

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AGING AND SOCIETY
HLTH AGE 3R03: HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Clancy
Lectures: 8:30-10:20 Wednesdays
Friday from 10:30-11:20 on September 5 only

Email: clancysj@mcmaster.ca
Office: KTH 234
Office hours: Tuesdays 10-11am;
Wednesdays 10:30-12:15pm and
Thursdays 11:30-12:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine health inequalities. The first part of the course will focus on defining key concepts within the study of health inequalities, health inequities and determinants of health. In this part of the course, we will also examine the dominant theoretical perspectives used to analyze health inequalities, including: the psychosocial framework, materialist/political economy framework, the life course framework, and finally, the cultural and behavioral framework. In the second part of the course, we will explore the relationship between health inequalities and race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and geography. The final part of the course will explore ways to address health inequalities &, health inequities, such as intersectionality, sustainability action, surveillance, and other forms of policy and action.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Gain a critical understanding of the definitions and concepts associated with health inequality, inequity and determinants of health
- Gain a critical understanding of the dominant theoretical perspectives used to analyze health inequalities
- Gain a critical understanding of how to apply the dominant theoretical frameworks used to analyze health inequalities to real life health inequalities
- Explore the relationship that exists between determinants of health inequalities, such as race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and geography
- Gain knowledge on policies, sustainability plans, surveillance and other mechanisms to address health inequalities
- Improve research and writing skills through completion of the health inequalities journal and the final course assignment
- Engage in scholarly debate with classroom colleagues through in-class participation in lecture-based discussions

COURSE EVALUATION - OVERVIEW

Test 1 - 25%

Test 2 - 30%

Final assignment - 35%

Health inequalities journal - 10%

October 15, 2014

November 26, 2014

December 3, 2014

Work over the course of the term;
due on November 19

COURSE READINGS

1. COURSE TEXTBOOK (available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore)

Bartley, M., Blane, D. & Davey Smith, G. (Eds.). (1998). *The Sociology of Health Inequalities*. Maldan, Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd.,.

2. COURSE READINGS

Additional readings are available freely online or through McMaster Library Electronic Database

ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

COURSE FORMAT

Lectures will be held on **Wednesdays only** from 8:30-10:20am; **there will be no Friday lectures after the first class on September 5, 2014.** Lectures may include the use of video clips or movies, when applicable, to illustrate course material. We will also have in-class group-based discussions on course material presented in lecture throughout the term.

COURSE WEBSITE

This course will use Avenue to Learn (<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>). Please check the website frequently for class announcements and other important information. We may be using the site for posting of grades. More information will be provided in class.

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.

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

1. TEST 1 - 25% - ON OCTOBER 15, 2014

Test 1 will consist of multiple choice/true false questions, as well as short answer questions and will test your knowledge of both lecture material and assigned readings.

2. TEST 2 - 30% - ON NOVEMBER 26, 2014

Test 2 will consist of multiple choice/true false questions and will test your knowledge of both lecture material and assigned readings.

3. FINAL ASSIGNMENT - 35% - DUE ON DECEMBER 3, 2014 AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

In this final assignment, you will select a movie from the list provided (see assignment handout which will be posted on Avenue under the 'content' section during the first week of class). The list of provided movies were selected for their focus on one or multiple forms of health inequalities. The movie will be the basis for you to: explore health inequalities; explore theoretical frameworks to analyze health inequalities; examine the accuracy of the representation

of health inequalities presented in the film versus reality by conducting research on the topic; and, finally, critically reflecting on the social, economic, political and cultural changes that are necessary in order to address the health inequality/inequalities. Therefore, this is not a movie synopsis. This assignment requires theoretical application, research, analysis, and critical reflection.

4. HEALTH INEQUALITIES JOURNAL - 10% - OVER THE COURSE OF THE TERM - DUE ON NOVEMBER 19, 2014

Starting the week of September 9 through to the week of November 11 inclusive (10 weeks total), you are required to keep a health inequality journal. Each week, you must locate a news article, story, etc., that discusses a real-life case/occurrence of health inequalities on a local, national, or global scale. Articles/stories must be printed out with all sources properly referenced and kept as part of the journal. In addition, you are required to write a thoughtful, summative reflection on the news story collected. More information on the format and structure will be posted in Avenue during the first week of classes.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. COMPLETION OF ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS ARE MANDATORY TO PASS THE COURSE

Please submit your assignments (hard copies only) in class on the day that they are due. Faxed or emailed assignments will NOT be accepted.

