

HLTH AGE 3B03
Advanced Research Inquiry
Winter 2018

Department of Health, Aging & Society
McMaster University

Instructor: Dr. Jessica E. Pace
E-mail: paceje@mcmaster.ca
Class location: BSB 137

Lectures: Monday, 12:30-2:20pm
Thursday, 1:30-2:20pm

Office Hours: Monday, 11:00am-12:00pm (or by appointment),
KTH (Kenneth Taylor Hall), Room 233

***Students should put 3B03 in the subject line of email messages regarding this course**

Course Description

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to develop elements of a research proposal that would be suitable for a fourth-year thesis project or independent project in the health or social sciences. The course is structured to help students to understand how to design a research project and compose an effective research proposal. The material covered in the course includes theoretical and practical elements such as the selection of a research topic, development of an effective research question, literature review, ethical research conduct with human participants, data collection and analysis, and knowledge mobilization and dissemination. The course will also highlight current trends in qualitative research (e.g. arts-based approaches, participatory and community-engaged research) and engage students in discussions of why social scientists are adopting such approaches.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Develop a methodologically rigorous research proposal
- Demonstrate competency in selecting appropriate methods for answering research questions
- Create and present an academic poster
- Reflect critically on social research methods, research design, and research outputs
- Build group collaboration, oral presentations, and time management skills.

- Engage in scholarly debate with fellow students through in-class participation in discussion and workshop activities.

Course Format

This course is highly interactive. The class will include formal lectures, group discussions and activities, guest lectures, and in-class writing workshops. Collaborative workshops and group discussions are built into the course to support the development of analytical, critical thinking, and writing skills. These activities will also support collegial work practices and problem-solving. Students are expected to attend each class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and actively participate in discussion and workshop sessions.

Readings

Required Text:

David, M. & Sutton, C. (2011). *Social research: An introduction* (2nd ed.) London: Sage.

Optional Texts:

1. Northey, M., Tepperman, L. & Albanese, P. (2012). *Making sense in the social sciences: A student's guide to research and writing* (5th ed.). Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

2. Van den Hoonaard, D. (2012). *Qualitative research in action: A Canadian primer*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Other Readings:

Given that this is an applied research methods class, students will be required to access additional readings directly from McMaster's e-journal portal. You will need your McMaster username and password: <http://library.mcmaster.ca/ejournals>

Instructions on how to access readings in this manner will be given the first day of class and will be available for future consultation on the lecture's slide posted on Avenue to Learn.

Please note that additional required readings not included in this outline may occasionally be announced on Avenue to Learn. Additional readings will be announced at least 2 weeks prior to the lecture for which they are required.

Course Assessments

10% - Selecting a research topic

10% - TCPS Core Certification & Ethics Reflection

25% - Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography (20% individual + 5% group)

25% - Photovoice Project (15% group + 10% individual reflection)
20% - Final Poster & In-Class Presentation
10% - Class Participation & Attendance

Key assignments in this course will involve a combination of individual and group work. Your group will be established at the beginning of the semester and you will work with the other members of your group in assignments as the semester unfolds. You will be allotted ample time in class to conduct group work, but some work may still need to be conducted outside of class to complete assignments.

Assignment Descriptions

Selecting a Research Topic for Final Poster

Due: January 22nd at the beginning of class.

In class on Thursday, January 18, 2017 students will work in groups to brainstorm research topics. Students will engage in a guided process which will help them to establish a research topic. This process will include brainstorming and concept-mapping activities. More information, including assignment guidelines will be posted on Avenue to Learn during the first week of class.

TCPS Core Certification & Reflection

Due: January 29th by 11:59pm (Upload to Avenue)

Each student will be required to complete the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) Core Ethics Certification. To complete the certification, each student will visit <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>, create an account, and follow the directions to work through each module and complete the quizzes. Upon successful completion, you will receive a certificate. Save a copy of this certificate and upload it to Avenue to Learn by 11:59 on January 25th, 2018. In addition to the TCPS certification, students will be asked to write a brief 1-page reflection on the ethics guest lecture. More information, including assignment guidelines will be posted on Avenue to Learn during the first week of class.

