

**SW 3T03 Poverty and Homelessness**

* Course Information
* January 11 to April 14, 2021, Wednesdays 11:30 a.m.- 2:20 p.m.
* Instructor: Stephanie Baker Collins
* Virtual office hours: by appointment
* Email: sbcollins@mcmaster.ca
* TA: Mary Vaccaro
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# Course Overview

## Course Description:

This course will critically examine policies and social work practices in response to poverty and homelessness including causes, lived experiences, service provision, alternate policy options and activist responses.

## Course Objectives:

* Apply an understanding of the political perspectives on poverty/homelessness to public conversations about poverty and homelessness
* Compare and contrast these political perspectives on poverty/homelessness and evaluate how they shape program responses

#### Describe how policies and program responses designed to address poverty/homelessness impact the social determinants of health

* Appreciate the differential impact of poverty and homelessness on marginalized groups
* Appreciate the complex lived experiences of persons who must sustain a living with inadequate income and housing

The basic assumptions of this course concur with the broader curriculum context set by the **School of Social Work's Statement of Philosophy**:

*As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.*

## Course Format

This course features synchronous and asynchronous formats. Most weeks will feature short synchronous sessions (where we come together in a Zoom meeting) consisting of a short review of the course content for that week, guest lectures and time for group work. Links to the synchronous session will be posted on Wednesday morning on Avenue to Learn. Each week there will be course content delivered via learning modules on Avenue to Learn, which students can access at their convenience. Several weeks during the term will be completely asynchronous (that is, you will engage with all of the course content independently). Links to all course content can be found on Avenue.

## Required Texts:

The readings for this course are all available online. Access to the readings is available in two ways. The easiest access will be via the course website on A2L. Under the e-reserves tab you will find an ARES link. The ARES link is a service provided by the library where course readings have been given a secure link. Across the top of the ARES menu is a list of dates. Click on a date and you be shown the course readings with links for that class. The second way to access readings would be to click on the URL links in an electronic copy of this course outline or cut and paste the url into your browser. Those readings without an active url in the course website can be found under the e-reserves/ARES tab on the course website.

# Course Requirements/Assignments

## Requirements Overview and Deadlines

1. Class Attendance and Participation in Learning Modules- 25%, Ongoing
2. Mapping Responses to Poverty and Homelessness – 35%, Due March 17
3. Analysis of Service Provider Perspective on Poverty – 40% OR

Analysis of Budgetary Needs and Community Services – 40%, Due April 14

## Requirement/Assignment Details

1. Class Attendance and Participation in Learning Modules- 25%
* Some of the course material for each week will be presented asynchronously in the form of learning modules via Avenue to Learn. Students are expected to complete 10 of 11 learning modules during the term and will receive 2.5 marks for each one completed. (20%)
* For most of the synchronous classes you will have small group activities to complete for marks so attendance during the synchronous classes is very important.

A fuller description will be provided for each of the following assignments in class:

1. Mapping Responses to Poverty and Homelessness – 35%, Due March 17
* This group assignment focuses on mapping the sectors of the social welfare state that individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness frequently interact with. Students will learn about the ways different sectors define and respond to poverty and learn about community resources that make up Hamilton’s ‘helping’ system. Students will be asked to identify gaps in services, potential barriers to accessing support and recommend amendments to or alternative responses to poverty/homelessness through their sector. The objective is to learn about how the current social responses to poverty and homelessness are organized and navigated by individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness. Students will work in groups during the synchronous class gatherings.
1. STUDENTS HAVE THE OPTION OF CHOOSING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS.
2. Analysis of Service Provider Perspectives of Poverty – 40%,

Due April 14

* Students will interview a service provider from the community during a designated class time via zoom. There will be a variety of service providers available and students will interview them in small groups via zoom, choosing an interviewee based on your area of interest. The interviews will focus on the service provided, and the service provider’s views on the causes of poverty and the best responses for reducing poverty. This assignment will include a written analysis of how the providers’ statements illustrate different perspectives on poverty as outlined in the Bradshaw article. Students will also describe their own perspective on poverty and how this compares to the perspective of the service provider.