Your assignments should be typed and double-spaced in either 10 or 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font. **The due dates for all assignments are fixed and non-negotiable.** There will be a **deduction of 10% per day** for all late assignments, including weekends (10% for the whole weekend). If an assignment is due on Wednesday, but handed in or after 12:00am on Thursday, the deduction will be 10% for that day and so on. Deductions are calculated per day, not per 24 hour period. **No assignments will be accepted 1 week after the due date.**

2. ILLNESSES AND EMERGENCIES

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): The MSAF is an on-line self-reporting tool for undergrad students to report missed academic work. The MSAF gives you the ability to request consideration for missed work (worth less than 30% of the final grade) due to illness or injury lasting 5 days or less. You must visit the following link to locate the MSAF to report your absence: <https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>. This form should be filled out as soon as possible after your absence. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately (within 48 hours of submitting the MSAF) in person or by email regarding the nature of the relief that may be possible for the missed work. Whether consideration is given for missed work, and the type of consideration provide, is the decision of the instructor.

Limitations: You may submit only 1 MSAF per term without supporting documentation. An MSAF cannot be used for any final examination.

Longer or Successive Absences: For absences longer than 5 days, for reasons other than illness or injury, or for missed work worth 30% or more of the course grade, you must visit the Faculty of Social Sciences office to request an MSAF exception link. You will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation to the Faculty office before an exception link will be approved. You may also be required to meet with an academic advisor.

Privacy: You must NOT submit any medical or other relevant documentation to your instructor. Your instructor may NOT ask you for such documentation. You are not required to share the details of your medical or personal situation with any instructor. And the instructor may not ask for any such medical or personal information.

Responsibilities: The purpose of the MSAF is to provide students who miss academic work because of illness or injury with the ability to still fulfill the requirements of the course. However, the MSAF is NOT intended as a time or workload management tool, or as a holiday organizer. As a student you are responsible for using the MSAF tool as it was intended, and to not misuse or abuse it for other reasons. You can also help to prevent any unexpected medical situations from jeopardizing the on time completion of your academic work by starting assignments and studying as early as possible.

Follow-Up E-Mail: In order to arrange for MSAF accommodation, you must e-mail the instructor as soon as possible after submitting your MSAF form. Your message to the instructor should include the following information:

1. If the missed work was an assignment, explain the work that you had completed before your absence and any work you have completed following your absence.
2. Propose a new deadline to submit the assignment, or, for tests, identify blocks of time when you are available to complete the assignment outside of class time.

Conflicting Make-Up Schedules: When scheduling make-up timeslots for this class, be sure not to compromise your attendance and participation in other classes. Similarly, you should not sacrifice time in this class to complete assignments for other courses.

3. REVIEW OF MARKS

Assignments and exams are marked fairly and carefully. However, in the event that a student disagrees with his/her mark, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The student must write a detailed one-page note (hard copy only; emails will not be accepted) outlining the reason for the review of the mark. This note must be attached to the original assignment and handed in to the instructor
2. The instructor will review the request and review the original assignment and provide the student with written feedback
3. Students must not submit a request for review any earlier than 1 week after the paper/exams are returned and no later than 2 weeks after
4. Please note that upon re-review, there is a chance that the new grade may be lower than the original grade received

4. ACCOMODATIONS

Please feel free to discuss your personal needs with me. Arrangements for Individualized accommodations can be made through Students Accessibility Services (<http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>). Students Accessibility Services (<http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>) also provides helpful information on time management, note-taking, keeping up with readings, and taking multiple choice tests.

If you require course information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society (ext. 27227 | e-mail: hasdept@mcmaster.ca).

Student Accessibility Services (SAS):

Students who require academic accommodations 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 at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652, or by email at sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Responsibilities as a Student Registered at SAS: SAS assists with academic and disability-related resources for students with a variety of learning needs. If you require academic accommodation through SAS, be sure that you arrange your accommodations with SAS as early as possible, and ensure that the instructor receives a copy of your accommodation letter as early as possible in the term.

Students registered with SAS are responsible for:

- meeting their SAS Program Coordinator prior to, or at the start of each academic term (September, January and summer sessions);
- providing their SAS Program Coordinator with relevant and professional medical or psychological documentation;
- notifying their SAS Program Coordinator if courses are dropped or added, or if accommodations require a change;
- meeting with individual course instructors to discuss their specific accommodation needs in relation to the course; and
- providing the instructor with their accommodation letter as early as possible.

