

UNDERSTANDING LIVED EXPERIENCES: STIGMATIZED IDENTITIES

Spring 2021 Term

Instructor: Dr. Erica Speakman
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Lecture: Weekly (Asynchronous*)

Office: Zoom
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

Using social psychological theoretical perspectives, this course will provide insight into understanding the lived experiences of those living with **Stigmatized Identities**. We will begin by examining how social psychologists study lived experience, both theoretically and methodologically. This will be followed by a discussion of the theory of stigma as it was conceptualized by Erving Goffman as well as more contemporary conceptualizations. The second part of this course focuses on case studies that examine these lived experiences. Here, we will not only be discussing the substantive topics under review, but also delving into issues such as multiple stigmatized identities, medicalization, managing stigma, and the like. This course is designed to get students critically thinking about how stigmatized identities are experienced and the impact that these identities can have on the individual, the group, and society.

Course Objectives

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

- Understand the dominant theoretical and methodological perspectives that are utilized to study lived experiences more generally, and those living with deviant and stigmatized identities more specifically, as well as appreciate the strengths and limitations of these approaches
- Gain a critical understanding of the impact that the individual and society has on people living with stigmatized identities
- Be able to apply concepts learned to current situations and events in the community and around the world.
- Enhance students' critical thinking, writing, and organizational skills through course assignments, as well as enhance students' communication skills through on-line class discussions.

Required Materials and Texts

- All readings will be available through Avenue to Learn.

Class Format

This will be an on-line asynchronous class format primarily run through Avenue to Learn. Recorded lectures will be posted weekly, along with Power Point Slides and any other material associated with weekly lecture content. That being said, for students who wish to join the lecture “live,” I will also be providing the option of attending the recording of the lecture. The date and time are forthcoming.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Critical Reflection (20%)
2. Mid-Term Exam (25%)
3. Proposal (30%)
4. Final Exam (25%)

Course Evaluation – Details

Critical Reflection Assignment (20%) May 21, 2021

The first assignment will require you to critically engage with the course material covered so far. Here, you will reflect on the readings and lecture material, and connect the material to the ‘real-world.’ You may also choose to ground the material in your own lived experiences of stigma and use what you have learned in this class to analyze these experiences. A more detailed breakdown of the assignment will be provided on Avenue.

Mid-Term Exam (25%) May 19, 2021

The exam will be a take-home format with both short and long answer style questions. The exam will be available from 9am-9pm on May 19 and will be submitted through Avenue to learn

Research Proposal (30%) June 9, 2021

For this proposal, you will get the opportunity to explore the lived experiences of a stigmatized group of your choice and address some of the potential theoretical and methodological issues that your proposed research may run into. This assignment may be done individually or in pairs. A more detailed breakdown of the assignment will be provided on Avenue.

Final Exam (25%) June 16, 2021

The exam will be a take-home format with both short and long answer style questions. The exam will be available from 9am-9pm on June 16 and will be submitted through Avenue to learn

Weekly Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	DUE
Week 1 (May 3-7)	Introduction to the Course Theory of Stigma and Lived Experiences How Do We Study Lived Experiences?	Prus – Chapter 1 Goffman – Chapter 1 Prus – Chapter 4 Müller (2018)	
Week 2 (May 10-14)	Multiple Stigmatized Identities and Stigma by Association	Dodds (2006) Collins, von Unger, and Armbrister (2008) Birenbaum (1970) Hammond and Kingston (2014)	
Week 3 (May 17-21)	Midterm Exam	No Readings!	Midterm Exam – May 19 Critical Reflection – May 21
Week 4 (May 24-28)	Disability and Appearance	Taylor (2000) Davis (2012)	

		Vail (1999) McLorg and Taub (1987)	
Week 5 (May 31 – June 4)	Health, Illness, and “Extreme” Deviant Identities	Schulze and Angermeyer (2003) Halding, Heggdal, and Wahl (2011) Simi and Futrell (2009) Skrapec (2001).	
Week 6 (June 7 – June 11)	Managing Stigma	Holt, Blevins, and Burkert (2010) Geek Girls (2017) – Documentary Siegel, Lune, and Meyer (1998) Gailey (2012)	Proposal – June 9
Week 7 (June 14 – June 18)	The Final Exam	No Readings!	Final Exam – June 16

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Please submit assignments to the appropriate assignment folder on Avenue to Learn. Faxed or e-mailed assignments will not be accepted. Your assignments should be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font, with 1-inch margins.

Late Assignments

The due dates for assignments are fixed and non-negotiable. There will be a deduction of 5% per day for all late assignments, unless you submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf>). The MSAF is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences for medical or other reasons that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work worth less than 25% of your overall. In these cases, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence. If you are absent for more than 3 days, or exceed one request per term, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office. You may be required to submit supporting documentation.

No Assignments Will Be Accepted 2 Weeks Past the Due Date

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

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".

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.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not

wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. 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 information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

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.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

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.

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 requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation 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.

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.

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.

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