

**Course Outline**  
**Environment and Society 4HH3**

# **Environment and Health**

School of Earth, Environment and Society  
McMaster University  
*Fall 2020*

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Office Location: In a cramped basement closet. Sorry, you can't meet me here.  
Office hours: Through **zoom** appointment - Please email me for a time

## **Course objectives**

- Enhance understanding about scientific and social dimensions of environment and human health
- Learn about the methods used in environmental health research and practice
- Learn about the interpretation and communication of environmental health information

## **Course Delivery**

- There will be two regularly scheduled live **synchronous Zoom virtual lectures** every week, each of which will run about 40 to 50 minutes. Virtual lectures will use Zoom with the instructor as the primary lecturer sometimes assisted by TA moderators.
- Each virtual lecture will be uploaded to Avenue in the week following the date the lecture was held. This time delay allows for video editing.
- Most weeks there will be one scheduled synchronous **Zoom virtual tutorial** with a TA which will run between 30 and 50 minutes
- There is no course textbook, but there is a reading list (see section 13). Readings should be done throughout the course term to ensure students are up to date on lecture material.

## **Course assessment**

- Assignment 1 (**10%**)
- Assignment 2 (**35%**)
- Tutorial exercises (total **10%** based on 10 tutorial assignments/exercises of **1%** each)
- Online presentation (**10%**)
- In class fun quizzes! (**5%**)
- Final exam (**30%**)

### **3.1 Assignment 1: General health risk assessment report (due in mid-October 10%)**

This is a **750** word report that assesses and describes the general risk of a potential hazard to human health. The purpose of the assignment is to reinforce research skills, as well as help students write a concise and well organized report. Research should be based on peer reviewed journal articles and official government reports (from Health Canada, the CDC and other major agencies). Students will be

able to pick a topic from a proposed topic list, or choose their own topic if approved by the instructor and their TA.

### 3.2 Assignment 2: Site specific health risk assessment report (due in late-November 35%)

This is a site-specific assessment of the risks of a specific hazard in a specific community. ***Students will be able to pick a topic from a proposed topic list, or choose their own topic if approved by the instructor and their TA.***

### 3.3 Tutorial exercises (10%)

Most tutorials involve an exercise, quiz, discussion or other in-class activity. The purpose is to reinforce content, cover some course content in more detail, and cover some ideas we can't get to in lectures. For some tutorials you may be required to do short readings or other work in preparation ahead of time. None of this preparation should take more than 15 minutes of your time. This work is important to prepare you for the tutorials, and all students are asked to complete these tasks prior to class. The following table outlines the required work ahead of the tutorials. Tutorial grading is based on the work done in the tutorial session.

### 3.4 Online presentation (10%)

Each student will make an informative and dynamic pre-recorded video presentation (5-10 minutes in length) that summarizes your site specific health risk assessment. This needs to be completed by the end of term (the last class). It will be available for the whole class to view online.

### 3.5 In class fun quizzes (5%)

Periodically there will be live in-class quizzes. These are easy ways to get marks and engage with class material, and are not meant to be overly challenging as long as you show up and participate!

### 3.6 Final exam (30%)

There is a final exam in this course. Details will be discussed in class prior to the end of term.

## **Missing quizzes, exams and late lab assignments**

**McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):** 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".

**For missed quizzes and missed labs** use the McMaster student absence form (MSAF) on-line, self-reporting tool. Undergraduate students may report medical-related absences lasting up to **3** days using MSAF. The submission of medical or other types of supporting documentation is normally not required. Students may use this tool to submit a maximum of one request for relief of missed academic work per term. ***Once you use this form, you must email me ([yiannan@mcmaster.ca](mailto:yiannan@mcmaster.ca)) to notify me of your missed quiz or lab within two working days.***

### **Students who miss the midterm exam cannot use the on-line, self-reporting tool to request relief.**

University policy states that for assignments or exams worth 25% or more of the final mark students cannot use the self reporting tool to request relief. If you miss the midterm, you **MUST IMMEDIATELY** report to your Faculty Office (the Associate Dean's office of your Faculty) to discuss your situation and will be required to

provide appropriate supporting documentation. After you have contacted the Faculty Office, email ***notify me (via email) that you have done so.***

