

HLTH AGE 4J03: Narratives of Illness Winter 2021



Mondays 2:30 – 5:20pm
Instructor Dr. Myriam Nafte
Email naftem@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours By appointment for individual Zoom meetings, and/or anytime via email

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Course Description

This course explores the inherent power of narratives in shaping the ideas and experiences of illness. The body marked by disease and disability is examined primarily through art, literature, media, and clinical medicine. Weekly lectures (both synchronous and recorded), films, case studies, and presentations offer students multiple meanings assigned to long, short term, and chronic “suffering”, alongside changing concepts of those determined to be “sick”, “ill”, and/or “diseased”.

In order to fully benefit from the course, students must actively engage in online discussions, do the assigned research and bring their interests, thoughts and questions to each lecture. The goal is to create an interactive and creative platform from which to explore the narrative experience of illness. Dynamic participation hinges entirely on students challenging various theories, supporting lectures with questions and insights, and lastly, contributing to resource material with film clips, images, and other references during their own group and individual presentations. Because this course is delivered entirely online, it is designed to be *experiential* with more emphasis on individual primary research material.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:


- Discuss analytical frameworks pertaining to health/health data
- Identify and interpret various forms of narrative
- Describe different methods of researching/collecting data
- Translate multiple meanings assigned to concepts of illness
- Understand 'controversy' pertaining to illness/preventative treatment(s)

Required Materials and Texts

Required Readings

All articles, lectures, slides and material will be posted on Avenue to Learn

Films (to be assigned)

 Films TBA

Class Format

Lectures, Case Studies, Primary Research, Group and Individual Presentations

Course Evaluation

Grade Distribution

1. Participation – 20%
2. MM Presentation [Individual] – 25%
3. One Media Assignment – 25%
4. One Group Assignment – 30%

Participation – 20%

Participation grades are based on a list of weekly questions and answers that students submit. It is vital that all students come prepared to enhance the many and varied topics discussed each week and complete classroom Q+As. Engaged, thoughtful reactions to the presentations and case studies are essential along with an ongoing sense of adventure. NB. The Q+As can be done online or submitted to me via email within *24 hours* of the relevant lecture.



Multi-Media Presentation – 25%

Each student will present a topic of their choice in a visual and/or auditory medium. It must integrate primary research data that the student has gathered with attention to the *narrative of a particular illness*, for example through collecting relevant visual references, film clips, informal interviews, survey material, polls, advertisements, images, newspaper reports, etc. Topics can range from various diseases, mental illness, and depression, to suicide, and death. Students must integrate what they know and have learned through visual cues, literary strategies [rhetorical devices] and

theories employed for specific effects. Grades are based on the quality of the presentation, the materials used, and the level of engagement. *Please refer to the grading rubric for specific expectations.

NB. The medium for presentation can range from creating a graphic novel or short film, to slides with audio, artwork, or photographs.

***Presentation Evaluation Rubric**

Clarity 1 2 3 4 5

Eye Contact 1 2 3 4 5

Engagement 1 2 3 4 5

References 1 2 3 4 5

Visuals 1 2 3 4 5

Media Assignment – 25%

Students are given a series of questions to answer in response to a film.

There will be a range of films from which to choose that reflect the relevant themes of the course and lecture material.



Group Assignment – 30%

Students choose partners to collaborate on a project of their choice. Details will be posted after discussing options with class participants.

Weekly Course Schedule:

**Please note: All lectures, slides and reading materials will be posted on A2L. Course schedule and material are subject to change!*

Week 1 (Jan 11)

Introduction: Course outline, Quiz

© Lecture *Part I Defining the Narratives: Strategies of E-P-L*

Week 2 (Jan 18)

Topic: The Social, Political, and Symbolic

© Lecture *Part II Defining the Narratives: Theoretical Overview*

Week 3 (Jan 25)

Topic: Constructing the Narrative – Q+As

© Lecture *Who is WHO*

Week 4 (Feb 1)

Topic: The ‘Origins’ of Good Health vs Bad Health

© Lecture SDH or FDHD?

Week 5 (Feb 8)

Topic: Strategic Methods and Ways of Knowing [Collecting Primary Data]

©Lecture + Group Assignment: “Hunting and Gathering”

Week 6 (Feb 15)

Mid-Term Break

Week 7 (Feb 22)

Topic: Controversial Narratives – Q+As

©Lecture *What Makes a Controversy?*

+ Individual MM Assignments [discussion]

Week 8 (Mar 1)

Topic: Infectious Disease Narratives

© Lecture Syphilis: Shaping the Cultural Landscape

Week 9 (Mar 8)

Topic: Mental Health / Iatrogenesis

©Lecture *Total Institutions*

🎬 Film [Media Assignment]

Week 10 (Mar 15)

Group Presentations

Week 11 (Mar 22)

Group Presentations

Week 12 (Mar 29)

Student Presentations

Week 13 (Apr 5)

Student Presentations

Course Policies

NB. Information on the structure and content of presentations, readings, requirements and expectations, will be posted on Avenue to Learn.

Grades

Grades are 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 Assignment Policy

Late assignments are penalized 2% per day, for 7 days. Presentations and group work are *not accepted* beyond class duration.

NB. All materials, letters, documents for absences/missed work (due to family emergency, medical condition, etc.) must be directed to the Faculty of Social Sciences office.

Avenue to Learn

All student feedback, readings, course changes, and class announcements will be posted on 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.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with special learning needs are asked to contact the instructor no later than the second week of classes. You must have written confirmation from Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Students can contact SAS to arrange for special accommodation for writing exams. They also provide or assist students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, Classroom Accommodations. Web site: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society at 905.525.9140 ext. 27227 or hasdept@mcmaster.ca

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

[McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic

Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “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.