

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF POPULATION HEALTH IN CANADA

Fall 2022

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Lecture: Wednesdays (1:30 – 2:20) and
Fridays (12:30 – 2:20)

Office: KTH 224
Office Hours: Friday, 2:30 – 4:00pm
(in-person) or by appointment (via
Zoom)

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the social determinants of population health framework. It is used to analyse a number of social and economic determinants of health, including housing, neighbourhoods and early child development within the Canadian context.

Course Objectives

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

- Identify concepts related to health inequalities in Canada, and describe the social determinants of health and the population health approach
- Critically appraise the strength of evidence from empirical studies in population health
- Describe how various social determinants affect health, at different levels of social organization
- Describe intersectionality in the context of the social determinants of population health

Required Materials and Texts

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Other required readings are available through the McMaster University Library System or will be made available on Avenue to Learn (e.g., link to the resource online or a PDF of the book chapter).

Class Format

The classes will be interactive lectures, discussions, and activities based on readings and material presented during the lecture. All classes will be conducted in-person during the course lecture times, unless otherwise indicated in the course schedule.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. VoiceThread Participation – 10%, throughout course
2. Midterm Exam – 30%, October 21
3. Intersectionality and Population Health Paper – 20%, November 25
4. Final Exam – 40%, as scheduled by the Registrar's Office

Course Evaluation – Details

VoiceThread Participation (10%), throughout course

A class VoiceThread activity will take place during Wednesday lectures on the six weeks denoted in the Weekly Course Schedule (see below). Synchronous online

participation in each activity is worth 2%, up to a maximum of 10% of your final grade. If you participate in all six activities, your top five grades will be counted. This has been purposefully setup to provide flexibility for unforeseen circumstances (e.g., illness) and therefore exceptions are unlikely to be granted. However, if granted, the substitute assignment will be a personal reflection (500 words) on the video content of the week being missed.

Midterm Exam (30%), October 21

The midterm exam will be written during class time, covering all course material from Weeks 1 through 5, inclusive. The question style will be multiple choice and short answer.

Intersectionality and Population Health Paper (20%), November 25

Students will be provided a list of potential topics and must submit a 10-page (double-spaced) scholarly paper on their selected topic. If the student would like to write their paper on a topic that is not on the provided list, they may do so with prior approval by the instructor; approval must be requested by October 28 to allow sufficient time for discussion/refinement of the topic. Additional details will be posted to Avenue to Learn and reviewed in class on September 23.

Final Exam (40%), as scheduled by the Registrar's Office

The final exam will be cumulative but with a heavier focus on course material from Weeks 7 through 13. The format will be the same as the midterm with multiple choice and short answer questions.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 7 and 9, 2022)

September 7 – The Population Health Approach

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach (2nd ed.), Introduction & Chapter 1.

September 9 – An Introduction to Social Determinants of Health and the Last Straw

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach (2nd ed.), Introduction & Chapter 1.

Week 2 (September 14 and 16, 2022)

September 14 – VoiceThread 1: The Great Leveller

Required Readings: None

Notes: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

September 16 – Epidemiological Methods and Natural Experiments

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 2, pages 63-71.
- Petticrew, M., Cummins, S., Ferrell, C., Findlay, A., Higgins, C., Hoy, C., Kearns, A., & Sparks, L. (2005). Natural experiments: an underused tool for public health?. *Public health*, 119(9), 751–757. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2004.11.008>

Optional Reading:

- Craig, P., Katikireddi, S. V., Leyland, A., & Popham, F. (2017). Natural Experiments: An Overview of Methods, Approaches, and Contributions to Public Health Intervention Research. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 38(1), 39-56. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031816-044327>

Week 3 (September 21 and 23, 2022)

September 21 – VoiceThread 2: Code Red

Required Readings:

- DeLuca PF, Kanaroglou PS. Code Red: Explaining Average Age of Death in the City of Hamilton. *AIMS Public Health*. 2015 Nov 17;2(4):730-745. doi: 10.3934/publichealth.2015.4.730.

Note: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

September 23 – Sick Individuals and Sick Populations

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 3.
- Rose, G. (2001). Sick individuals and sick populations. *Intl Journal of Epidemiology*, 30(3), 427–432. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/30.3.427>

Optional Reading:

- Braveman P. (2010). Social conditions, health equity, and human rights. *Health and human rights*, 12(2), 31–48.

