

# Introduction to Social Work 1AA3: So You Think You Can Help

* September 3, 2019 to December 4, 2019, Mondays, 7-10 p.m.
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# Course Overview

## Course Description:

In this introductory course we will explore the idea of ‘helping’ in a world shaped by a wide range of ongoing forms of violence and struggle. We will critically engage with various understandings and ideas about help, and how these different ideas influence who is defined as one who ‘helps’ and as one who ‘requires help’, as well as what help looks like. We will spend time exploring our own assumptions about help and the issues and people we believe need help. In the process, we will examine the messy relationship between the common desire to be good and useful people and the ways in which our own lives are interwoven with the many inequalities of the world. In these various ways, we will approach help as a question rather than a fact.

The desire to help and to make things better is a motivating factor for many wishing to enter the field of social work and other helping fields. It underlies all social work interventions; at all levels of intervention (e.g., individual, family, group, communities). In this course we examine a number of ideas, constructs and theories that, while foundational to social work practice, policy, education and research can also be readily taken into other fields, disciplines and professions.

## Course Objectives:

Course objectives for course content: By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Examine mainstream understandings and representations of social problems and the underlying ideas, values and power structures that contribute to these problems.
2. Recognize and problematize frameworks for understanding social problems.
3. Identify and critically assess “helping” approaches that are influenced by these frameworks; how these approaches define who provides and who receives help; and the impacts of different ways of helping on those in receipt of these interventions.
4. Begin to understand and describe how the local, provincial, national, and international contexts of “helping” interact and influence each other.
5. Recognize the different structures involved in providing “help”.

Course objectives for university foundations: By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Critically engage with course material/readings by identifying keywords and main points, summarizing, and raising and responding to questions through discussions and presentations.
2. Demonstrate your academic writing skills by producing an essay with a clear topic, thesis statement, paragraph structure, and conclusions; strong academic sources; and proper citations.
3. Use your critical reflection skills to draw connections between course material, the broader social context, and your own experiences/perspectives and desire to help/be helpful and consider how you might apply this learning in your life.

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

We will spend approximately 1 hour each week in a large lecture format class that will include videos and other media, guest speakers, discussion and activities. Students will spend the remaining time of scheduled class time in tutorial workshops structured around experiential learning activities and discussion. Students will attend tutorials on a rotating schedule which is included below.

## Required Texts:

There are no required textbooks for this course. Instead, this course uses readings, media, and other source material that will be available through the library, on-line, or accessed by hyperlink from an electronic copy of this course outline. For some of these readings, you will need to enter your Mac ID. It is possible that some online journal links will “expire” during the course, in which case students should access the relevant online journal through the McMaster Library to retrieve an updated link.

Please note that the reading list on this outline may change over the course of the year. Please check Avenue to Learn for the most updated information on readings. In addition, the instructor and guest speakers will also suggest additional readings as the course proceeds. Students are also expected to be proactive learners and independently seek out additional readings and other knowledge over the duration of the course and to integrate these with the concepts presented in class

# Course Requirements/Assignments

## Requirements Overview and Deadlines

### Critical Reflection Paper (15% of final grade) Due October 11, 2019

1. Critical Literature Review (30% of final grade) Due November 22, 2019
2. Tutorial Attendance and Participation (20%) based submission of (5) tutorial reflection logs to TA’s Due: Sunday at 11:59pm one week following each scheduled tutorial
3. Final Exam (35%) TBD during exam period.

## Requirement/Assignment Details

### Critical Reflection Paper (15% of final grade)

* + Due: October 11, 2019 by 11:59pm
  + To be submitted electronically on Avenue to Learn in .doc or .docx format
  + TA’s will grade the paper. Feedback will be provided to students if requested.
  + Additional details will be discussed in class and posted on Avenue to Learn.

### Critical Literature Review (30% of final grade)

* + Due: November 22, 2019 by 11:59pm
  + To be submitted electronically on Avenue to Learn in .doc or .docx format
  + TA’s will grade the paper. Feedback will be provided to students if requested.
  + Additional details will be discussed in class and posted on Avenue to Learn.

### Tutorial Attendance and Participation (20% of final grade) based on submission of 5 reflection logs (worth 4% of final grade each)

* + Due: Sunday at 11:59pm one week following each scheduled tutorial for each student (example: if student is scheduled to attend tutorial on September 16th , tutorial log would be due by 11:59pm on September 22nd)
  + To be submitted electronically on Avenue to Learn.
  + Students will reflect on their tutorial participation by answering two questions in a brief text submission response.
  + TA’s will grade reflection logs. No feedback will be provided for these reflections.
  + Additional details will be discussed in class and posted on Avenue to Learn.

