

HLTHAGE 4D03: HEALTH, CULTURE AND DIVERSITY Fall 2022

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Course Description

Culture is one of the determinants of health. People's understanding and experiences of health, illness and health care are greatly influenced by their cultural beliefs; and culture informs the construction of the health and social systems that respond to people's health needs. Hence, understanding of the intersection between culture and health, and the complexities of culture is relevant to the development of any effective health program. Using the concept of culture as an integral framework for understanding people's health behaviors, this course discusses the cultural role of institutions and healers, construction of health risks and the moral dimensions of cultural beliefs and the impact these may have on influencing health behavior.

Since culture permeates several areas of our daily lives, this seminar will build on students' lived experiences and examples from the local and global community, to learn how the concepts they have learned could be applied to real-life situations.

The learning modes will predominantly comprise of brief introductory overviews, group discussions, out of class activities and class presentations.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able:

- To reflect on their own cultural lens, biases and foster cultural awareness
- To articulate the key notions and complexities of culture, its diversity, pluralism and how it intersects with health.
- To explain and apply the concepts, and tools that are used in examining the relationship between culture and health.
- Apply the theoretical concepts to critically analyze the approaches used in current public health programs and research.

Required Materials and Texts

1. Electronic copies of all other required readings are available on the Mac library system

Required text:

Edberg M. (2023) Essentials of Health, Culture, and Diversity. Understanding people, reducing disparities. Second Edition, Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC. Burlington, MA, ISBN: 9781284226256| © 2023 | 250 pages (Also available as e-Text)

Class Format

This is a seminar course and will employ a mixture of learning strategies. These will include a synchronous on line component, traditional lectures, Student led discussions as well as an asynchronous learning aspect.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Seminar Participation: 15%
2. Introspective reflection: 20%
3. Group Seminar Facilitation: 10%
4. Cross-cultural experience and reflection: 20%
5. Final Essay: 35%

Course Evaluation – Details

Seminar Participation (15%)

Since this is a seminar course, in-person participation is important to student learning. Your participation can include – but is not limited to – being present in class, asking questions, contributing meaningfully, posting questions or responses on the class discussion board (10%).

Submissions of the individual cultural experience reflections (5%).

Introspective Reflection Paper (20 %) – Due: October 10th @ 11.59 pm.

One of the antecedents of cross-cultural competence is being aware of one's own culture. This paper will help you reflect on your **individual cultures (based on Wiegl's the framework) and your interaction with the "others"**. You will write a short (2.5 single spaced or **five** double-spaced) paper reflecting on your own culture and how you think your culture may have influenced your interaction with people from 'other' cultures. You will be expected to integrate the material you have learnt from week 1- week 5. In addition to the course material, you will provide 5 additional references. In your discussion, provide specific real-life examples.

Group Seminar Facilitation (10%) – Due Date: Various

Students will take turns in facilitating the seminar discussions. During the first two classes, students will form groups. They will choose a week when they will lead a seminar discussion.

The facilitators for each week will:

- 1) Read and summarize all the readings, and develop discussion questions
- 2) Lead the class in discussing the seminar material and how the media represents the topic.

The student should plan to provide an overview of about 15 minutes. The quality of the facilitation will be evaluated in terms of

- How well the seminar content reflected the seminar objectives;
- Clarity and interest of the slides

- Ability to link the ideas within the different readings
- Degree to which the questions facilitate engagement in discussions

Refer to: [Rasmussen \(1984\)](#) for guidance on developing good questions that promote discussion: Reference: Copy and paste in your browser.
(<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.422.4795&rep=rep1&type=pdf>)

Seminar facilitators should post their material or their recording and any additional facilitation material on A2L **by the Thursday before** the seminar on Monday.

Cross Cultural “Experience” and Reflection (20%) – Nov. 4th - Nov.25th

It is difficult to learn about diversity without confronting individuals from other cultures. This cultural “experience” will provide students with an opportunity to meet and engage with people from different cultures and the organizations that work with them. Based on the topic of their choice (based on the class discussions- different from the one they presented on). At the beginning of the course, students will choose a “cultural” experience they want to engage in:

Option 1: (Off- Campus): In groups according to their choice, students will independently seek an organization that addresses **aspects of the topic they have chosen** and caters to people from varying cultures e.g. the YWCA, a health clinic, Good Shepherd center, Mission services e.t.c.

Option 2: (On- Campus): In pairs, students will identify a university service that addresses **aspects of the topic they have chosen** and cater to students from different cultures e.g. the athletics center, student wellness center, the student center

Option 3: To be discussed in class

Cultural Engagement (10%)

All group members are expected to participate in the cultural engagement. In addition to each member evaluating the other members’ contributions, individual assignments will be used to evaluate individual’s engagement.

