

HLTH AGE 719

Fall 2022 – Winter 2023

Instructor: Dr. Diana Singh
Email: singhd22@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Monday: 2:30-5:20pm
Location: LRW 5001

Office: Virtual
Office Hours: By appointment

Contents

Course Description.....	3
Course Objectives.....	3
Required Materials and Texts	3
Class Format.....	3
Course Evaluation – Overview.....	4
Course Evaluation – Details.....	4
Assignment 1: Book Review (25%), due December 2, 2022	4
Assignment 2: Critical Reflections (15%), due weekly.....	4
Assignment 3: Health Equity Impact Assessment (40%), due TBD.....	4
Assignment 4: Health Equity Impact Assessment Presentations (20%), (due in class March 13 & 27, 2023)	4
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings	5
Week 1 (Sept. 12, 2022) Introduction to the Course.....	5
Week 2 (Sept. 19, 2022) Guest Lecture: Housing Security & Health.....	5
Week 3 (Oct. 3, 2022) Guest Speaker: Housing Security & Health	6
Week 4 (Oct. 17, 2022) Guest Lecture: Income Security & Health.....	6
Week 5 (Oct. 31, 2022) Guest Speaker: Income Security & Health.....	6
Week 6 (Nov. 14, 2022) Guest Lecture: Racialization & Health	6
Week 7 (Nov. 28, 2022) Guest Speaker: Racialization & Health	7
Week 8 (Jan. 9, 2023) Guest Lecture: Mental Health & Health Equity	7
Week 9 (Jan. 23, 2023) Guest Speaker: Mental Health & Health Equity	7
Week 10 (Feb. 6, 2023) Guest Lecture: Child Development & Health Equity	7
Week 11 (Feb. 27, 2023) Guest Speaker: Child Development & Health Equity	8
Week 12 (Mar. 13, 2023) Student Presentations 1	8
Week 13 (Mar. 27, 2023) Student Presentations 2.....	8
Course Policies	8

Submission of Assignments.....	9
Grades.....	9
Late Assignments	9
Absences, Missed Work, Illness	9
Avenue to Learn	9
University Policies	10
Academic Integrity Statement.....	10
Conduct Expectations.....	10
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	10
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)	11
Copyright and Recording	11
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy	11
Course Modification.....	11
Extreme Circumstances.....	12

Course Description

A substantial body of research shows that patterns of widening health inequalities are observed both locally and globally, are largely avoidable, transcend any particular disease category or organ system, and are attributable to a number of complex, interacting social, economic, cultural, and biophysical pathways. Efforts to achieve greater health equity require an ***interdisciplinary perspective***—one that builds on our understanding of the pathways underlying these patterns and helps guide more effective action for solutions to such equity.

This course provides a broad overview of interdisciplinary health equity issues that align with specific focal areas of the McMaster Institute for Health Equity (MIHE) and Initiative for Advanced Research on Mental Health and Society (ARMS). Topics will include definitions and theoretical perspectives on health equity, and health equity patterns and processes with a substantive focus on the following five areas, (1) Income Security and Health; (2) Housing and Health; (3) Healthy Child Development; (4) Racialization and Health, and (5) Health and Mental Health Equity. Students will have an opportunity to explore concepts of health equity generally, combined with the opportunity to focus more deeply on the health equity aspects of the substantive areas and topics listed above. Students in the course will gain skills in critical reflections (based on both scholarly journal publications and books), oral presentations, debate and group discussion, writing critical program/policy evaluations and assessments.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Understand dominant interdisciplinary frameworks and theoretical perspectives on health equity (ex. social determinants of health, the stress process model, disadvantage and disorder perspectives, life course perspectives, etc.)
- Describe health inequalities as it relates to issues surrounding income security, housing, child development, racialization, and mental health.
- Engage in critical discussion and policy-related debates in health equity using various critical frameworks and perspectives
- How to assess health equity issues and critically evaluate health policies and programs

Required Materials and Texts

- Readings for each week will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Class Format

The class will meet bi-monthly in-person. Students are expected to attend all class meetings having completed the assigned readings, and to participate in discussions.

Meetings are closely connected to MIHE and ARMS, and aligns with the thematic areas of the institute (listed above). Each theme will have two dedicated classes across the fall and winter semester. Specifically, there will be one class dedicated to a guest lecture on the topic from MIHE's faculty lead in the area. In the following class, students will attend the public talks hosted by MIHE & ARMS on the same theme—a part of the institute's annual speaker series. There will be five guest lectures and five public talks in total for this course.