#### Final Exam (35% of final grade) Date To Be Determined

* + During the Fall 2019 exam period (December) students will complete a written exam worth 35% of their final mark.
  + Exam will be a mix of multiple choice, short answer, sentence completion and both short and long essay questions.
  + Details will be discussed in class and posted on Avenue to Learn closer to the exam date.

# Assignment Submission and Grading

## Form and Style

* All written assignments will be submitted via Avenue to Learn.
* Written assignments must be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student’s name, student number, tutorial section, TA name, 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.
* In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. This will be enabled on Avenue to Learn *only for certain assignments* and students will be notified in advance which assignments it will apply to. Assignments will not be submitted without your permission. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must speak to their TA regarding alternate options.  All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

## 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 with the course instructor.

We will use ‘Avenue to Learn’ for many purposes so it is important that you access it frequently. Through Avenue to Learn we will distribute additional information about course assignments and expectations; inform students about changes to assigned readings; update students on guest presenters; share links to required and optional on-line sources. Assignments will be accessed and submitted through Avenue to Learn. Class cancellations will also be announced through Avenue to Learn.

Please do not email the instructor or Teaching Assistants (TA) from Avenue as the email function does not allow us to respond to emails. Please use only vancampl@mcmaster.ca to email the course instructor. TA emails will be shared in class.

Students who are unfamiliar with the ‘Avenue to Learn’ system should familiarize themselves with the system as soon as possible; if you have any questions review the online tips and the ‘esupport’ help available on the McMaster ‘Avenue to Learn’ webpage. If a solution is not found please seek immediate assistance by contacting the TA or instructor.

How to Access Avenue to Learn: Step One: Make Sure You Are in the Avenue Database:

If you are officially registered in the course (and have paid your fees), you will be automatically enrolled in the Avenue database. Go to Step Two.

If you are not registered in the course or have not paid your fees, you will not be able to access the course on Avenue and you must remedy that situation. Then, wait until the Avenue database is updated. These updates are supposed to occur daily overnight, but there may be some delays at the beginning of the year. Also, if you register in the course during the first or second week of classes, wait two days; if you still can’t access the course in Avenue please contact your instructor.

Step Two: Login to Avenue

Go to the website: http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/index.html

Log in. Your user ID is your MAC ID. For example: if your email ID is: janed@mcmaster.ca; then your User ID is: janed. Your Avenue password is the same as your MAC ID password. If you do not have a MAC ID or you haven’t activated yours yet, you will need to do so. To do this, go to http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/email\_accounts/macid.html and follow the online instructions.

Step Three: Choose SW1BB3 under “My Courses”

From your personalized course listings, click on SW1BB3 for 2019. You are now inside the Avenue site for our course.

Do I need new software?

All you need to access Avenue is an internet browser. It is possible, though unlikely, that you will have to update your browser or change some of your “pop up” settings. If you have any problems viewing the site, go to the Avenue login page and click on "Browser Check”

eSupport for Avenue

You can access eSupport from the main Avenue site. Go to the login page; click “Support” on the left hand frame, then click on the “eSupport” hyperlink. Click “I am a student,” and you will have access to quick help, video tutorials, manual references, and more.

## Submitting Assignments & Grading

Most assignments will be submitted on Avenue to Learn. Feedback and grades will also be made available via Avenue to Learn

## 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

Attendance and participation comprise the tutorial grade. Attendance will not be taken during lecture time, however students are encouraged to attend class to facilitate their learning and integration of course materials.

## 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

## Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

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 either directly to Turnitin.com or 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.). To see the [Turnitin.com Policy](file:///C:\Users\Lorna\Documents\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\J07G1XFK\www.mcmaster.ca\academicintegrity).

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf) 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.

## Religious, Indigenous and 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.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/current-students/riso) about how to request accommodation.

## 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](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) ) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair ([prestosl@mcmaster.ca](mailto: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*](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) *) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (*[*prestosl@mcmaster.ca*](mailto:prestosl@mcmaster.ca)*).*

# Course Weekly Topics and Readings

## Week 1: September 9th, 2019

### Topics: Course Overview

### Readings & Tutorials:

* No readings for this week.
* No tutorials for this week.