Cultural Experience Media Post (10%) – Due: Nov 25th.

Between weeks 4 -8, students will identify and engage in intermittent cultural experience, to identify the relevant cultural groups represented and their perceptions of the topic you have chosen. Based on their experiences within the context, the literature, and the media student will *develop messaging to effectively raise awareness of some of the cross-cultural issues associated with the topic you were allocated with a focus on the cultures that are represented in your placement context, they will also identify a*

media platform (either face book, twitter, Blog, YouTube, Instagram...) where they will post their information.

Students will:

- 1) Review ALL the material associated with the allocated topic
- 2) Review the literature and find one media source (each), which discusses the topic to gain an understanding of how the public may perceive the topic.
- 3) Choose an appropriate social media platform, develop messaging and use the platform to raise awareness about their health issue for their cultural context.

The media post will be evaluated on:

- 1) Topical Content
- 2) Presentation
- 3) Appropriateness of the platform and strategy and Clarity of messaging
- 4) Sensitivity to the relevant cultural aspects of their topic and context.

Research Essay (35%) – Due: Dec. 5th @ 11.59 pm.

This final paper should demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have gained throughout the course, and will build on your “cultural” experience. **Details of the essay will be provided and discussed in class.** The paper should be 10 -12 double spaced pages (5-6ss pages).

The final essay requires you to consult **at least ten scholarly sources published between 2010- 2022** (e.g. scholarly journals, research reports and books).

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION: CULTURE, ME AND THE OTHERS (Week 1 - 5)

Week 1 (Sept. 12): Course Overview and Introduction: Defining Culture and Health: Concepts, Rationale and Complexity

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 1 & 2
- 2) Isaak, CA. & Marchessault (2008) "Meaning of Health: The perspectives of Aboriginal adults and youth in a Northern Manitoba First Nations community" *Canadian Journal of Diabetes* 32 (2): 114- 122
- 3) Eckersley R. (2006). Is modern Western culture a health hazard? *Int J Epidemiol.* 35:252–8. doi: 10.1093/ije/dyi235

Optional: <https://www.euromedinfo.eu/how-culture-influences-health-beliefs.html/>.

Individual post: *What does health and culture mean to you?*

Week 2 (Sept. 19): Understanding Your Own Culture

Readings:

- 1) Weigl RC. Intercultural competence through cultural self-study: A strategy for adult learners *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33 (2009) 346–360
- 2) McIntosh, P. (1990). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. Available from: <https://uucsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/White-Privilege- Unpacking-the-Invisible-Knapsack.pdf>

Individual task: *Use the readings to reflect on your own culture.*

Week 3 (Sept. 26th): Understanding the “Others” and Intercultural Communication

Readings:

- 1) The danger of a single story – TED talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs241zeg&ab_channel=TED
- 2) How miscommunication happens,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCfzeONu3Mo&t>
- 3) Barna, L. (1994). Six Stumbling Blocks in Intercultural Communication. Available from: [http://pharmacy304.pbworks.com/f/Barna,+L.M.+\(1994\).pdf](http://pharmacy304.pbworks.com/f/Barna,+L.M.+(1994).pdf)

Individual task: *What are some of the blocks you have experienced in your communicating with people from other cultures?*

Week 4 (Oct. 3rd): Culture and Cultural Sensitivity/Humility

Readings:

- 1) Foronda, C. L. (2008). A concept analysis of cultural sensitivity. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 19, 207-212
- 2) Gregg, J., & Saha, S. (2006). Losing culture on the way to competence: The use and misuse of culture in medical education. *Academic Medicine*, 81, 542-547
- 3) Jennifer Abe, Beyond Cultural Competence, Toward Social Transformation: Liberation Psychologies and the Practice of Cultural Humility, *Journal of Social Work Education*, 10.1080/10437797.2019.1661911, (1-12), (2019).
- 4) View: Cultural Humility: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaSHLbS1V4w>

Optional: Jowsey T. Three zones of cultural competency: surface competency, bias twilight, and the confronting midnight zone *BMC Medical Education* (2019) 19:306 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1746-0>

Individual post: *What does cultural humility mean to you?*

Week 5 (Oct. 10-16): Reading Week

SECTION II: TOOLS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND HEALTH (Week 6 - 9)

The 4 topics to be decided based on students' interests.

