canadian society: Social Problems, social policy, and the law

SUMMER 2022

**Instructor:** Dr. Erica Speakman

**Email:** hiltze@mcmasmter.ca

**Lecture:** Online

**Office:** KTH 213/Zoom

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

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# Course Description

What are social problems, and how can we solve them? These questions are at the heart of this course, where we will explore social problems within the Canadian context. We will discuss several sociological lenses through which we can understand social problems, as well as touch on the plethora of research that has been carried out within this field. We will also be considering how social policy and the law can both solve, as well as exacerbate, certain social problems. Over the course of the semester, we will be examining social problems related to: Inequality, Intimate Relations, Health and Illness, Crime and Criminal Justice, and the Environment

# 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 social problems, 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 shaping and responding to social problems
* Be able to apply concepts learned to current situations and events in the community, and around the world.
* Enhance their critical thinking, writing, and organizational skills through course assignments

# Required Materials and Texts

* **Required**: Tepperman, L., Guzman, C., & Sendroiu, I. (2019). *Picturing Social Problems*. Oxford University Press.
* All other assigned and supplemental readings will be posted on Avenue to Learn

# Class Format

This is an online course that will be run through Avenue to Learn. Each week, 2 lectures will be posted and will be made available for **72 hours**. After this time has passed, the lecture content will no longer be available. Drop-in sessions with the instructor will be scheduled throughout the term via Zoom.

# Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Quizzes - 30% (3 quizzes at 10% each)
2. Mid-Term Exam – 20%,
3. Discussion Posts – 30% (6 posts at 5% each)
4. Final Exam – 20%

# Course Evaluation – Details

## Quizzes (10% Each = 30%), Due: June 29, July 20, and July 27, 2022

Throughout the term, you will complete THREE quizzes that will be based on both lecture and reading material. Each quiz will consist of 20 multiple choice/true or false questions. They are open-book assessments and will be administered through Avenue to Learn. You will have 30 minutes to complete the test, which will be available from 9am-9pm on the day they are due

## Discussion Posts (5% Each = 30%), Due Each Week

For this course, you will respond to SIX discussion questions on Avenue to Learn. In order to get full marks on your response, you must draw from the course material.

## Midterm Exam (20%), Due: July 13, 2022

The exam will be based on both the lectures and the readings. It will consist of multiple choice, true or false, and short answer questions. The exam will be administered through Avenue to Learn. You will have 2 hours to complete the exam, which will be available from 9am-9pm on the day it is due

## Final Exam (20%), Due: August 3, 2022

The exam will be based on both the lectures and the readings. It will consist of multiple choice, true or false, and short answer questions. Please note that the exam is **not cumulative.** The exam will be administered through Avenue to Learn. You will have 2 hours to complete the exam, which will be available from 9am-9pm on the day it is due

# Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS | DUE |
| **Week 1** | **Lecture 1:** Introduction to the Course  **Lecture 2:**  Understanding Social Problems | **Chapter 1**  **Best:** *Damned Lies and Statistics - Introduction* | **Discussion Post Due June 24 by 11:59pm** |
| **Week 2** | **Lecture 3:**  Economic Inequality  **Lecture 4:**  Racism and Ethnic Inequality | **Chapters 2 and 3**  ***Supplemental:*** “*Building Understanding: The First Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty – Chapter 2*”  *BLM Canada Website*  “*Anti-Asian Discrimination on the Rise in Canada, U of T Researchers Find*” | **Discussion Post Due July 3 by 11:59pm**  **Quiz 1 Due June 29 – Quiz will cover Lecture 2, as well as Ch. 1 and Best reading** |
| **Week 3** | **Lecture 5:** Gender Inequality  **Lecture 6:**  Sexualities and Family Life | **Chapters 4, 5, and 11**  ***Supplemental:*** *“Experts fear the pandemic may have devastating effects on working moms”* *- The National Post*  *‘Historic moment’: Conversion therapy officially banned in Saskatoon” - Global News* | **Discussion Post Due July 8 by 11:59pm** |
| **Week 4** | **Lecture 7:** Aging  **Lecture 8:** Health and Illness | **Chapters 6 and 9**  ***Supplemental:***  Webster. *COVID-19 highlights Canada's care home crisis*  *“Changing the minds of the vaccine hesitant requires actually listening to them” - Maclean’s* | **Discussion Post Due July 15 by 11:59pm**  **Midterm Exam Due July 13 – Exam will cover material from Weeks 1-3** |
| **Week 5** | **Lecture 9:** Work  **Lecture 10:** Schools | **Chapters 12 and 13**  ***Supplemental:*** *“Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Panel – Final Report - HWDSB* | **Discussion Post Due July 22 by 11:59pm**  **Quiz 2 Due July 20 – Covers Lectures 7 and 8, as well as Chs. 6 and 9** |
| **Week 6** | **Lecture 11:** Crime and Criminal Justice  **Lecture 12:** The Environment | **Chapters 13 & 15**  ***Supplemental:*** *“2 Years After Legalizing Cannabis, Has Canada Kept Its Promises?” - The New York Times* | **Discussion Post Due July 29 by 11:59pm**  **Quiz 3 Due July 27 – Covers Lectures 9 and 10, as well as Chs. 12 and 13** |
| **Week 7** | **Review and Final Exam** |  | **The Final Exam is Due August 3 – Exam will cover material from Weeks 4-6** |

# Course Policies

## Submission of Assignments

Please submit discussion posts to the appropriate folder on Avenue

## 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 |

## Late Assignments

The due dates for assignments are fixed and non-negotiable unless you are registered with SAS or 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**

**Review of Marks**

We will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, we will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.***

To request a review of a mark, write a ½ page memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error and submit this memo to your Teaching Assistant. You may submit requests for review no sooner than 24 hours after receiving a grade, and no later than one week after assignments/exams are released back to the class.

If, after this review of your mark, you continue to dispute the mark, you may submit an appeal to Professor Speakman. Write a 1-page memo describing the dispute with the reviewed mark and submit it along with the original assignment and all written feedback from the Teaching Assistant. Professor Speakman will not review any marks not already reviewed by the respective Teaching Assistant.

## 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 plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. 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 to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

# University Policies

## Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior 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 behavior 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, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## 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](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

## Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.