

**SOCIOLOGY 3B03**  
**Selected Topics in the Sociology of Education**  
**(Education in the Field)**

Winter 2020	
<b>Day and Time of Classes:</b>	Instructor: Dr. Karen Robson
Wednesday 1230-220pm	klrobson@mcmaster.ca
Monday 130 – 220pm	<b>Student hours:</b>
	Wednesday 11am-12:15pm
Class Location: ABB B118	

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The sociology of education examines the social construction of formal institutions of learning. Indeed, we are learning about this topic within a formal institution of learning.

A key component of this course is contribution to education-related initiatives. This will be accomplished in three ways: 1) volunteering your time in one of the field positions that is organized through Experiential Education (approximately 24 hours over the term), and 2) participating in a Reconciliation project, and 3) authoring a Wikipedia entry related to the sociology of education.

Your experiences in these sites of learning and history will be examined alongside many elements related to the sociology of education. Sociological theories that are pertinent to the sociology of education are considered early in the course to give us grounding from which to understand various educational processes and outcomes. We cannot ignore the history of the education system in Canada (and how it was shaped through traditions from England and beyond), and thus we also consider how historical processes have given us a strong discourse around what education is “meant to be” and how structures created from historical processes are shaping inequalities we observe in the educational landscape.

We also consider how school is a major force of socialization and the ramifications of such processes. We will consider how race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, dis/ability, citizenship, place of birth and other markers influence students’ educational trajectories and overall life chances and how this is observed in our chosen education field sites. From these socialization experiences emerge structural and social inequalities in school settings and beyond, of which we are asked to think of the wider implications of such processes.

## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, [University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#)).

1. This course encourages students to critically examine how the process of education is socially constructed and the larger social ramifications of such processes and by doing so, expands the student's *depth and breadth of knowledge*;
2. This course requires students to communicate with others within their education field visits and convey those experiences in seminar, requiring that students the ability to *communicate accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences*;
3. The linkage between field visits and course readings requires the *application of knowledge* from the textbook and journal articles to real life social processes around schooling, educational systems, and pedagogical issues.

## **Course Text / Readings**

### **Required textbook**

Robson, Karen (2013) *Sociology of Education in Canada. First Edition*. Pearson Education.  
\*\*\*THIS BOOK IS DISTRIBUTED BY THE PROFESSOR AS AN ELECTRONIC VERSION  
FREE OF CHARGE\*\*\*\*

### **Additional required readings:**

All other readings are accessible through McMaster e-resources. You will receive Avenue to Learn messages on the citation information for additional required readings.

Additional readings, relevant news items, reports, etc. will be regularly posted on the course Avenue to Learn site.

## OUTLINE

Date	Volunteer placement	Reconciliation project	Wikipedia component	Required Reading
Monday, January 6, 2020 Wednesday, January 8, 2020	Introduction Pick placement Police check	Introduction Select project	Wikipedia training module (required)	tbd
Monday, January 13, 2020 Wednesday, January 15, 2020	Sign up for WordPress blog Attend placement		Make basic edits in Wikipedia	
Monday, January 20, 2020 Wednesday, January 22, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Choose articles	
Monday, January 27, 2020 Wednesday, January 29, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Review of using sources	
Monday, February 3, 2020 Wednesday, February 5, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Narrow down articles	
Monday, February 10, 2020 Wednesday, February 12, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Draft starter article in sandbox	
Monday, February 17, 2020 Wednesday, February 19, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Move article to the main page	
Monday, February 24, 2020 Wednesday, February 26, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Review feedback from editors	
Monday, March 2, 2020 Wednesday, March 4, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Peer review of articles (student to student)	
Monday, March 9, 2020 Wednesday, March 11, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Respond to feedback	
Monday, March 16, 2020 Wednesday, March 18, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Group presentations on Wikipedia	
Monday, March 23, 2020 Wednesday, March 25, 2020	Attend placement Blog		Wikipedia assignment due	
Monday, March 30, 2020 Wednesday, April 1,	Attend placement Blog			