On weeks where there is a guest lecture from a MIHE theme lead, students will meet with the course instructor in **LRW 5001**. On weeks where students are required to attend the MIHE's speaker series, the instructor will provide details about the location one week before the class (which may be either in-person or virtual). All in-person guest lectures and public talks will be on campus.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Book Review - 25% (due December 2, 2022)
2. Critical Reflections (on guest lectures and MIHE speaker series) – 15% (weekly)
3. Health Equity Impact Assessment - 40%, (TBD)
4. Health Equity Impact Assessment Presentation - 20% (due in class March 13, 27 2023)

Course Evaluation – Details

Assignment 1 (25%), due December 2, 2022

Book Review Assignment: In this assignment you will read a book related to one of the five themes of the course: There are many aspects of the complex health equity issues that are difficult to capture in a single article, and benefit from a longer, more in-depth examination. The book will be selected from a list of available books relevant to the substantive areas covered in the course. There is a wide variety of books to choose from. For your report, please limit it to 6-8 pages, typed, double-spaced (maximum 2,000 words) and properly referenced (if applicable). There is no prescribed structure for the book review, but it should generally be in the style of a scholarly book review that you would see in a journal (but much longer than a scholarly book review of course). Your book review should be more than just descriptive, it should also involve some critical analysis on your part. Examples of exemplary book reviews will be provided in the first part of the course.

Assignment 2 (15%), due weekly

Critical Reflections (on guest lectures and speaker series): You will submit a total of 4 (1 page) critical reflections on the presentations throughout the course. Please choose the presentations on which you will write critical reflection pieces. You are required to submit two reflections on the guest lectures and two reflections on the public talks (MIHE & ARMS speaker series).

Assignment 3 (40%), due (TBD)

The third assignment will be a Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) – a modified version of the HEIA from the Ontario Ministry of Health. The assignment will require you to research a program, policy, or service in the community (within Ontario) relevant to one of the five major themes from the course and conduct a report style version of the HEIA. You will then be asked to critically reflect on the usefulness of HEIA tool and make recommendations for modification of the tool.

Assignment 4 (20%), Presentations will be in class on March 23rd and 17th 2023

You will be asked to present on your impact assessment report with emphasis placed on your program evaluation plan and recommendations for modification to the tool. More details about the expectations for the presentations will be provided within the first few weeks of classes.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 12, 2022)

Introduction

Notes: The location for this class will be *L.R. Wilson 5001*.

Week 2 (September 19, 2022)

Topic: Housing Security & Health

Guest Lecture: Dr. Jim Dunn

Readings:

1. Swope, C. B., & Hernández, D. (2019). Housing as a determinant of health equity: A conceptual model. *Social Science & Medicine*, 243, 112571.
2. Dunn, J.R., Hayes, M.V., Hulchanski, D., Hwang, S.W. and Potvin, L. (2004) Housing as a socio-economic determinant of health: A Canadian research framework. In: Howden-Chapman, P. and Carroll, P. (eds.) *Housing & Health: Research, Policy and Innovation*. Wellington, New Zealand: Steele Roberts. pp. 12-39.
3. Andermann, A., Mott, S., Mathew, C. M., Kendall, C., Mendonca, O., McLellan, A., ... & Pottie, K. (2021). Evidence synthesis-evidence-informed interventions and best practices for supporting women experiencing or at risk of homelessness: A scoping review with gender and equity analysis. *Health promotion and chronic disease prevention in Canada: research, policy and practice*, 41(1), 1.

4. Beer, A., & Faulkner, D. (2011). Housing over the life course: housing histories, careers, pathways and transitions. *Housing transitions through the life course*, 15-38.

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 3 (October 3, 2022)

Topic: Housing Security & Health

Guest Speaker: Dr. Julia Woodhall-Melnik

Notes: This is an invited Public Talk hosted by MIHE and ARMS.

Week 4 (October 17, 2022)

Topic: Income Security & Health

Guest Lecture: Dr. Jim Dunn

Readings:

1. Fuller, A. E., Zaffar, N., Cohen, E., Pentland, M., Siddiqi, A., Vandermorris, A., ... & de Oliveira, C. (2022). Cash transfer programs and child health and family economic outcomes: a systematic review. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 1-13.
2. Hertzman, C., Frank, J., & Evans, R. G. (2017). Heterogeneities in health status and the determinants of population health. In *Why are some people healthy and others not?* (pp. 65-92). Routledge. [Available Online: McMaster Library]
3. Sinha, K., Davillas, A., Jones, A. M., & Sharma, A. (2021). Do socioeconomic health gradients persist over time and beyond income? A distributional analysis using UK biomarker data. *Economics & Human Biology*, 43, 101036.
4. Hertzman, C., & Boyce, T. (2010). How experience gets under the skin to create gradients in developmental health.