OR

1. Analysis of Budgetary Needs & Community Services – 40%,

Due April 14

* Students will work on one of three budget case scenarios to develop a monthly budget for a low-income household living in Hamilton. Some aspects of the budget estimates will be provided ahead of time and others will require students to provide estimates of, for example, housing and income, transportation and so on. Community services and government programs that are needed will be identified and located. An assessment of quality of life and adequacy of services will be included.

# Assignment Submission and Grading

## Form and Style

* Written assignments must be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student’s name, student number, and the date. Number all pages (except title page).
* Paper format must be in accordance with the current edition of American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual with particular attention paid to font size (Times-Roman 12), spacing (double spaced) and margins (minimum of 1 inch at the top, bottom, left and right of each page) as papers not meeting these requirements will not be accepted for grading.
* Students are expected to make use of relevant professional and social science literature and other bodies of knowledge in their term assignments. When submitting, please keep a spare copy of your assignments.

Avenue to Learn and Zoom

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn and Zoom. 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 with the course instructor.

### Submitting Assignments & Grading

Assignments are to be uploaded to the appropriate Avenue to Learn drop box. Assignments submission should be before midnight on the date specified for submission. If you experience technical difficulties uploading, contact McMaster e-support, if still unable to upload, e-mail a copy of the completed assignment to the instructor *before* the deadline to avoid late penalties.

Please upload assignments in Microsoft Word or RTF format in a *single* file. Title your file using your first and last name, course number, and assignment title. See examples below:

 “lastname-firstname-3T03-2016-Service Provider Perspectives

 “lastname-firstname-3T03-2016-Budget Assignment

#### Proper naming of assignment is important for organizing downloaded assignments and for ensuring that student’s names are attached to their submission.

### Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last five digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

### 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.

# Student Responsibilities

* Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.
* In the past, student and faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices during class to be distracting and at times disruptive. Consequently, during class, students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place.
* Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

### Attendance

Students are expected to attend synchronous classes. If you anticipate difficulty with this, please speak with the instructor. If you have difficulty attending synchronous classes due to internet access or other technical constraints, please speak to the instructor.

### 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. 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](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

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

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### 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.

### Accessibility Statement

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. If you have accessibility concerns or want to talk about your learning needs, please be in touch with the course instructor.

### 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.

The School of Social Work requests and expects that:

* Instructors inform students about what they will record, when they will record, and what they will do with the recording
* Students who wish to record contact the instructor first. This is so the instructor can inform the class when permission has been given to a student to record (the identity of the student will be kept confidential by the instructor).
* Recordings by students are used for personal study only, and not shared with anyone else, and are deleted when no longer needed for personal study
* There will likely be times when students or guest speakers share personal or sensitive information. In this circumstance we expect everyone to stop recording. The instructor (or student or guest sharing) may also ask for recording to stop, and we expect everyone to respect such a request.

### 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, they may not reply.

### 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”.

### Extensions and Incomplete Courses

Extensions

All instructors understand that life situations sometimes make it very difficult to hand in an assignment on the date it is due. If you need more time to complete an assignment, talk with your instructor – in advance of the assignment deadline! Once you and your instructor have agreed on a new due date, it is your responsibility to submit your assignment on time. If you find yourself unable to meet deadlines in more than one course, please reach out to Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (millet@mcmaster.ca ) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (prestosl@mcmaster.ca ). We are here to support you to think about options (such as reducing your course load) that can take the stress off and contribute to your success in the program overall.

Incomplete courses

If you are not able to complete all of your assignments by the end of term, you have the option of contacting the instructor to request an Incomplete (INC) on the course. If the instructor agrees, (taking into account the amount of outstanding coursework and the time it will likely take to complete), the instructor will enter the grade you have so far in the course (the default grade) and the course will appear in Mosaic as INC (incomplete).