Please note: Students are advised to log into the TCPS system as soon as possible to ensure that they have ample time to deal with any technical difficulties that may occur. Last minute technical difficulties *will not be accepted* as a valid reason for an extension.

Annotated Bibliography & Literature Review

Due: Annotated Bibliography: February 8th by 11:59pm (Upload to Avenue)

2-page Summary: February 15th by 11:59pm (Upload to Avenue)

This assessment has group and individual components. Each student will be required to do a literature search and locate 5 sources germane to the research topic for their group's final paper. Working together, the group will then compile a bibliography with 20 unique sources. Each student in the group will be responsible for writing a brief (200-300 word) summary for each of their 5 sources. Each student will also be responsible for writing a 2-page summary on the findings of the literature review. The group will be required to submit the compiled annotated bibliography as one document. One week later each individual will be required to submit their own 2-page summary of the literature review findings. More information, including assignment guidelines will be posted on Avenue to Learn during the first week of class.

Photovoice Project

Due: Photos to be printed and brought into class on March 1st (beginning of class)

Reflection paper: March 8th by 11:59pm (Upload to Avenue)

As individuals and with your group, you will work on a photovoice project on the topic of "student well-being and distress." For this project, you will be both a participant and a researcher. For more information about potential risks to participation in this research and your right to withdraw from or not complete this project, see the note below.

The research question guiding this project is: What are noteworthy sources of emotional wellbeing/contentment and stress in the lives of undergraduate students? For this project, you will be asked to take a series of photographs – using either a digital camera or a smart phone – that reflect your different emotional states. Your photographs should be of material objects (e.g., coffee cup, tree, lap top) or landscapes that represent the source of your happy/content and unhappy/stressed moments as an undergraduate student at McMaster. You should take at least 5 photos that are reflective of each emotional state. To conform to our ethical clearance for this course it is absolutely imperative that your photos are of material objects or landscapes; people can only be in the photo if they are visible at a distance and if their face is not clear to the viewer of the photograph.

Later, in class, you will share your photos with members of your group. You may wish to think about the types of photos that you will take knowing that you will be asked to share and talk about them with members of your group/class, including your Professor. In class, you will work one-on-one with your group, who will ask you to explain why you took each photo and what it means to you. After doing so, you will switch roles.

The following class, your group, will begin the process of identifying common themes or subthemes that reflect the significance of and meanings embedded in the photographs. Finally, you will work (on your own) towards the completion of a reflection paper (4-5 pages).

****IMPORTANT NOTE: Risks to Participation in the Photovoice Research Project & the Voluntary Nature of Your Participation**

While this project asks you to take photographs of material objects/landscapes that represent the source of negative emotional states as an undergraduate and/or Indigenous student, it is not expected that this assignment will heighten your anxiety or discomfort. However, you may find that this project results in reflection and awareness of your emotional state in new, surprising, and uncomfortable ways. If you realize that you are struggling to achieve success, happiness, and satisfaction at university due to your participation in this project, you are encouraged to contact Counselling Services at the Student Wellness Centre (SWC). Counsellors are available on a drop-in basis in MUSC B101 for a 15-minute appointment with a counsellor. With the counsellor, you will be able to explore support options and decide the next best steps, including: individual counselling, group programming at the SWC, connections to community/campus resources, etc.

You can also decide not to complete this course assignment/research study up until February 15th. If you decide that you do not wish to complete this course assignment/research study, you should notify your Professor so that an alternative course assignment can be designed for you. If you want to take the photographs and complete the written assignment, but do not want to share your photographs or talk about them with group members in class, you should notify your Professor so that alternative accommodations can be arranged. If you decide to complete this course assignment/research study and find yourself uncomfortable during the group work portion of the assignment, you can refuse to answer any question that you do not want to or leave the class/group work at any time on March 1st.