Weekly Schedule

Week 6 (Oct 17): Topic TBD from Topic List (see below)

Week 7 (Oct. 24): Topic TBD from Topic List (see below)

Week 8 (Oct. 31): Topic TBD from Topic List (see below)

Week 9 (Nov. 7): Topic TBD from Topic List (see below)

Individual task: *Individuals develop and post a 500-word summary based on the above information.*

Topic List

1. Ethnomedicine I: Cultural Health Systems

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 3
- 2) Ibeneme S, Eni G, Ezuma A, Fortwengel G. Roads to Health in Developing Countries: Understanding the Intersection of Culture and Healing. *Curr Ther Res Clin Exp*. 2017;86:13-18. Published 2017 Mar 4.
doi:10.1016/j.curtheres.2017.03.001
- 3) Kahissay, M., Fenta, T. & Boon, H. Beliefs and perception of ill-health causation: a socio-cultural qualitative study in rural North-Eastern Ethiopia. *BMC Public Health* 17, 124 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-017-4052-y>

2. Ethnomedicine II: Cultural Systems of Psychology and Mental/Emotional Health

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 4
- 2) Beneduce, R. "Madness and Despair are a Force": Global Mental Health, and How People and Cultures Challenge the Hegemony of Western Psychiatry. *Cult Med Psychiatry* 43, 710–723 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11013-019-09658-1>
- 3) Sotero, M. 2006. "A Conceptual Model of Historical Trauma: Implications for Public Health Practice and Research." *Journal of Health Disparities and Research Practice* 1(1): 93-108.

3. The Moral Dimension: The Relationship of Etiology to Morality in Cultural Beliefs and Practices Related to Health

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 5
- 2) Kleinman, Arthur and Rachel Hall-Clifford. Stigma: A social, cultural, and moral process. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 63(6).
<http://jech.bmj.com/>
- 3) Sigurosson G. ethics and ego: East-West perceptions of morality. *Icelandic E-journal of Nordic and Mediterranean studies*. Conference proceedings
<https://nome.unak.is/wordpress/09-2/c64-conference-paper/ethics-and-ego-east-west-perceptions-of-morality/>

4. Culture, Healers and the Institutions of Health

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 6
- 2) Bilby KM. & Handler JS. (2004) "Obeah: Healing and protection in West African slave life." *The journal of Caribbean History* 38(2):153-183

- 3) Robbins, Julian A., & Dewar, Jonathan. (2011). Traditional Indigenous Approaches to Healing and the Modern Welfare of Traditional Knowledge, Spirituality and Lands: A Critical Reflection on Practices and Policies taken from the Canadian Indigenous example. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*. 2(4). Article 2.

5. Socio-cultural Ecologies of Disease and Illness

Readings:

- 1) Textbook Chapter 7
- 2) Singer M. & Clair (2003). Syndemics and public health. Re-conceptualizing disease in bio- social context. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (4):423-441
- 3) Cowan, E., Khan, M.R., Shastry, S. et al. (2021). Conceptualizing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with opioid use disorder: an application of the social ecological model. *Addict Sci Clin Pract* 16, 4.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13722-020-00210-w>

6. Culture, Subculture, and Constructions of Health Risk

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 8
- 2) Sylvester Senyo Ofori-Parku (2020). Fifty years after surgeon general's report: cultural cognition, biased assimilation, and cigarette smoking risk perceptions among college students, *Health, Risk & Society*, 22:2, 156-176, DOI: 10.1080/13698575.2020.1769566
- 3) Saucier G. (2018). Culture, morality and individual differences: comparability and incomparability across species. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B* 373: 20170170.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2017.0170>

SECTION III: CULTURAL "EXPERIENCE": APPLYING THE TOOLS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND HEALTH (Week 10 - 12)

Week 10 (Nov. 14th): Synthesis of the Cultural Representations from the Placement Context and the Media Representation of Cultural Topic

Readings:

None.

Tasks:

- 1) Synthesize individual tasks to identify cultures, audiences, media platforms for presentation.
- 2) Group Presentation of (i) the cultures that are represented in their placement context and their perception of the allocated topic (ii) the social media

representation of topic (from 2 social media platforms), what is the main focus of the post? (ii) what is the target audience for the media posts (how is this audience similar to or different from the cultures that are represented in the placement context).

Week 11 (Nov. 21st): Facilitated Group Work on Communication Strategy

Review material from week 4.

