

HLTH AGE 1ZZ3: INQUIRY INTO HEALTH & SOCIETY

Fall 2022

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Lecture: Mon 12:30-2:20pm (BSB 108)

Tutorials:
T01: Thur, 3:30-4:20 (ETB 224)
T02: Fri, 10:30-11:20 (ETB 227)

Dr. Savelli's Office Hours:
Thursday, 12:30-1:20 (KTH 230)

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of health from non-biomedical perspectives. It examines the ways in which culture, politics, economics, and other social forces shape our conceptions of health and illness. Emphasis is placed on learning to apply competing and complementary sources of professional and academic knowledge to the complexities inherent in health and illness. Taking an inquiry-based approach, students will play an active role in shaping their own learning and research questions. Moreover, regular participation (asking and answering questions) is an important part of the lectures themselves.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to discuss the socio-cultural dimensions of health and analyze health and illness from a variety of critical perspectives. They should demonstrate an ability to discuss the ways in which characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, age, and class contribute to health outcomes and definitions. Students are also required to demonstrate the ability to formulate a research question and respond through a clear, properly cited, well-organized academic essay. They will also learn how to approach and understand academic articles from a variety of disciplines.

Key Course Questions

What is the difference between health and illness? Are these fixed categories or subject to interpretation? What social forces and processes determine if a person is (considered) healthy or ill? How do different professional and academic disciplines approach these issues? What can non-biomedical approaches contribute to our understanding of health, illness, disease, and medicine?

Class Format

The course involves weekly mandatory lectures and tutorials and must be attended in person. Neither lectures nor tutorials will be recorded.

Required Materials and Texts

Gillett, Andrews, and Savelli, *Health and Society: Critical Perspectives*. Oxford University Press, 2016. All other readings are available on [Avenue to Learn](#).

Course Evaluation – Overview

There are no tests or exams in this course. Instead, students will complete the following assignments:

1. Interdisciplinary Assignment: 15% (due October 6th at 11:59pm)
2. Tutorial Participation: 20%

3. Essay Proposal: 25% (due October 28th at 11:59pm)
4. Major Essay: 40% (due December 5th at 11:59pm)

Course Evaluation – Details

Interdisciplinary Assignment (15%), due October 6th at 11:59pm

Students, working in small assigned groups, must complete a maximum 1000 word assignment that explains how any two, social science/humanities disciplines might explore and respond to a particular issue related to health. What questions might that discipline ask? What tools and techniques could they use to answer those questions? The specific health issues will be assigned in class.

Tutorial Participation (20%)

All students are expected to regularly attend tutorial and to participate in discussion. Attendance alone will not earn students marks, it is *fundamental* that they participate in discussions based on that week's readings.

Essay Proposal (25%), due October 28th at 11:59pm

Students must complete a proposal that outlines the research question that they will explore in the Major Essay. The proposal should outline the question that the student wishes to explore, highlight why the question is significant, and incorporate relevant academic literature. Students should use at least five peer-reviewed academic sources in constructing their proposal. Proposals should use a 12-point font and should be roughly 850-1000 words in length. Please include a bibliography (separate from the word count).

Major Essay (40%), due December 5th at 11:59pm

Students are required to complete a maximum 2500 word essay on a topic related to health and society. Essays should incorporate at least ten peer-reviewed academic sources and must include a bibliography (separate from the word count). Essays should use a 12-point font and should fall in the 2000-2500 word range.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 12-16)

Introduction to Health & Society I

Week 2 (September 19-23)

Why do we need critical health studies?

- Reading: *Health & Society*, chapter 1.

Week 3 (September 26-30)

Social determinants of health

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 10; Larsen and Gilliland, "Mapping the evolution of 'food deserts' in a Canadian city: Supermarket accessibility in London, Ontario, 1961–2005."
- Tutorials begin

Week 4 (October 3-7)

Politics, ideology, and health

- Readings:; LeBesco "Neoliberalism, Public Health, and the Perils of Fatness"; Bell and Green, "On the Perils of Invoking Neoliberalism in Public Health Critique"); Raphael, Curry-Stevens, and Bryant "Barriers to addressing the social determinants of health: Insights from the Canadian experience."

Week 5 (October 10-14)

Reading Week – No Class

Week 6 (October 17-21)

Health care systems in a comparative context

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 9; Waitzberg et al. "The Structure and Financing of Health Care Systems Affected How Providers Coped with Covid-19"

Week 7 (October 24-28)

Health as a social construction

- Reading: *Health & Society*, chapter 3; Rodin, "The Social Construction of Premenstrual Syndrome"

Week 8 (October 31 – November 4)

Culture and health

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 4; Wilson "Therapeutic Landscapes and the First Nations Peoples: An Exploration of Culture, Health, and Place"

Week 9 (November 7-11)

Biomedical culture

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 8; Lambert, "Accounting for EBM: notions of evidence in medicine."

Week 10 (November 14-18)

Identity, marginality, and health

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 5; Courtenay, "Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: a theory of gender and health."

Week 11 (November 21-25)

Alternative approaches to health and healing

- Reading: *Health & Society*, chapter 11; Winnick, “From quackery to “complementary” medicine: The American medical profession confronts alternative therapies.”

Week 12 (November 28 – December 2)

Health consumerism

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 12; Lupton, “Quantifying the Body”

Week 13 (December 5)

Globalization and the global health movement

- Readings: *Health & Society*, chapter 7; Groenhout, “The ‘Brain Drain’ Problem”

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Assignments must be submitted online to the Avenue to Learn dropbox. This copy is officially due by 11:59PM on the due date posted. Failing to submit a copy by this point will result in a late penalty.

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 penalized at a rate of 3% per day, including weekends. These should be submitted to the Avenue to Learn dropbox.

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.

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.

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.