Final Poster & Presentation

Due: March 26th (beginning of class)

Each group will be required to prepare an academic poster that displays their groups' research topic, presents central research questions, highlights key literature and theoretical frameworks, and presents ethical considerations, methodology, methods, and a proposed data analysis plan. Students are expected to work on their posters throughout the course. There will be class sessions dedicated to working on posters as a group.

On March 26th, each group will display a poster in class and class members will circulate to ask each other questions and listen to the poster presentations of their peers. The course instructor will visit each group separately. While the instructor is evaluating a group, all members of the group are expected to be present to contribute to the discussion. An evaluation rubric will be provided in class. Should a group member be absent for the mini-conference, proof of absence will be required through the McMaster Student Absence protocol. In the event of a justified absence, students may be asked to present the poster separately to the instructor.

Class Participation and Attendance (Ongoing)

Participation will be based on attendance, preparedness (keeping up with readings), and participation in discussions, etc. Students are expected to attend all classes and actively contribute to class activities. Participation will be evaluated in terms of: consistency of

participation, the constructive provision of peer feedback, and preparation of questions and comments during lectures and course activities.

Weekly Topics

Week 1

January 4 – Introduction/Welcome: The first class will be devoted to discussing student's goals and expectations, providing an overview of the course, and reviewing course assignments and readings. This class will also briefly introduce students to applied health research.

Week 2

January 8 – Identifying an area of interest & Using literature review to define your topic and refine your research question. **Guest Lecture:** Rachel Weldrick, PhD Student, Department of Health, Aging & Society, McMaster University

January 11 – Literature searching & reviewing: Using McMaster's e-portal to search and review published literature. **Class will meet at the normal time at the Mills Library Wong e-classroom (L107)**

Week 3

January 15 – Theory-driven research: theoretical frameworks, knowledge paradigms, and the link to methodology. Choosing the right research method.

January 18 – Concept mapping Exercise/Group work: In this class, your group will begin to think about your potential research interests and topic for your final poster presentation as well as the research methods, theoretical framework, and overall research design.

Week 4

January 22 & 25– Research Ethics Workshop. **Guest Lecture:** Nikolas Caric, Senior Ethics Advisor at McMaster University.

Week 5

January 29 – Designing a Qualitative Study: Thinking Qualitatively

February 1 – In this class your group will work to refine and compile a final list of sources for your annotated bibliography. This will help you to begin to refine your research topic into a concise research question.

Week 6

February 5 – Data Collection: Ethnography & Fieldwork. **Guest Lecture:** Nicole Dalmer, PhD Student, Library & Information Science, Western University

February 8 – Data Collection: Qualitative Interviewing & Focus Groups

Week 7

February 12 – Writing a Proposal & Putting Together an Academic Poster

February 15 – Partnership & Community-Engaged Research

Week 8

February 19 & 22 – READING WEEK

Week 9

February 26 – Arts-based Research & Photovoice: Participatory Approaches to Health Research

March 1 – In this class you will work with your group to come up with captions for your photographs, and identify common themes or sub-themes that reflect the significance and meaning of the photographs from your photography assignment.

Week 10

March 5 – Designing a Quantitative Study & Using SPSS – **Guest Lecture:** Julia Woodhall-Melnik, Class will meet in the SPSS Lab in KTH (tentative).

March 8 – Group Work, Poster Presentation Preparation

Week 11

March 12 – Disseminating Results & Knowledge Translation

March 15 – Digital Dissemination – KMB & Your Digital Presence. **Guest Lecture:** Stephanie Hatzifilialithis, PhD Student, Department of Health, Aging & Society, McMaster University

Week 12

March 19 – Qualitative Analysis

March 22 – Group work, Poster Presentations & Mini Conference Preparations

Week 13

March 26 & 29 – Mini conference with Poster Presentations & Course Wrap-up

Grading

Grades for each course requirement will be added together at the end of the term. The final total will be translated into the following letter grade according to the grading system documented below:

McMaster University Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

A range: Between excellent and exceptional work that combines the following characteristics in differing degrees: a superior grasp of course material, both conceptual and substantive; a

strong analytic reading of written materials used; some original insights and in general very thoughtful; and exceptional writing skills.