Readings:

- 1) Kreuter MW, McClure SM.(2004) The role of culture in health communication. *Annu Rev Public Health.* 25:439-55. doi: 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.25.101802.123000. PMID: 15015929.
- 2) Airhihenbuwa CO, Iwelunmor J, Munodawafa D, Ford CL, Oni T, Agyemang C, Mota C, Ikuomola OB, Simbayi L, Fallah MP, Qian Z, Makinwa B, Niang C, Okosun I. Culture Matters in Communicating the Global Response to COVID-19. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2020 Jul 9;17:E60. doi: 10.5888/pcd17.200245. PMID: 32644918; PMCID: PMC7367065.
- 3) Elder JP, Ayala GX, Parra-Medina D, Talavera GA. (2009) Health communication in the Latino community: issues and approaches. *Annu Rev Public Health.* 30:227-51. doi: 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.031308.100300. PMID: 19296776.

Group Task: *Identify a communication strategy that your group would use, and develop messaging to effectively raise awareness of some of the cross-cultural issues associated with the topic you were allocated with a focus on the cultures that are represented in your placement context. Develop messaging, using the identified media strategy for presentation.*

Individual Task: *Reflect on the media representations of the topics discussed in class and the degree to which these align with your own perceptions and those of the cultures represented in your placement context.*

Week 12 (Nov. 28th): Group Presentations

1. Group presentations
2. Clarifications on the final paper

Week 13 (Dec. 5th): Final paper submission

Additional resources

Culture Dimensions in a Sample of Current Public Health Challenges and Integrating Cultural Dimensions in Public Health and Health Promotion Interventions

Readings:

- 1) Textbook, Chapter 9 & 11
- 2) Airhihenbuwa CO, Ford CL, Iwelunmor JI. Why culture matters in health interventions: lessons from HIV/AIDS stigma and NCDs. *Health Educ Behav.* 2014;41(1):78-84. doi:10.1177/1090198113487199
- 3) Bond, C., Brough, M., Spurling, G., & Hayman, N. (2012). "It had to be my choice" Indigenous smoking cessation and negotiations of risk, resistance and resilience. *Health, Risk, & Society*, 14(6), 565–581. [[Taylor & Francis Online](#)], [[Web of Science®](#)],
- 4) Jennifer Abe, Beyond Cultural Competence, Toward Social Transformation: Liberation Psychologies and the Practice of Cultural Humility, *Journal of Social Work Education*, 10.1080/10437797.2019.1661911, (1-12), (2019).
- 5) Health Research & Educational Trust. (2013, June). *Becoming a culturally competent health care organization*. Chicago, IL: Illinois. Health Research & Educational Trust Accessed at www.hpoe.org.
- 6) The Lewin Group, Inc. (2001). Health Resources and Services Administration Study on Measuring Cultural Competence in Health Care Delivery Settings: A Review of the Literature. Prepared under contract with the Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All written assignments should be typed: 1.5 spacing, Font size: 12pt, have a title page with the topic that is discussed in the paper, student's name and number, and course number. Where references are used, you are required to use the citation and referencing guidelines from the American Psychological Association. These guidelines are contained in the publication, Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (the references in the course guide roughly follow APA format).

Citations

I expect you to cite and properly reference any and all material taken from a secondary source. You must acknowledge every idea, fact, or analysis taken from another source and not just direct quotes. This includes ALL material that you use in your papers other than that based on your own ideas and analyses. This includes required course readings and paraphrases taken from a source. It is perfectly respectable to take an idea from another source and then develop that idea in your own way, or to use someone's method or structure and apply it to a new case so long as you indicate clearly what was derived from the original source and what is your own. Papers with poor referencing and acknowledgement of original sources will be marked down severely. Not acknowledging sources that you have used or acknowledging them only part of the time borders on plagiarism and may be treated as such. If in doubt, acknowledge the source.

Retention of work

I require that students keep ALL of their rough work for their essays and be able to produce this material on 24 hours' notice. In some cases, I will ask for this material to be submitted with your assignments. This includes rough notes, early drafts, etc. This is partly a protection for you. If there is any doubt over the grade assigned on a project, or if you decide to appeal a grade or if you happen to be charged with plagiarism, this work can provide a basis for settling the issue. Without it, you may not be given the benefit of the doubt. With it, the issue is easily resolved. You should keep this material until you have been notified of your grade for the course and decided that you are not going to appeal any grades. If you are using a word-processor, keep both your rough notes and early drafts.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-

MARK	GRADE
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

Assignments are to be submitted on A2L on, or before, the due date indicated. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. All papers submitted after the due date will be assessed at a 5% per day penalty.

Weekends will be treated as one day late. Please note that extensions will be permitted only if discussed with the instructor BEFORE the due date. If you are unable to hand-in a paper because of illness, please consult with the Dean's Office.

Course Modification

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. If any 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.

University Policies

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. **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

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.

Courses with an On-line 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.

Conduct Expectations

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.

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 to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests For Relief For Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#).

Academic Accommodation For Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students 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

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.

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.