For more information, visit the SAS website: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

Accommodating Peers: Students may be asked to assist in making our learning environment accessible for all students. For example, in-class presenters may be asked to submit, in advance, a text summary of the presentation's visual components to ensure the inclusion of students for whom those visuals would not otherwise be accessible.

5. COMPUTER USE IN THE CLASSROOM

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

6. OFFICE HOURS and EMAIL COMMUNICATION

I maintain regular offices hours - no appointment is necessary. I am also available by email (clancysj@mcmaster.ca). Please use proper email etiquette when sending an email: include the course name in your subject line; provide a salutation (Dear Dr. Clancy); and include your name and student number. You can expect a response to your email within 48 hours, **excluding weekends, holidays and university scheduled breaks such as Fall break, Reading Week, etc.,.**

Faculty Of Social Sciences E-Mail Communication Policy: It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including to 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.

Avenue Mail: Please use your McMaster e-mail account to contact the instructor. There is a technical difference between the Mail feature in Avenue to Learn and the McMaster e-mail services, including UnivMail, the mail service used by most instructors. Messages sent from Avenue to e-mail, for example, can often cause unhelpful delays and errors.

7. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

University Policy on 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. 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.

Avoiding Academic Dishonesty: It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the McMaster Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>. The following illustrates only a few forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Submitting work that is not your own.
2. Submitting your own material for which other credit has already been obtained in another course.
3. Using another writer's sentences, phrasing, or writing structure without properly indicating your debt by using quotation marks.
4. Neglecting to properly cite the source of your ideas.
5. Improper collaboration in non-group work.
6. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
7. Requesting accommodation or exceptions in bad faith or under false pretenses.

Access Copyright Regulations: McMaster University holds a licensing agreement with Access Copyright, the Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency. Information on current regulations for copying for education purposes can be found at the following website:

<http://www.copyright.mcmaster.ca/>

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.

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READING SCHEDULE

TOPIC	ASSIGNED READINGS	IMPORTANT NOTES
WEEK ONE: SEPTEMBER 5, 2014		
Introduction and course outline	1. Text: Introduction	
WEEK TWO: SEPTEMBER 10, 2014		
Defining inequalities, health disparities and determinants of health; introduction to the theoretical frameworks and perspectives on health inequalities	<p>1. Text: Chapter 3</p> <p>2. Centre for Disease Control. (2014). Social Determinants of Health. <i>Centre for Disease Control</i>. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/Definitions.html</p> <p>3. Mackenbach, J.P. (2012). The persistence of health inequalities in modern welfare states: The explanation of a paradox. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 75(4), 761-769.</p>	
WEEK THREE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2014		
Theoretical perspectives on health inequalities: Psychosocial framework	<p>1. Text: Chapter 2</p> <p>2. Elstad, J. I. (1998). The psycho-social perspective on social inequalities in health. <i>The Sociology of Health and Illness</i>, 20(5), 597-618.</p> <p>3. Toselli, S., Gialdo-Russo, E., Marzouk, D., Sundquist, J. & Sundquist, K. (2014). Psychosocial health among immigrants in central and southern Europe. [Supplement 1]. <i>European Journal of Public Health</i>, 24, 26-30.</p>	
WEEK FOUR: SEPTEMBER 24, 2014		
Theoretical perspectives on health inequalities: Lifecourse framework	<p>1. Text: Chapter 9</p> <p>2. Bartley, M., Blane, D. & Montgomery, S. (1997). Health and the life-course: Why safety nets matter. <i>British Medical Journal</i>, 314(7088), 1194-1196.</p> <p>3. Zlotnick, C., Tam, T.W. & Soman, L.A. (2012). Life course outcomes on mental and physical health: The impact of foster care on adulthood. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 102(3), 534-540.</p>	