B range: Strong, good work that combines the following characteristics in differing degrees: a firm grasp of course material, by and large, though there are some minor errors or a competent analytic reading of written materials used; not especially original but well considered; and competent writing skills.

C range: Average work that displays the following characteristics in differing degrees: perhaps shaky but passable understanding of course material; largely reiterative or summative (rather than analytic) reading of written material; displays a moderate effort to think through issues; shaky but intelligible writing skills.

D to F range: Poor work that displays the following characteristics in differing degrees: Student appears to have made little to no effort to tackle lecture or reading materials; misunderstands them fairly seriously; has poor writing skills.

Policies & Procedures

Class communication, E-mail & Office Hours

You may contact me by e-mail at paceje@mcmaster.ca. Please include the course code (HLTH AGE 3B03) in the subject line, and your full name and student number in the body of the e-mail. I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). General questions that might be answered by other students should be posted in the discussion section of Avenue to Learn.

In the context of a university course, e-mail is a mode of professional communication. Please use proper etiquette when composing messages. For example, please provide a salutation (Dear Dr. Pace), use full sentences and proper punctuation, be polite, and refrain from using informal abbreviations.

A note about e-mail: If you have a complex question, it is often easier and more productive to discuss the question in person during office hours or in class instead of by e-mail. I am available for weekly office hours (Thursdays, 1-3pm, KTH 234) and am happy to meet at other times by appointment.

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 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.

Computers & Cell Phones

You are welcome to bring your laptop with you to class, but when in class you should only be using your word-processing program. Please keep all electronic social networking and texting out of the classroom. This behaviour is potentially disruptive to other students and can impact their learning experience. If necessary, I reserve the right to ask students who are breaking this policy to turn off their devices or leave the classroom.

Submission of Assignments

All written work is to be submitted on Avenue to Learn or in hard copy during the class period on the due date (submission type is indicated above for each assignment). Do not submit your work by e-mail and do not put it under the instructor's door. Late assignments will be penalized 3% per day (including weekends) up to one week past the due date, after which time late submissions will not be accepted unless an extension has been granted. Late penalties will be waived if the office of the Associate Dean of Social Sciences notifies the instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date. If you require an extension, please speak with your instructor well in advance of the assignment due date.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Please familiarize yourself with revisions to the university policy for the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF).*

Return of Assignments

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves. Tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. The instructor will arrange for you to pick up your assignments in person during scheduled office hours. You may also provide the Professor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of assignments by mail.

Review of Marks

A great deal of time and attention will be spent grading your assignments and effort will be made to provide clear feedback about your work. If you would like additional feedback, please book an appointment with the instructor. If you disagree with the mark you are given and wish to contest the grade assigned, you will need to indicate this to the instructor in writing. Please adhere to the following procedure: submit a one page, single-spaced, type-written letter to the instructor (hard copy only) which explains why you believe you deserve an improved mark. Use the grading rubric and examples from your work to support your argument. Please note that your instructor may choose to *increase* or *decrease* your original assignment grade following a review of marks.

University Policies

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society at 905.525.9140 ext. 27227 or hasdept@mcmaster.ca

Academic Integrity

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 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.

Course Modification

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. Please check the website at least once a week for announcements.

Avenue to Learn

Important note: This course uses Avenue to Learn to post the course outline, assignments and other notices. Please ensure that you know how to log on to Avenue to Learn and that you check the site on a regular basis for course updates.

In this course, we will be using Avenue to Learn. 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.