The School’s requirements for completing courses depend on a) the nature of the course (whether it is a foundation course\*, or a social and political context course) and b) when you are hoping to start placement. For example, a student who has an incomplete in a foundation course cannot start placement. Please see the [Policy on Extensions and Incompletes in the BSW Program](https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/resources/general-school-policies/policy-on-extensions-and-incompletes-october-2017.pdf) for more details.

At approximately 52-60 days after the end of term, the Mosaic system will automatically change an INC to the default grade. Depending on the default grade, this might affect your standing or progress in the program.

*As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your progress in the program, please connect with Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (**millet@mcmaster.ca* *) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (**prestosl@mcmaster.ca**).*

# Course Weekly Topics and Readings

## Week 1: January 13 (Synchronous; Zoom link can be found on the course website)

### Topic:

### Introduction: Poverty in Canada

### Readings:

* Appleyard, N. (2020) *Poverty Trends 2020: Rights and Realities in Canada*. Ottawa: Citizens for Public Justice

<https://cpj.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Poverty-Trends-2020.pdf>

## Week 2: January 20 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

Topic:

### How Do We Understand Causes of Poverty and Homelessness?

### Readings:

* Bradshaw, T.K. (2007). Theories of Poverty and Anti-Poverty Programs in Community Development. *Community Development 38*(1), 7-25.
* Schwan, K., Gaetz, S., French, D., Redman, M., Thistle, J., & Dej, E. (2018). *What Would it Take? Youth Across Canada Speak Out on Youth Homelessness Prevention*, Executive Summary. Toronto, ON: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

#### <https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/COH-AWH_What_Would_it_Take_Executive_Summary_0.pdf>

#### Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: The Patels

<https://dignityforall.ca/the-patels/>

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## Week 3: January 27 (Asynchronous)

Topic:

* Poverty, Social Assistance and Helping Systems

### Readings:

* Johnston, C. & Kalinowski, K. (2017). Give Us a Chance to Succeed: Voices from the Margins. Report of the April 2016 Hamilton Social Audit

#### <http://www.sprc.hamilton.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Social-Audit-Report_final.pdf>

* Food Insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2020. STATCAN COVID 19: Data to Insights for a Better Canada. Statistics Canada.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00039-eng.pdf>

#### Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: the Naullaqs

<https://dignityforall.ca/the-naullaqs/>

## Week 4: February 3 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

### Topic: Lived experience of poverty

### Readings:

* Baker Collins, S. (2005). An Understanding of Poverty from Those who Are Poor. *Action Research 3*(1), pp. 9-31.
* Wilson, B., Lightman, E., & Mitchell, A. (2009). *Sick and Tired: The Compromised Health of Social Assistance Recipients and the Working Poor in Ontario*. Toronto: Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, University of Toronto’s Social Assistance in the New Economy Project & the Wellesley Institute.

#### <https://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/sick_and_tired_the_compromised_health_of_social_assistance_recipients_and_the_working_poor_in_ontario>

#### Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: Mila Frei

<https://dignityforall.ca/frei/>

Week 5: February 10 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

Topic:

### Differential Vulnerability to Poverty

### Readings:

* Access Alliance. (2013). Where are the Good Jobs? Ten case stories of “working rough, living poor” 2013 Summary. Toronto: Access Alliance

<http://accessalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Summary_Where-are-the-Good-Jobs-Report-2013.pdf>

Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton. (2020). Equitable recovery from Covid 19. Hamilton’s Social Landscape.

<http://www.sprc.hamilton.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SPRC-Hamilton-Social-Landscape-Equitable-recovery-from-COVID-19-August-2020.pdf>

* Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: the Dulaimis

<https://dignityforall.ca/the-dulaimis/>

## February 17 – Reading Week – No Class

## Week 6: February 24 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

Topic: Anti-poverty Programs and Strategies

### Readings:

* *Accessing Income Support in the wake of COVID-19*. Income Security Advocacy Centre, Toronto, Ontario.