## Week 2: September 16th, 2019

### Topics: Unpacking Helping – Representations of Helping

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Burr, V.(2003). Social constructionism (2nd ed.). *What is social constructionism?* (pp. 1-24). New York, NY: Routledge
* Tutorial A

## Week 3: September 23rd, 2019

### Topics: Socio-political Context of ‘Help’: Charity and Moral Models

### Readings & Tutorials:

* James, C. (2001). Reforming reform: Toronto's settlement house movement, 1900-1920.*The Canadian Historical Review*, 81(1). 55-90.
* BBC (2014). Ethics Guide: Arguments Against Charity. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/charity/against\_1.shtml
* Tutorial B

## Week 4: September 30th, 2019

### Topics: Socio-political Context of ‘Help’: Medical Models

### Readings & Tutorials:

* McCulloch, A., Ryrie, I., Williamson, T. & St. John, T. (2005). Has the medical model a future? *Mental Health Review*, 10,(1), pp. 1–11.
* By Happenchance, (2018, August 18). What is the medical model? And why do people hate it so much? Retrieved from https://www.byhappenchance.com/blogroll/what-is-the-medical-model
* Tutorial A

## Week 5: October 7th, 2019

### Topics: Socio-political Context of ‘Help’: Social Welfare and Other State Sponsored Models

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Macdonald, D.(2017). *Ontario needs a raise: who benefits from a $15 minimum wage?* Retrieved from Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
* Social Welfare Model [Wikipedia Page]. (n.d.). Retrieved August 12, 2019 from, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\_welfare\_model
* Tutorial B

## Week 6: October 14th, 2019 – Winter Intersession – No Classes!

## Week 7: October 21st, 2019

### Topics: Understanding Social Problems

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Lyon-Callo., V.(2012). Homelessness or the violence of poverty and exploitation: Does it matter? *Rethinking Marxism*, 24(2), 215-220.
* McIntyre, L., Tougas, D., Rondeau, K., & Mah, C.L.(2016). ‘In’-sights about food banks from a critical interpretive synthesis of academic literature. *Agriculture and Human Values.* 33(4). 843-859.
* Haggerty, R. (2013, December 19) *How to solve a social problem* [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVylRwmYmJE
* Tutorial A

## Week 8: October 28th, 2019

### Topics: Experiences of “help” and being “helped”

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Chouinard, V. & Crooks, V.(2005). 'Because they have all the power and I have none": state restructuring of income and employment supports and disabled women's lives in Ontario, Canada. *Disability & Society*, 20(1), 19-32.
* Seth, P., Slark, M., Boulanger, J.,& Dolmage, L.(2015). Survivors and sisters talk about the Huronia class action lawsuit, control, and the kind of support we want. *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*. 21,(2), 60-68.
* Tutorial B

## Week 9: November 4th, 2019

### Topics: Experiences of “help” and being “helped” continued

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Johnston, P., & Tester, F.(2015).The contradiction of helping: Inuit oppressions and social work in Nunavut. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 26, 246-262.
* CBC News: The National (2015, June 2) *Stolen Children: Residential School Survivors Speak* [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdR9HcmiXLA
* Tutorial A

## Week 10: November 11th, 2019

### Topics: ‘isms’ and Intersectionality

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Ferguson, S. (2014, September 29). *What is Privilege?* Retrieved from https://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/what-is-privilege/
* Ngozi Adichie, C. (2009, July) *The danger of a single story* [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\_adichie\_the\_danger\_of\_a\_single\_story?language=en
* Carbado, D.W., Crenshaw. K.W., Mays, V.M., & Tomlinson, B. (2013). Intersectionality: Mapping the movements of a theory. *Du Bois Review,* 10(2). 303-312.
* Tutorial B

## Week 11: November 18th, 2019

### Topics: Helping Internationally

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Heron, B.(2006). Critically considering international social work practica. *Critical Social Work. 7(2).*
* Richey, L. A., & Ponte, S. (2008). Better (Red)™ than Dead? Celebrities, consumption and international aid. *Third world quarterly*, *29*(4), 711-729.
* Tutorial A

## Week 12: November 25th, 2019

### Topics: So, can “help” be helpful?

### Readings & Tutorials:

* Dunn, E. (2019, April) *SHelping others makes us happier: But it matters how we do it* [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\_dunn\_helping\_others\_makes\_us\_happier\_but\_it\_matters\_how\_we\_do\_it
* Benjamin, A. (2017). Doing anti-oppressive social work: The importance of resistance, history, and strategy.. In D. Baines (Ed.), *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice: Social Justice Social Work* (pp.). Blackpoint, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
* Tutorial B

## Week 13: December 2nd, 2019

### Topics: Course Review & Exam Prep

### Readings & Tutorials:

* No readings for this week.
* No tutorials for this week. Any tutorials that are missed may be scheduled during this period.