2020				
Monday, April 6, 2020	Attend placement Blog	Final reflection paper due Fundraiser event		

## METHOD OF EVALUATION

There are various means of evaluation in this class that serve to give you experience in education-related settings and gain work-related experience using various technologies, and for some students, the experience of event-planning. While these practices may deviate from traditional lecture/term paper courses, they do have the advantage of giving you skills, work experience, and networks that you would not have had prior to this class, and are therefore widely applicable to your future employment prospects.

### *1. Service to the wider education community project*

You will be required to perform 24 hours of volunteer service to an education-related program, which will be facilitated through the Office for Experiential Education. This is not optional. A wide variety of options and times are available.

You will be evaluated on a creation of a Word Press blog that journals your experience in the volunteer placement. Your group journal should be updated throughout the term, documenting your experiences and reflections. Please be sure not to add photos or any identifying characteristics of minors that you are working with.

(Group work on blog of up to 4 allowed)  
--25%

### *2. TRC Reconciliation service to Indigenous community* (students who self-identify as Indigenous will have an alternate assignment if requested) --25%

This can take one of two forms:

- a) Group participation in the creation and hosting of a “Save the Evidence” fundraiser for the Woodland Cultural Centre to occur on McMaster campus in early April. As a group you will be jointly responsible for organizing all aspects of this fundraising and liaising with the Woodland Cultural Centre. **[confirmed]**
- b) Volunteer a minimum of 8 hours at Native Women’s Centre in Hamilton (<http://www.nativewomenscentre.com/volunteer>) to be organized by yourself

You will be evaluated by three-page (double-spaced) reflection paper where you evaluate your contributions to the reconciliation service you have given and how it meets the TRC Calls to Action. This paper will be uploaded to Avenue.

### *3. Knowledge dissemination service project* (Group of up to 4 allowed)

In this project (group work allowed if desired), you will create a Wikipedia entry for a education-related topic that has either no existing entry or a very weak existing entry. You will consult with Dr Robson before finalizing the term you will be adding to Wikipedia. You will be added to the online Wikipedia dashboard which will give you weekly prompts about your expected progress.

--25% (training module required to be completed in order to be graded)

#### **4. Participation**

-Participation in class requires not just attending, but actively contributing to discussions. If you are consistently unable to attend class, it will affect your grade. There are no alternative means of assessing participation. Participation also involves paying attention in class. Students should not text, look at social media, or engage with their smart phones during seminar **except in the case of emergencies or to access class-related materials**. Students who are distracted by their phones during class will be graded as absent.

--25%

**ACADEMIC PLACEMENT:** Academic placements are subject to the guidelines set out by the Faculty of Social Science. The benefits to academic placements are many: students are able to apply what they are learning in class through practical and hands-on experiences; they are able to learn from those with experience working in the field; and they are able to make contacts and build their resume. All of these benefits will enrich learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of placement at an approved education-related placement organized through the Office of Experiential Education. These opportunities are available both after school and during school in Hamilton and surrounding communities.

**ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO UNDERGO A POLICE CHECK.**

Students completing unpaid placements as part of an academic course are required to complete the following documents and return them to Ruthanne Talbot: 1) Students must sign the student declaration letter, required to let them know, via sign-off, they have coverage via WSIB or ACE/private coverage and to report incidents accordingly; 2) Placement “employers” sign off on letter to placement employers, noting that they have been informed that WSIB coverage (or ACE/private coverage) is provided via the MTCU, and therefore their respective WSIB standings (i.e. premiums) will not be effected, and; 3) Students and placement “employers” will sign off on the Pre-Placement Safety Orientation Checklist

### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and 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 kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

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 other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations. Exam answers are checked for plagiarism on Turnitin.

### **DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

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.

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.

### **Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

### **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](#) policy.