WEEK FIVE: OCTOBER 1, 2014		
Theoretical perspectives on health inequalities: Materialist, political economy framework	<p>1. Text: Chapter 1, 8</p> <p>2. Blane, D.B., Bartley, M. & Davey Smith, G. (1997). Disease etiology and materialist explanations of socio-economic mortality differentials. <i>European Journal of Public Health</i>, 7, 385-391.</p>	
WEEK SIX: OCTOBER 8, 2014		
Theoretical perspectives on health inequalities: Cultural and behavioural framework	<p>1. Abel, T. & Frohlich, B.K. (2012). Capitals and capabilities: Linking structure and agency to reduce health inequalities. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 74(2), 236-244.</p> <p>2. Shim, J.K. (2010). Cultural health capital: A theoretical approach to understanding health care interactions and the dynamics of unequal treatment. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i>, 51(1), 1-15.</p> <p>3. Pinxten, W. & Lievens, J. (2014). The importance of economic, social and cultural capital in understanding health inequalities: Using a Bourdieu-based approach in research on physical and mental health perceptions. <i>Sociology of Health and Illness</i>, 1-16. Early online preview available at: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9566.12154/pdf</p>	TEST 1 REVIEW
WEEK SEVEN: OCTOBER 15, 2014 - TEST 1 TODAY (25%)		
TEST 1	No readings today	TEST 1 TODAY (25%)
WEEK EIGHT: OCTOBER 22, 2014		
Defining and exploring determinants of health: Race and ethnicity	<p>1. Text: Chapter 7</p> <p>2. Gee, G.C., Wasleman, K.M. & Brondolo, E. (2012). A life course perspective on how racism may be related to health inequities. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 102(5), 967-974.</p> <p>3. Sawyer, P.J., Major, P., Casad, B.J., Townsend, S.S. & Mendes, W.B. (2012). Discrimination and the stress response: Psychological and physiological consequences of anticipating prejudice in interethnic interactions. <i>American</i></p>	

	<i>Journal of Public Health</i> , 102(5), 1020-1026.	
WEEK NINE: OCTOBER 29, 2014		
Understanding how socioeconomic status & wealth affect health status	<p>1. Bartley, M. (2012). Explaining health inequality: Evidence from the UK. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 74(5), 658-660.</p> <p>2. Semyonov, M., Lewin-Epstein, N. & Maskileyson, D. (2013). Where wealth matters more for health: The wealth–health gradient in 16 countries. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 81(5), 10-17.</p> <p>3. Rajan, K., Kennedy, J., & King, L. (2013). Is wealthier always healthier in poor countries? The health implications of income, inequality, poverty, and literacy in India. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 88:98-107.</p>	
WEEK TEN: NOVEMBER 5, 2014		
Defining and exploring determinants of health: Gender	<p>1. Text: Chapter 5</p> <p>2. Griffith, D.M., Metzl, J.M. & Gunter, K. (2011). Considering intersections of race and gender in interventions that address US men’s health disparities. <i>Public Health</i>, 125(7), 417-423.</p> <p>3. Richardson, E.T., Collins, S.E., Kung, T., Jones, J.H., Tram, K.H., Boggiano, V.L., ... Zolopa, A.R. (2014). Gender inequality and HIV transmission: A global analysis. <i>Journal of the International AIDS Society</i>, 17(1), 1-5. Retrieved from http://www.jiasociety.org/index.php/jias/article/view/19035/3821</p>	
WEEK ELEVEN: NOVEMBER 12, 2014		
Defining and exploring determinants of health: Geography and physical living conditions	<p>1. Text: Chapter 4, 6</p> <p>2. Pearce, J., Barnett, R. & Moon. G. (2012). Sociospatial inequalities in health-related behaviours: Pathways linking place and smoking. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i>, 36(1), 3-24.</p>	

WEEK TWELVE: NOVEMBER 19, 2014 - HEALTH INEQUALITIES JOURNAL DUE TODAY (10%)		
Addressing health inequalities: Intersectionality, universal access sustainability, surveillance, and policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bowleg, L. (2012). The problem with the phrase <i>women and minorities: Intersectionality</i> - An important theoretical framework for public health. <i>American Journal of Public Health, 102</i>(7), 1267-1273. 2. Marmot, M. & Bell, R. (2012). Fair society, healthy lives. [Supplement 1]. <i>Public Health, 126</i>, S4-S10. 3. Bleich, S.N., Jarlenski, M.P., Bell, C.N. & LaVeist, T.A. (2012). Health inequalities: Trends, progress, and policy. <i>Annual Review of Public Health, 33</i>, 7-40. 	HEALTH INEQUALITIES JOURNAL DUE TODAY (10%) TEST 2 REVIEW
WEEK THIRTEEN: NOVEMBER 26, 2014 - TEST 2 TODAY (30%)		
TEST 2 TODAY	No assigned readings	TEST 2 TODAY
WEEK FOURTEEN: DECEMBER 3, 2014 - FINAL PAPER DUE TODAY (35%)		
Course wrap-up and	No assigned readings	COURSE WRAP-UP FINAL PAPER DUE TODAY (35%)