National Standards Project (2015) <b>Forum Discussion 4 closes March 15<sup>th</sup></b></p>	14  Posted on Avenue 2 Learn
Week 10- March 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>ASD Throughout the Lifespan</b></p> <p>Chapter 4 (p. 74-85) and 15: <i>Boucher</i> (2009)</p> <p><b>Assignment 2 due March 27<sup>th</sup></b></p>	4 & 15
Week 11- March 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	<p><b>Current Research in ASD, Perceptions of ASD and Practical Challenges</b></p> <p>"Does autism need a cure?" Baron-Cohen</p> <p>Articles as assigned</p> <p><b>Team Research Project due March 31<sup>st</sup></b></p>	14  Posted on Avenue 2 Learn

Week 12- April 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2017 Last day of class	<b>Team Research Project Presentations</b>  <b>Final Exam Review</b>	
Exam period- April 11 to 27, 2017	<b>Final Exam</b>	

**Note:**

- ❖ Any homework that is a “Dropbox item” indicates homework that will count towards the allocated in-class activity marks. The homework will form the basis for in-class discussions and group work. Prior to the start of class please post the required information to the appropriate Dropbox in Avenue2Learn. (For discussion purposes make sure you bring a copy to class or have access to the information on your lap top.)
  
- ❖ **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.**