<http://incomesecurity.org/public-education/accessing-income-support-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-updated-march-26/>

#### Worker Action Centre. (2015). Still Working on the Edge. Building Decent Jobs from the Ground Up. Summary Report

<http://workersactioncentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/StillWorkingOnTheEdge-Exec-Summary-web.pdf>

* Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: the Doyles

#### <https://dignityforall.ca/the-doyles/>

## Week 7: March 3 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

### Topic:

### Poverty and Homelessness in Hamilton

### Readings:

* Hamilton Hunger Report 2019. Hamilton Food Share
* <http://www.hamiltonfoodshare.org/wp-content/uploads/Hamilton-Food-Share-Hunger-Report-2019.pdf>
* Mayo, S. (2017). *Persistence of Poverty in the Hamilton CMA.* Social Landscape Bulletin 15. Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton.

<http://www.sprc.hamilton.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/SPRC-HSL-Bulletin-15-Persistence-of-poverty-April-2017.pdf>

#### Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton. (2018). *Out of Control: Ontario’s Acute Rental Housing Crisis, Lessons from Hamilton and Quebec City*. Hamilton: Social Planning and Research Council

#### <http://www.sprc.hamilton.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/SPRC-Out-of-Control-rental-housing-report-June-2018-1.pdf>

#### Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada: Ana Eberly

#### <https://dignityforall.ca/eberly/>

## Week 8: March 10 (Asynchronous)

### Topic:

### Homelessness: The Canadian Context

### Readings:

* Hulchanski, J. D., Campsie, P., Chau, S. Hwang, S., Paradis, E. What’s in a Word? In: Hulchanski, J. David; Campsie, Philippa; Chau, Shirley; Hwang, Stephen; Paradis, Emily(eds.) *Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada* (e-book), Introduction. Toronto: Cities Centre, University of Toronto.

#### <https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/homelessness-what%E2%80%99s-word>

Thistle, J. (2017.) Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

<https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHIndigenousHomelessnessDefinition.pdf>

## Week 9: March 17: Interviews via Zoom for Assignment (Synchronous)

## Week 10: March 24 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

### Topic:

### Lived Experience of Homelessness: A Gendered Lens

### Readings:

* Mayock, P., Sheridan, S., Parker, S. (2015). ‘It’s just like we’re going around in circles and going back to the same thing . . . ’: The Dynamics of Women’s Unresolved Homelessness. *Housing Studies* *30, (6),* 877-900.
* I lived on the streets for years. Toronto Star

## Week 11: March 31 (Asynchronous)

### Topic: Homeless Helping Systems

### Readings:

* Kirkby, C. & Mettler, K. (2016). Women First: An Analysis of a Trauma-Informed, Women-Centred, Harm Reduction Housing Model for Women with Complex Substance Use and Mental Health Issues. In N. Nichols and C. Doberstein (Eds). Exploring Effective Systems Responses to Homelessness, Pp. 1-18. Toronto: The Homeless Hub

<http://homelesshub.ca/systemsresponses/21-women-first-analysis-trauma-informed-women-centred-harm-reduction-housing-model-women>

* Vaccaro, M. & Vengris, J. (2020) *Covid 19 is worsening homelessness and insecure housing for women.* Behind the Numbers Blog. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

<https://behindthenumbers.ca/2020/08/04/covid-19-is-worsening-homelessness-and-insecure-housing-for-women/>

## Week 12: April 7 (Synchronous: Zoom link can be found on the course website)

### Topic:

### Programs to Address Homelessness

### Readings:

* Gaetz, S. (2012). The real cost of homelessness; can we save money by doing the right thing? Toronto: Canadian Homeless Research Network Press.

#### <https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/costofhomelessness_paper21092012.pdf>

* Paradis, E, Brady, S., Cummings Diaz, P., Athumani, F., Pereira, I. We’re not asking, we’re telling: An inventory of practices promoting the dignity, autonomy and self-determination of women and families facing homelessness

Section One: Good Practices of Women & Families.

<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/goodpractice_report.pdf>

## Week 13: April 14

### Time for Completion of Assignments