Week 4 (September 28 and 30, 2022)

September 28 – Income Inequity, Wealth, and Health Part 1

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 4.

- McGrail KM, van Doorslaer E, Ross NA, Sanmartin C. (2009). Income-related health inequalities in Canada and the United States: a decomposition analysis. *Am J Public Health*. 99(10):1856-63. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2007.129361.

September 30 – No class (National Day of Truth and Reconciliation)

Week 5 (October 5 and 7, 2022)

October 5 – Income Inequity, Wealth, and Health Part 2

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 4.
- Dunn, J. R., Veenstra, G., & Ross, N. (2006). Psychosocial and neo-material dimensions of SES and health revisited: predictors of self-rated health in a Canadian national survey. *Social science & medicine*, 62(6), 1465–1473. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.07.038>

October 7 – Education, Childhood, and Transitions to Adulthood

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 5.
- Hertzman, C., & Wiens, M. (1996). Child development and long-term outcomes: a population health perspective and summary of successful interventions. *Social science & medicine* (1982), 43(7), 1083–1095. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536\(96\)00028-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536(96)00028-7)
- Shonkoff, J.P. & Garner, A.S. (2012). The lifelong effects of early childhood adversity & toxic stress. *Am. Acad. Pediatrics*, 129:e232–e246

Optional Readings:

- M. David Low, Barbara J. Low, Elizabeth R. Baumler, Phuong T. Huynh; Can Education Policy Be Health Policy? Implications of Research on the Social Determinants of Health. *J Health Polit Policy Law* 1 December 2005; 30 (6): 1131–1162. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-30-6-1131>
- Irwin, L. G., Siddiqi, A., & Hertzman, C. (2007). Early Child Development: A Powerful Equalizer. *Final Report for the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health*. World Health Organization.

Week 6 (October 12 and 14, 2022)

Reading Week

Week 7 (October 19 and 21, 2022)

October 19 – Social Support, Social Capital, the “isms,” and Health Part 1

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 7.
- Thoits, P.A. (2011). Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health. *J. Health & Social Behavior*, 52(2): 145-161.
- Tuyisenge, G., & Goldenberg, S. M. (2021). COVID-19, structural racism, and migrant health in Canada. *Lancet* (London, England), 397(10275), 650–652. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(21\)00215-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00215-4)

October 21 – Midterm Exam

Week 8 (October 26 and 28, 2022)

October 26 – VoiceThread 3: Lived Experience

Required Readings: None

Note: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

October 28 – Social Support, Social Capital, the “isms,” and Health Part 2

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 6.
- Socías, M. E., Koehoorn, M., & Shoveller, J. (2016). Gender Inequalities in Access to Health Care among Adults Living in British Columbia, Canada. *Women's health issues*, 26(1), 74–79. doi: 10.1016/j.whi.2015.08.001
- Addis, S., Davies, M., Greene, G., Macbride-Stewart, S., & Shepherd, M. (2009). The health, social care and housing needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older people: a review of the literature. *Health & social care in the community*, 17(6), 647–658. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2524.2009.00866.x>

Optional Reading:

- Lakey & Orehek (2011). Relational regulation theory: A new approach to explain the link between perceived social support and mental health. *Psychological Review*, 118(3): 482-495

Week 9 (November 2 and 4, 2022)

November 2 – VoiceThread 4: Lived Experience

Required Readings: None

Note: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

November 4 – Employment, Working Conditions, and Health

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 9.
- Angeles, R., McDonough, B., Howard, M., Dolovich, L., Marzanek-Lefebvre, F., Qian, H., & Riva, J. J. (2014). Primary health care needs for a priority population: a survey of professional truck drivers. *Work*, 49(2), 175–181. <https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-131649>
- Benach, J., Vives, A., Amable, M., Vanroelen, C., Tarafa, G., & Muntaner, C. (2014). Precarious employment: understanding an emerging social determinant of health. *Annual review of public health*, 35, 229–253. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-032013-182500>

Week 10 (November 9 and 11, 2022)

November 9 – Housing and Health

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 10.
- Dunn, J.R., et al. (2004). Housing as a socio-economic determinant of health: A Canadian research framework. In: Howden-Chapman, P., Carroll, P. (eds.) *Housing & Health: Research, Policy and Innovation*. Wellington, Steele Roberts.