#### *Other important info*

- If you miss a quiz, **and** you have used the self-reporting MSAF tool within 3 days, the quiz grade weight gets shifted to the final exam.
- If a lab assignment is submitted late, or missed, **and** you have used the self-reporting MSAF tool within 3 days, the lab grade weight gets shifted to the final exam.
- If you miss a quiz or fail to submit a lab on time and do not use the self reporting tool within 3 days of the due date, you get a '0' grade.
- Bonus labs must be completed on time to be graded; you cannot use MSAF for the bonus labs.
- If you fail to contact ***me that you have submitted your MSAF form*** within 3 days of your late/missed quiz/lab assignment/exam you get a '0' grade.

### **Policy regarding 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. **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.

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 Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

## **Copyright and recording**

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.

## **Extreme circumstances**

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

## **Courses with an online element**

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.

## **Online proctoring**

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

## **Statements on course ethos and the rights of students**

McMaster is committed to an inclusive and respectful community. These principles and expectations extend to online activities including electronic chat groups, video calls and other learning platforms. If you are concerned about your virtual classroom experiences, the Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) is available to advise and assist students who may be experiencing any equity, accessibility, inclusion, harassment, discrimination or sexual violence concerns. You can reach the EIO at [equity@mcmaster.ca](mailto:equity@mcmaster.ca). Thank you for joining us in ensuring that our McMaster online communities are spaces where no one feels excluded and everyone is able to enjoy learning together.

## *McMaster University Statement on Inclusivity and Academic Integrity:*

The University values integrity, inclusiveness and teamwork, and strives to support the personal and collective growth of the McMaster student community. These values are foundational to ensuring campus environments – both in-person and virtual – are conducive to personal wellbeing and academic success.

### *Inclusivity and a Culture of Respect*

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”) [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#). 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.

Additional information about the Code and netiquette can be found [here](#).

### **Academic accommodation of students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto: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**

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.

### **Changes to the course outline**

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 their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## Avenue to Learn and other online tools

We will be using *Zoom*, *Avenue to Learn* and *Google Drive* in this course. Students **must ensure that they have working A2L and Gmail accounts** in order to complete labs. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames associated with McMaster email 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.

## Course readings

The list of course readings provides essential background material for the course. This material should be read in the recommended week. If a student does not have time to read the whole reading in a particular week, then at least skimming the content is important. The reading material provides important context for the class lectures and assignments, and the instructor will assume that students are familiar with the content.

Date	Topic	Reading	Access
Week 1	The Epidemiologic Transition	The Epidemiologic Transition: Changing Patterns of Mortality and Population Dynamics (McKeown 2009)	<a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2805833/pdf/nihms134943.pdf">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2805833/pdf/nihms134943.pdf</a>
Week 2	Determinants of health in the city	Urban Environmental Health Hazards and Health Equity (Kjellstrom et al., 2007)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nqOveVJKxC_qvSndtXipfhOfpxnlNSnx/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nqOveVJKxC_qvSndtXipfhOfpxnlNSnx/view?usp=sharing</a>
Week 3	Concepts in Epidemiology	A glossary for social epidemiology (Krieger 2001)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZYwNsFWP7aWwllLnsnbWcU6Xb-o8K-Qs/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZYwNsFWP7aWwllLnsnbWcU6Xb-o8K-Qs/view?usp=sharing</a>
Week 4	Study designs	Principles of Study Design in Environmental Epidemiology (Morgenstern and Thomas 1993)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uwSxLtA79SXysiNNC96_RjBPWpUnShEr/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uwSxLtA79SXysiNNC96_RjBPWpUnShEr/view?usp=sharing</a>
Week 5	Understanding risk	Grimes and Schulz (2008) Making sense of odds and odds ratios	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fbw7mAEjs1XIRIJMqYltBKE3IJGsEqI/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fbw7mAEjs1XIRIJMqYltBKE3IJGsEqI/view?usp=sharing</a>
Week 7	Toxicology	Chapter 1. Introduction to Toxicology Hodgson (2004)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/181oveXQ1QqTeV3lzmQFG3U11qRVXvTqN/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/181oveXQ1QqTeV3lzmQFG3U11qRVXvTqN/view?usp=sharing</a>
Week 8	TBA	TBA	TBA
Week 9	TBA	TBA	TBA