

HLTH AGE 4Z06

Term 3

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Course Description

Students are given a choice of one of three thesis experiences, based on their own goals and interests. One is oriented to developing expertise in academic knowledge and understanding; another in practice and program issues; the third in the process of knowledge production.

Option 1: Theses in Published Theory and Knowledge in Health and/or Aging

This option has the student integrate theory and knowledge in a substantive area. Working with an academic supervisor, the student and supervisor would choose current literature in a specific area of interest. They would be expected to analyze, synthesize, evaluate and summarize the material they are reading.

Option 2: Theses Experience in Health or Social Care Practice

This option involves the student working with a community supervisor to develop, implement and evaluate a program through the collection and analysis of data. Students could work in teams, depending on the scope of the project. Programs might be located in settings where the student has existing contacts.

Option 3: Theses Experience in Research/Inquiry

This option sees students working with a supervisor to develop a research question, determine appropriate research methodology, collect data, analyze the data and write up the project in a traditional research thesis format.

Topic and supervisor selection:

Students choose their own topic and then recruit a faculty member (not necessarily in Health, Aging and Society) or a community-based mentor as their supervisor. The Thesis Coordinator grant approval for a supervisor who is not a McMaster faculty member.

Students might develop an independent project or link into the supervisor's ongoing research.

Ethics approval:

All research involving direct contact (in person, by phone, or by mail) with human subjects **must** be approved by the McMaster Student Ethics Committee. If you are working on a project for which your supervisor has already obtained University ethics approval, you will not need to go through this step. If you are unclear as to whether your project requires ethics approval, discuss the matter with the Thesis Coordinator. You may obtain an ethics form online at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/ors/ethics/>. **Please note that ethics approval can take 4+ weeks.**

Course Objectives

The thesis course allows students to develop and conduct a research project of their own choosing. By the end of the course students should be able to conduct all phases and aspects of the research process including proposals, literature reviews, ethics (if applicable), data collection (if applicable), analysis and synthesis, oral presentation, poster presentation, report/thesis writing.

Required Materials and Texts

Because of the individualized nature of the projects, there are no required materials or texts. Supervisors will advise on readings.

Class Format

Dispersed seminars and individual meetings throughout the academic year

Course Evaluation – Overview

Proposal and Literature Review (marked by Supervisor) **25%**

Proposal and Literature Review 15 min Presentation (marked by Thesis Coordinator) **10%**

Poster (marked by Class and Thesis Coordinator) **10%**

Full Thesis (marked by Supervisor) **55%**

Course Requirements, Deadlines and Evaluation – Details

Supervisor Information Sheet and Project Approval Form (at the end of this document) must be submitted to the Thesis Coordinator at the first class or at the first individual meeting with them.

A 12-15 page Proposal and Literature Review must be submitted both to the Supervisor (directly) and Thesis Coordinator (via the department office) on **NOVEMBER 15th**. Your supervisor will need to inform the coordinator of your grade by **DECEMBER 6th**.

A completed ethics approval form (if required) must be submitted to the Thesis Coordinator (via the department office) **ON NOVEMBER 22nd, (or as soon as possible thereafter)**.

The thesis must be handed in to your supervisor **NO LATER THAN MARCH 27th**. Plan ahead to meet the deadline. You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to hand in a draft of the thesis ahead of that time so that the supervisor can provide comments that you can incorporate into the final version. Your supervisor will need to inform the coordinator of your grade by **APRIL 10TH**

The **FINAL COPY** of the thesis must then be submitted (by either you or your supervisor) to the Thesis Coordinator, before grades can be submitted to the Registrar. Grades are normally submitted to the registrar **WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES**. Keep in mind that this copy of the thesis will remain in the Program Archives.

TWO (2) bound copies are required: one for your supervisor, and one for the Thesis Coordinator. A **THIRD** copy (not bound) should be given to your supervisor for marking; this copy will be returned to you with notes/comments on it. If you want a clean copy for yourself (and you likely will), keep a **FOURTH** copy for yourself.

Weekly Course Schedule (in the designated lecture room unless otherwise stated)

September 9: lecture on course requirements

September 16: lecture on ethics proposals (with Nick Caric)

September 23: individual meetings - in KTH 225 - to discuss thesis proposals (signup sheets)

September 30: individual meetings - in KTH 225 - to discuss thesis proposals (signup sheets)

October 21: oral presentations of thesis proposals and literature reviews to class (signup sheets)

October 28: oral presentations of thesis proposals and literature reviews to class (signup sheets)

November 25: individual meetings – in KTH 225 - to discuss thesis progress (signup sheets)

December 2: individual meetings – in KTH 225 - to discuss thesis progress (signup sheets)

February 3: lecture on thesis posters (See Appendix II)

March 9: present thesis posters (See Appendix II)

Course Policies

MAIN THESIS FORMAT:

The thesis should be printed using letter-quality type on 8½" x 11" good quality paper. Textual material must be double-spaced; footnotes and long quotations should be single-spaced.

The first line of each paragraph and of each footnote should be indented five (5) spaces. Each chapter or division should begin 2" from the top of a new page, as should also the Table of Contents, the Abstract, a List of Illustrations, and the Bibliography. All other pages should have top and left-hand margins 1½" wide and a right-hand margin of

1" wide. The last line of the page, whether of text or footnote, should be no less than 1" from the bottom.