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 5 (October 31, 2022)

Topic: Income Security & Health

Guest Speaker: TBD

Notes: This is an invited Public Talk hosted by MIHE and ARMS.

Week 6 (November 14, 2022)

Topic: Racialization & Health

Guest Lecture: Dr. Lydia Kipiriri

Readings: TBD

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 8 (November 28, 2022)

Topic: Racialization & Health

Guest Speaker: Dr. Ingrid Waldron

Notes: This is an invited Public Talk hosted by MIHE and ARMS.

Week 8 (January 9, 2023)

Topic: Mental Health & Health Equity

Guest Lecture: Dr. Marisa Young (Department of Sociology)

Readings:

1. Wheaton, Blair, Marisa Young, Shirin Montazer and Catherine Stuart. 2012. "Social Stress in the 21st Century." Pp. 299-323 in Carol Aneshensel, Jo Phelan, Alex Bierman (eds.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*. New York, New York: Springer.
2. Kessler, Ronald C., Patricia A. Berglund, Olga Demler, Robert Jin, Kathleen R. Merikangas and Ellen E. Walters. 2005. "Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication." *Archives of General Psychiatry* 62(6):593-602.
3. Mirowsky, J., & Ross, C.E. (2017). *Social Causes of Psychological Distress* (2nd ed.). Routledge. "Basic and New Social Patterns. Selected pages from Pp. 75-156 (selected pages).. 3
4. Warren, John Robert. "Socioeconomic Status and Health across the Life Course: A Test of the Social Causation and Health Selection Hypotheses." *Social Forces* 87, no. 4 (2009): 2125-153. Accessed July 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40345010>.
5. Antony S. R. Manstead. 2018. The psychology of social class: How socioeconomic status impacts thought, feelings, and behaviour. *British Journal of Social Psychology* (2018), 57, 267–291.

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 9 (January 23, 2023)

Topic: Mental Health & Health Equity

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jane McLeod (Indiana University)

Notes: This is an invited Public Talk hosted by MIHE and ARMS.

Week 10 (February 6, 2023)

Topic: Child Development & Health Equity

Guest Lecture: Dr. Anne Fuller (Health Sciences, McMaster University)

Readings:

1. Garner, A., Yogman, M., & Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health. (2021). Preventing childhood toxic stress: partnering with families and communities to promote relational health. *Pediatrics*, 148(2).
2. Hertzman, C., & Wiens, M. (1996). Child development and long-term outcomes: a population health perspective and summary of successful interventions. *Social science & medicine*, 43(7), 1083-1095.
3. Shonkoff, J. P., Garner, A. S., Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption, and Dependent Care, and Section on Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Siegel, B. S., Dobbins, M. I., Earls, M. F., ... & Wood, D. L. (2012). The lifelong effects of early childhood adversity and toxic stress. *Pediatrics*, 129(1), e232-e246.
4. Slopen, N., & Heard-Garris, N. (2022). Structural racism and pediatric health—A call for research to confront the origins of racial disparities in health. *JAMA pediatrics*, 176(1), 13-15.

Supplementary Readings

1. Gromada, A., Rees, G., & Chzhen, Y. (2020). *Worlds of influence: Understanding what shapes child well-being in rich countries*. United Nations Children's Fund.

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 11 (February 27, 2023)

Topic: Child Development & Health Equity

Guest Lecture: Dr. Andrea Gonzalez (Department of Psychiatry, McMaster University)

Notes: This is an invited Public Talk hosted by MIHE and ARMS.

Week 12 (March 13, 2023)

Student Presentations 1

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

Week 13 (March 27, 2023)

Student Presentation 2

Notes: The location for this class will be **L.R. Wilson 5001**.

THE END

****NOTE: This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change****

(August 15, 2022)

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

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-
0-69	F

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be marked and the grade reduced by 5% per day for 5 days maximum.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Students are expected to attend every class. Absences must be reported to the Course Instructor prior to the class start time. Students who miss more than two classes for any reason will be required to complete extra work.

Avenue to Learn

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.

Online Proctoring

In this course we will 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.

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. **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 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.

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:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.