Optional Reading:

- Olson, N. & Pauly, B. (2021). Homeless encampments: connecting public health and human rights. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 112(6): 988-991. doi: 10.17269/s41997-021-00581-w

November 11 – Neighbourhood and Health

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 10.
- Oakes, M. et al. (2016). How should we improve neighbourhood health? Evaluating evidence from a social determinant perspective. *Curr Epidemiol Rep*, 3, 106-112
- Sampson, & Raudenbush (2004). Seeing disorder: Neighbourhood stigma and the social construction of “broken windows”. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 67(4), 319-342.

Week 11 (November 16 and 18, 2022)

November 16 – VoiceThread 5: Lived experience

Required Readings: None

Note: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

November 18 – Food, Food Insecurity, and Health

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 11.
- Pirrie, M., Harrison, L., Angeles, R., Marzanek, F., Ziesmann, A., & Agarwal, G. (2020). Poverty and food insecurity of older adults living in social housing in Ontario: a cross-sectional study. *BMC public health*, 20(1), 1320. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09437-3>

Week 12 (November 23 and 25, 2022)

November 23 – Health of Indigenous Peoples

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 8.
- Kim P. J. (2019). Social Determinants of Health Inequities in Indigenous Canadians Through a Life Course Approach to Colonialism and the Residential School System. *Health equity*, 3(1), 378–381. <https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2019.0041>
- Philpott J. (2018). Canada's efforts to ensure the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. *Lancet (London, England)*, 391(10131), 1650–1651. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)30179-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30179-X)

November 25 – Environment and Health

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). *Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach* (2nd ed.), Chapter 12.
- Feng, et al. (2010). The built environment and obesity: A systematic review of the epidemiologic evidence. *Health & Place*, 16: 175-190.
- Fenton, M. (2012). Community design and policies for free-range children: Creating environments that support routine physical activity. *Childhood Obesity*, 8(1): 44-51.

Optional Reading:

- Weyman, et al. (2013). Planning health-promoting development: creation and assessment of an evidence-based index in the Region of Peel, Canada. *Environment & Planning B: Planning & Design*, 40(4), 707–722.
- Finkelstein, M. M., Jerrett, M., DeLuca, P., Finkelstein, N., Verma, D. K., Chapman, K., & Sears, M. R. (2003). Relation between income, air pollution and mortality: a cohort study. *Canadian Medical Association journal*, 169(5), 397–402.

Note: Paper on Intersectionality and Population Health is due at 11:59pm.

Week 13 (November 30 and December 2, 2022)

November 30 – VoiceThread 6: Lived Experience

Required Readings: None

Note: VoiceThread will be used to view and discuss a short video. Synchronous online participation is mandatory (see Course Evaluation).

December 2 – Access to Healthcare

Required Readings:

- Davidson, A. (2019). Social Determinants of Health: A Comparative Approach (2nd ed.), Chapter 2, pages 46-63.
- Soril, L., Adams, T., Phipps-Taylor, M., Winblad, U., & Clement, F. (2017). Is Canadian Healthcare Affordable? A Comparative Analysis of the Canadian Healthcare System from 2004 to 2014. *Healthcare policy*, 13(1), 43–58. <https://doi.org/10.12927/hcpol.2017.25192>
- Agarwal, G., Pirrie, M., Marzanek, F., & Angeles, R. (2020). Time to reshape our delivery of primary care to vulnerable older adults in social housing?. *The British journal of general practice : the journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 71(702), 6–7. <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp21X714353>

Note: This lecture will be conducted over Zoom.

Week 14 (December 7, 2022)

December 7 – Exam Review

Required Readings: None

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments must be submitted in .doc or .docx format to the appropriate Dropbox on Avenue to Learn unless alternate arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Turnitin.com services have been enabled on Avenue to Learn for this course.

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

MARK	GRADE
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

All papers are due at 11:59pm on the date indicated. Late assignments will be marked down 10% per day.

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.