All pages are to be numbered except the half-title page, which is disregarded in the pagination, and the title page, on which the number (i) is implied but not given. For the remaining pages of the preliminaries, lower-case Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.) are centered $\frac{3}{4}$ " above the bottom of the page. For the first page of each chapter or section, Arabic numerals (1, 23, 56, etc.) are similarly centered at the bottom of the page.

On all other pages of the text and reference matter, Arabic numerals should be in the top right-hand corner, 1" below the top of the page (this includes maps, tables, etc.).

SEQUENCE:

A thesis normally comprises the following parts, arranged in this order:

(a) **Title Page**: The material on the title page is arranged symmetrically on either side of an imaginary vertical line $4\frac{1}{2}$ " from the left side of the page. Spacing and capitalization should be like those in the sample attached.

(b) **Descriptive Note**: To consist of degree and year; department; University name and location; full title in lower case; full name of author; supervisor; number of pages. To be numbered ii.

(c) **Abstract**: An abstract of not more than one page shall be included and shall indicate the major emphasis of the thesis, new discoveries and its contribution to knowledge. To be numbered iii.

(d) **Acknowledgments**: An expression of thanks for assistance given by the supervisor and by others should be set forth on a separate page. To be numbered in lower case Roman numerals.

(e) **Table of Contents**: A list of the major divisions in the thesis indicating their page numbers.

(f) **List of Tables**: A list of the titles of tables, with page numbers.

(g) **List of Figures**: A list of the titles of figures (illustrated charts), with page numbers

The main body of the thesis should be approximately forty (40) pages in length and should normally consist of the following four (4) parts:

(1) **Introduction and Literature Review**: This includes a brief (1 - 2 pages) introduction which sets up the topic and tells the reader in general terms what the purpose of the thesis is and how the research was done. The literature review (15 - 18 pages) presents relevant previous research, relates the research to your topic, and is synthesized so as

to show both what is known and what still needs to be examined (i.e., show how your thesis will fill a gap in knowledge). Following the literature review, if appropriate, you should have a section on the theoretical approach you will use and/or describe the major concepts you will use. The end of part 1 should include a section, Research Questions. List the specific questions (1 - 5) that your thesis will ask and seek to answer, in order to address the gap in knowledge you have identified through your literature review. Note that this section takes your overall topic and breaks it into researchable questions. If appropriate for your thesis, also list your hypotheses in this section.

(2) **Method:** This section informs the reader of the methodological approaches to be used in the investigation. This includes (as appropriate): setting, sample, measures, and methods of analysis.

(3) **Results:** This section deals with the findings of the investigation. It provides the kind of data that enable the reader to make independent judgements regarding the nature and quality of the investigation. Your presentation of the results should reflect the research questions posed in part 1.

(4) **Discussion:** The discussion presents the major findings and interprets them in the light of the issues raised in the Introduction and Literature Review.

References: Use the format of one style manual (e.g., American Psychological Association).

Appendices: Appendices may include lists of materials, data, or whatever the supervisor deems appropriate.

SUGGESTED MARKING SCHEME:

The following guidelines have been suggested to supervisors:

Introduction and Literature Review 15

Methods 10

Results 30

Discussion 25

Style 5

Process 15*

Total 100

* Process refers to such things as student participated in regular meetings (at least once a month), completed tasks on schedule, followed through on supervisor's suggestions, revisions, etc.

15 MINUTE ORAL PRESENTATION AND POSTER:

Present an overview of your project to the class. Be prepared to answer questions from the class and the Thesis Coordinator. Provide the class with a handout providing an overview.

Poster requirements and content will be covered in the corresponding lecture.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be reduced by 5% a day unless approval is gained from the supervisor

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Absences, missed work and illness must be discussed with the supervisor

Avenue to Learn

In this course we might 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.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy 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 to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior 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 behavior 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 credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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](#).

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

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.

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.

PROJECT APPROVAL FORM
THESIS, HEALTH AGING AND SOCIETY

This form is to be completed by the student and signed by the student **AND** the Supervisor, and must be submitted to the Course Coordinator. The study will extend over two terms.

1. **NAME:** _____ **I.D.#:**

2. **ADDRESS:**

Postal Code

TELEPHONE NO.: () -

Area Code

3. **TERM OF REGISTRATION:**

Term I _____ Term II _____ Summer _____

Beginning Date:

Ending Date:

4. **TOPIC:**

5. **BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:**

(attach you one page description)

6. **SIGNATURES:**

Date: _____

Student

Date: _____ Faculty Supervisor

Date:

Course Coordinator

THESIS: HEALTH, AGING AND SOCIETY
**** REQUIRED ****

SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

**THIS FORM IS TO BE COMPLETED IN FULL BY THE STUDENT AND/OR SUPERVISOR,
AND MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE STUDENT TO THE COURSE COORDINATOR.**

STUDENT NAME:

I.D. #:

SUPERVISOR:

NAME:

TITLE: (e.g., Dr. Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc.)

POSITION:

WORK ADDRESS (including postal code):

PHONE NUMBER: ()

FAX NUMBER: ()

COMPLETE E-MAIL ADDRESS: