

Sociology 4HH3: Sociology Students and the Work World

Fall, 2019.

Day and Time of Class: Mon., 2:30 pm to 5:20 pm.

Instructor: Dr. D. Young.

Office: KTH/629, Ext. 23615.

Office Hours: Mon., 11:30 am to 12:30 pm and Thurs., 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.

Email: youngd@mcmaster.ca.

Course Outline

Contact Information

My name is Dr. Young. My office location and hours are indicated above. Feel free to drop by or call during these times. I would appreciate it if you would make every effort to see me during scheduled office hours. However, if you are unable to speak with me during my office hours, you may ask me to arrange an appointment for you. My office hours will not be in effect during scheduled university closures (e.g., holidays), scheduled university breaks (e.g., mid-term recess weeks), or the term-end examination periods.

My office telephone number is indicated above. Please leave your name, a telephone number (spoken slowly), and a very brief message.

My email address is indicated above. Before sending an email message, please check to see if your question has already been answered in this course outline. Please also ensure that your inquiry deals with something short and simple; complicated matters require discussion in person (i.e., during office hours or by appointment). Since email to professors and TAs is an aspect of business communication, and since it is important for you to acquire business communication skills, please follow the instructions below when sending a message:

- Please ensure that your message is sent from your McMaster email account (not from any other email account or from Avenue to Learn mail). This is official policy adopted by the Faculty of Social Sciences, and university personnel are not required to reply to email originating from a non-McMaster email address.
- Please ensure that you use "Sociology 4HH3" as a subject line.
- Please ensure that you include an appropriate greeting following by my title and last name (e.g., "Dear Dr. Young", "Hello Dr. Young", or "Hi Dr. Young"). When writing to TAs (if any TAs have been assigned to the course), please use a similar greeting followed by their name. Please understand that "Hey" is not an appropriate greeting in business communication.
- Please write your email message in a professional manner (e.g., being polite and using full sentences with correct spelling).
- Please sign off in a professional manner (e.g., writing "Thank you", "Thanks", "Regards", or "Sincerely" followed by your full name).

Email that fails to follow the instructions noted above may not be answered. Even if you have followed the instructions, please do not expect an immediate response. Professors and TAs are busy people, and it may take us up to two business days to reply. Furthermore, please keep in mind that email will only be read and answered during regular business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm). If you have not received a reply after two full business days, please check to see if you followed all of the instructions provided above. If you did and still did not receive a response, it may be that the message was not received or somehow got missed. At that point, please send a follow-up message.

Course Description

This course is designed to assist students who will soon be graduating with an undergraduate sociology degree and either pursuing further education at the graduate level or directly entering the world of work.

The course is divided into three sections, each of which covers important issues that sociology students need to be aware of and think about in order to enhance their prospects in the work world. Practical advice will be offered, but a great deal of attention will also be given to sociological research and other academic research related to the topics of the course.

Part I of the course considers what is involved with utilizing and building on an education in sociology. We will examine research on the skills and personal attributes that employers are looking for in job candidates as well as research on how university students see issues connected to employability. This will provide the foundation for exploring how a four year undergraduate sociology degree gives students the opportunity to develop the skills and personal attributes that are of interest to employers as well as graduate schools, law schools, and teaching colleges. While utilizing their sociology education to enhance their employability, sociology students also have to start building on that education; they have to decide between pursuing further education or directly seeking employment, so we will conclude Part I by considering both of these options.

Part II of the course focuses on preparing for further education and preparing for the process of seeking employment. We will study research on the prospects for sociology graduates (i.e., research on the employment of former sociology students). We will then turn to issues that graduates of undergraduate sociology programs need to think about as they get ready for the future. As we will discover, it is important for sociology graduates to begin by undertaking a self-assessment (which includes critical assessment of their skills and personal attributes) and engaging in sociological reflection (by considering what they have learned from an undergraduate program in sociology and how this can be useful in terms of seeking employment and developing a life-long career). We will then discuss the next step for sociology graduates, which entails preparing a resume or a curriculum vitae that effectively conveys their personal attributes and the skills they have acquired through completion of a sociology degree and possibly further education. In order to pursue further education or employment, sociology graduates need letters of recommendation from professors or former employers. We will discover what is involved with these letters, including the importance of making a strongly favourable impression on professors or former employers in relation to skills and personal attributes.

Part III of the course examines several topics associated with seeking employment. We will consider various issues connected to the job search that are important for sociology graduates

to be aware of. These include the process of researching jobs, the importance of networking with other people and developing ties that will enhance the chances of finding a job, and the positive or negative implications of social media with regard to seeking employment. Finally, we will address issues connected to job interviews and hiring decisions.

Course Learning Objectives

This course has several objectives. By the end of the course, you will:

- understand the skills and personal attributes that employers, graduate schools, law schools, and teaching colleges are looking for.
- comprehend how a sociology degree provides an opportunity to develop important skills and desirable personal attributes.
- grasp the various options available to sociology students in terms of further education or direct entry to the world of work.
- recognize how to engage in critical self-assessment and sociological reflection in preparation for further education or direct entry to the work world.
- know how to emphasize important skills and desirable personal attributes through a resume or curriculum vitae.
- be cognizant of factors that can affect your chances of getting positive letters of recommendation (which provide an assessment of skills and personal attributes).
- be aware of what is involved with the job search, job interviews, and hiring decisions.
- be able to interpret all of the above through a sociological lens by drawing on academic materials, including papers published in sociology journals or other academic journals.

All of the objectives noted above are associated with the topic and content of the course. Additional objectives are connected to several of McMaster's Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations:

[Link to Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#)

In particular, you will have the opportunity to enhance the depth and breadth of your knowledge as you learn about theoretical ideas and empirical research associated with the transition from university education to the work world. Along with verbal participation in classes, the written work in the course will help to enhance your communication skills. Finally, you will be encouraged to deepen your autonomy and professional capacity by developing qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study and employment (e.g., business communication skills, reliability, maturity, time management skills, and behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility).

Course Format

This course is scheduled to run for up to three hours on Mondays at the time noted above. You will be given a 15 minute break at a convenient point (toward the middle of the class period). You must be prepared to stay for the entire class.

The format will vary from week to week. In all weeks, I will give a formal lecture. However, the lecture itself will not necessarily take up the full three hours of class time. In part, that is

because we will periodically break from the lecture for discussions or other active learning activities. Furthermore, in some weeks, there may also be a short guest lecture from a former sociology student who will visit the class to discuss his or her experiences with further education or employment in the work world.

Please Note (Hearing Problem): Please keep in mind that I am partially deaf. This makes it difficult for me to hear comments or questions during lectures, especially if there are many students in a course or if a classroom has poor acoustics. Therefore, I would very much appreciate your co-operation in two ways:

1. If you are inclined to ask questions, please sit near the front of the classroom. If you would prefer to sit at the back, then perhaps you could save your questions for after class or during my office hours. I would be happy to address your questions then. Depending on the size and acoustics of the classroom, I may not be able to hear questions from the back of the room.
2. When students are asking questions, or when any class discussions are taking place, please listen and refrain from making any noise. Competition from other sounds (talking, sorting notes, adjusting chairs, etc.) makes it extremely difficult for me to hear what someone is saying to me.

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 McMaster email 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.

Avenue to Learn will be used in a limited way during this course. It will be used to communicate major announcements and to distribute various documents (such as course handouts or lecture slides). Avenue will also be used to distribute grades for computer-scanned results of in-class tests (but not grades for written work, grades for any aspect of a final examination, or final course grades).

Please do not contact me through Avenue to Learn. There are two reasons for this. First, I rarely go on Avenue, and I prefer to use my McMaster email account for correspondence. Second, it is impossible to reply to a message sent from Avenue to a McMaster email account. Consequently, if you expect your message to be read and answered, please send the message from your McMaster email account to my McMaster email account.

Please be aware that material posted on Avenue to Learn is protected by copyright. You are permitted to print or download one copy of material that I have written (e.g., course handouts or lecture slides) so that you can privately read or study this material. However, any further copying or any distribution of these materials (e.g., to websites or to students not enrolled in the course) is strictly prohibited. If some academic writing has been posted on Avenue (e.g., an excerpt from a book), please note that this has been done under provisions in Canada's Copyright Act.

Course Requirements

The course requirements, and the weights attached to them in the calculation of your final grade, are as follows:

Test on Part I (30%); scheduled for Oct. 7.

Test on Part II (30%); scheduled for Nov. 11.

Final Examination on Part III (40%); scheduled by the Registrar (Dec. 6 to Dec. 19).

You must complete all of these course requirements. More information about the course requirements can be found in the sections below.

The Tests and Final Examination

The two tests will be 50 minutes long. They will include multiple choice questions as well as true/false questions (but not short-answer questions or essay questions). Most of the questions will be multiple choice, but some will be true/false. While the majority of the multiple-choice or true/false questions will be based on the lectures, a minority of the questions will be based on the required readings. Questions based on the required readings will cover important points that you should have picked up from doing the readings (e.g., definitions of concepts or explanations of key issues or ideas). Questions based on the lectures will go into greater detail (e.g., definitions of concepts, examples of concepts, aspects of particular theories or studies, and contributions of theorists or researchers). I will not ask questions about specific dates (e.g., the year in which a book was published), but I might ask questions about general timeframes (e.g., which of several theories was developed first or which approach to research was dominant in a particular decade).

The final examination will be two hours long. It will include multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and possibly essay questions. For information about the nature of the multiple choice and true/false questions, please read the paragraph above. In addition to answering multiple choice and true/false questions, you may be expected to answer one essay question from a choice between two questions. In each of these essay questions, I will identify a specific section of the lecture on a topic and ask you to demonstrate your comprehension of the material covered in that particular section. You will need to show detailed knowledge of the definitions, examples, descriptions, and analyses presented in that part of the lecture.

Please be aware that all essay questions and all lecture-based multiple choice or true/false questions will be derived from the current lecture material. This means that you will need the definitions, examples, descriptions, and analyses presented in the version of the course that you are taking. If you use out-dated lecture notes from an earlier version of the course, you may not have the material you need to be successful.

Before each test or examination, I will post an announcement on Avenue to Learn which presents more specific information (e.g., noting testing locations, indicating the exact number of multiple choice and true/false questions, specifying the weights attached to particular types of questions, and providing other information). The announcement will appear on Avenue at least one week before the test or examination is to be held, and it is your responsibility to carefully read that announcement.

In-class tests will not be re-scheduled to accommodate vacations or other travel arrangements. If travel arrangements mean that you are not going to be available on the scheduled test date(s) noted above, you are advised to drop the course. Only certain conditions are acceptable grounds for missing in-class tests. For details, see the section below regarding “Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work.” You should also be aware that McMaster’s Undergraduate Calendar states: “Examinations are not rescheduled for purposes of travel.” If you miss the final examination, I do not have the authority to let you write it. You will have to deal with other university personnel. Please see the Undergraduate Calendar for the university’s policies regarding deferred examinations.

If you miss an in-class test, and if I give you permission to write a make-up test (see the section below regarding “Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work”), please be aware that you will be given only one chance to make up the missed test. Missing the scheduled make-up test (for any reason) will result in a grade of zero for that test. You will not get a third chance to write it.

Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster University has a policy on “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.” This policy is explained in the Undergraduate Calendar. Building on that general policy, the Faculty of Social Sciences has established a policy titled “Student Absence Information: Academic Missed Work Procedures.” This policy can be found on the Faculty’s website:

[Link to Missed Work Procedures in Social Sciences](#)

The following is a combined summary of these policy statements (along with my requirement that students must enter into a written agreement with me for completing missed work). More detailed information can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar and on the website for the Faculty of Social Sciences. You are strongly advised to consult these sources and have a full understanding of the policy statements.

The appropriate approach for requesting relief due to missed academic term work depends on the value of the missed work as well as your specific situation:

1. For medical or personal situations lasting up to three calendar days and affecting academic work worth less than 25% of the final grade, students must use the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) online self-reporting tool. No further documentation is required. Students may submit requests for relief using the MSAF once per term. An automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must contact the instructor immediately (i.e., within 2 working days) to discuss possible consideration. Any consideration that may be provided for missed work is the decision of the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may result in no consideration given for missed work. If I grant accommodation, students will be required to enter into a written agreement that sets out conditions for completing the missed academic work. Failure to enter into a written agreement within a specified time frame will result in no consideration given for missed work. The MSAF cannot be used to meet a religious obligation or to celebrate an important religious holiday; as noted below, such accommodation is addressed through a separate university policy (the “Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances”). The MSAF cannot be used for academic work that has already been completed or attempted.

An MSAF applies only to work that is due within the period for which the MSAF applies, i.e., the 3-day period that is specified in the MSAF. However, all work due in that period can be covered by one MSAF. The MSAF cannot be used to apply for relief for any final examination or its equivalent.

2. For medical or personal situations lasting more than three calendar days, and/or for missed academic work worth 25% or more of the final grade, and/or for any requests for relief in a term where the MSAF has been used previously in that term, students must report to their Faculty/Program Office (i.e., their Associate Dean's office) to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation. If the reason for a request for relief is medical, the approved McMaster University Medical Form covering the relevant dates must be submitted. The student must be seen by a doctor at the earliest possible date, normally on or before the date of the missed work, and the doctor must verify the duration of the illness. If the reason is non-medical (e.g., a death in the family), appropriate documentation with verifiable origin covering the relevant dates must be submitted, normally within three working days of when the work was missed. Documentation for travel arrangements will not be accepted by the Faculty of Social Sciences. Students may be required to meet with an Academic Advisor to discuss the circumstances surrounding their missed work. In deciding whether or not to grant accommodation, adequacy of the supporting documentation, including the timing in relation to the date of the missed work and the degree of incapacitation, may be taken into account. Following verification of the documentation and approval by an Academic Advisor (if appropriate), the Faculty Office will send an automated MSAF notification to the course instructor (or, in special cases, an email). Students will also receive a copy of the notification or email. Students must contact the instructor immediately (i.e., within 2 working days) to discuss possible consideration. Any consideration that may be provided for missed work is the decision of the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may result in no consideration given for missed work. If I grant accommodation, students will be required to enter into a written agreement that sets out conditions for completing the missed academic work. Failure to enter into a written agreement within a specified time frame will result in no consideration given for missed work.

As far as the Faculty of Social Sciences is concerned, submitting an MSAF or submitting documentation only gives students the opportunity to discuss possible consideration with the instructor. In other words, there is no guarantee that an instructor will provide any accommodation. An instructor may deny accommodation to students for various reasons (e.g., if they have submitted an MSAF far too late; if they have submitted inadequate documentation or submitted the documentation too late; or if they have failed to follow-up in a timely manner by requesting accommodation through McMaster email within 2 working days).

Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the "Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances" (the RISO policy). Students requiring an RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office (normally within 10 working days of the beginning of the term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation) or

to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructor as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Disability Accommodation Letters

Students who require academic accommodation for a disability must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. SAS can be contacted by phone (905-525-9140, Ext. 28652) or email (sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's policy on "Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities."

If you have a disability, you will need an accommodation letter from SAS to arrange your accommodations with me (as well as your other instructors). Please go to the following link and carefully read all of the information provided about how to set up your accommodations for particular courses you are taking:

[Link to SAS Instructions for Activating Accommodations](#)

At the link noted above, SAS states: "When your instructor reviews and acknowledges receipt of your accommodations, an auto generated email will be sent to you requesting you to communicate with your instructor." Furthermore, SAS indicates the following: "You are expected to communicate at the beginning of the term with each of your instructors for all courses with accommodations requested. SAS strongly recommends you meet with your instructors in person to discuss your accommodation plan and implementation. Failure to follow through may result in the University being unable to fulfil the Academic Accommodation requirement for that particular situation."

In line with the SAS statements quoted above, please communicate with me at the beginning of the term so that we can discuss your accommodations. As specified by SAS, it is best to meet with instructors in person. However, in order to protect your confidentiality and ensure that we have enough time to address your accommodations, please do not try to discuss your accommodations with me in the classroom right before or after a class. Instead, please drop in during my scheduled office hours or contact me via McMaster email to set up an appointment for a time outside of my office hours so that we can talk about your needs more discreetly. Please bring two copies of your accommodation letter to the meeting in my office. A meeting will only take about five to ten minutes. We will review your accommodations and discuss your needs. I will then write notes on both copies of your accommodation letter (indicating what we have agreed to). I will keep one copy and give you the other. While some accommodations are straight-forward, others require a conversation and agreement in advance in order to avoid potential confusion or misunderstanding. Although a meeting is preferable for this reason, it may be possible to discuss your accommodations and make arrangements via email if a meeting is difficult for you.

Grading Schemes

This course may utilize two different marking schemes. Percentage grades will be used for any multiple choice or true/false testing. Letter grades will be used for any written work. Letter grades are preferred for written work since a numerical scheme implies that it is possible to produce a perfect piece of writing. However, for purposes of interpretation and calculation of a final course grade, the numerical mid-point of a letter grade (or the approximate numerical mid-

point) will also be provided. In the case of a failing grade (i.e., an F), the numerical equivalent (between 0%-49%) will be the decision of the marker.

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. It can result in: the grade of zero on an assignment; loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (the 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 (which is available through the web page for the Office of Academic Integrity):

[Link to Office of Academic Integrity](#)

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; and copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Use of Laptop Computers in the Classroom

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

If you want to use a laptop computer to take notes, you must use a battery in your computer or sit directly beside a wall and wall outlet. If you are seen stringing a cord to reach an outlet, you will be told to disconnect the cord. This policy is being adopted to ensure safety in the classroom. Please understand that other people could get hurt by tripping over your cord (if it is lying on the floor) or walking into it (if it is left hanging).

Departmental, Faculty, and University Policies

Do not fax assignments. When there are assignments in my courses, you are also not permitted to submit them by email or email attachment. Only a hard copy of written work will be accepted.

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

Students should check the Department of Sociology's website as well as the Undergraduate Bulletin Board outside the Sociology Office (KTH 627) for notices pertaining to Sociology

classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, and tutorial information).

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 (e.g., severe weather or labour disruptions). If modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice will be given to students with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels (e.g., McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn, and McMaster email). It is the responsibility of students to check these communication channels regularly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email 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.

Required Readings

There are two sets of required readings for this course. Some required readings come from a textbook, and other required readings have been assembled in a courseware package. Both of the following are available for purchase through the Campus Store:

Lambert, S. (2009). *Great jobs for sociology majors* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
Young, D. (2019). *Custom courseware for Sociology 4HH3*. Hamilton: McMaster University.

Some additional required readings are only available through websites. You can find the links to these readings in the "Course Schedule" below. The links were working at the time this course outline was finalized. If the links are no longer working when you try to access the articles, please let me know and I will provide the class with more information on how to access these materials.

All of these required readings are crucial to your success in the course. You will be tested on the readings through the two in-class tests and the final examination.

Course Lectures

I will not simply summarize the required readings in the lectures. The lectures will utilize material from the required readings, but they will also go beyond the readings in a variety of ways. They will often address theories, concepts, issues, etc. that are not discussed in the readings. The lectures and the readings are intended to complement each other, not copy each other.

I will post PowerPoint slides on Avenue to Learn after a lecture has been given, but it is important for you to understand that these slides will not be lecture notes. Rather, the slides will be "structural outlines" of lectures (setting out the headings and sub-headings used to organize the material) along with "supplementary slides" that provide some details from the lectures (e.g., selected key words, certain sketchy points, and graphs or tables). You need to realize that

much of the lecture material will be presented verbally. Therefore, unless you regularly attend the lectures, you will not have the material you need to be successful on a test or examination. You will only internalize the course material effectively if you regularly attend the lectures, listen to the explanations I give, take your own notes on these explanations, and take the opportunity to ask questions if I have said something you do not understand. The PowerPoint slides are best used when writing lecture notes and when later organizing or re-writing these notes.

You are not allowed to make audio recordings or video recordings during the lectures, or to take photos during the lectures, without written permission from the instructor. Usually, only certain disability students are allowed to make audio recordings. If students have an accommodation letter from SAS indicating that audio recordings of lectures are a necessary accommodation for a disability, and if these students discuss this accommodation with me, then they will be allowed to make audio recordings of lectures.

Please be aware that my lectures are protected by copyright. Like any piece of academic writing, lectures draw upon academic material produced by others. However, in lectures – as in journal articles or books – the selection and organization of material, as well as the arguments and analyses based on the material, are unique to the person who did the academic writing. Your lecture notes will reflect and reproduce the unique work that I have done, and distribution of that work is protected by copyright. You are certainly permitted (and encouraged) to take notes on my lectures so that you can privately read and study these notes. You are also permitted to share lecture notes with other students in the course on an individual basis (e.g., giving notes to a friend who missed a lecture). However, any mass electronic distribution of lecture notes (e.g., through Avenue to Learn mail or a lecture-sharing website) is not permitted. Furthermore, any attempt to secure individual gain from the distribution of lecture notes (e.g., by selling lecture notes for profit or receiving any form of compensation from a lecture-sharing website) is strictly prohibited.

Inappropriate and Disrespectful Behaviour

It is your responsibility to attend all classes in this course, to be on time for the classes, and to stay for the duration of the classes. The instructor bears no responsibility for difficulties experienced by students who do not attend, who are late, or who leave early. If you miss a lecture, or a portion of a lecture (for any reason), you are advised to borrow notes from a student who was present. You are also advised to consult this student about any announcements that may have been made. If you do not know anyone in the course, you are advised to get to know someone early on and exchange contact information so that you can share notes as well as information about announcements. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to provide students with lecture notes or to brief students on any announcements they have missed.

It is your responsibility to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner during classes in this course. While we (either me or a TA) are trying to teach you, and while other students are trying to learn, please do not engage in any behaviour which is rude or distracting. Such behaviour includes (but is not limited to): having a private conversation with another student; eating food; reading a book or magazine; putting your head down or sleeping; doing work for another course; using a laptop computer for anything other than taking notes; and using a smartphone or other personal electronic device for any reason while the class or tutorial is underway. Please understand that such rude or distracting behaviour can make it difficult for the professor or TA to teach, and this behaviour can also make it difficult for other students to learn.

For example, other students may find it hard to learn if they are distracted by the sound of chatting or eating and the sight of someone in front of them surfing the Web or playing a video game on a computer or a smartphone. You are welcome to engage in such activities while waiting for the class or tutorial to begin or while enjoying a scheduled break in the class time. However, while the class or tutorial is underway, please show consideration for me, your TA, and your classmates. If you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

It is your responsibility to interact with the professor, TAs, and other students in a respectful manner. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour is strictly prohibited. This behaviour includes (but is not limited to): speaking from your seat – or speaking up during class discussions – without raising your hand and waiting to be acknowledged by the professor or TA; yelling at the professor, TA, or other students; and engaging in any threatening, intimidating, degrading, harassing, or discriminatory behaviour (physically, verbally, or in writing) that is directed at the professor, TA, or other students. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour that occurs in or out of class may constitute a violation of McMaster University’s “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” (formerly known as the “Student Code of Conduct”) and be punishable by various sanctions (penalties) that can be imposed on students by the university. According to the university, all McMaster students have an obligation to familiarize themselves with the “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.” Again, if you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

When there is inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour, I will take action to deal with it. I will do this in various ways. Sometimes, at the beginning of a class, I will just issue a brief and friendly reminder to everyone about what constitutes rude or distracting behaviour (as described in the second paragraph of this section). At other times, I may find it necessary to address the behaviour of particular students. When doing this, my preferred approach is to have a private conversation with certain students (e.g., during a break in the class or at the end of the class) so that I can explain my concerns and politely ask that the behaviour cease. However, this approach may not always be possible; if I judge the behaviour to be sufficiently problematic, I reserve the right to stop the class and deal with the behaviour of a particular student (or a few students) immediately in front of the entire class. Such an approach would certainly be necessary in the event of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour (as described in the third paragraph of this section) and perhaps even in extreme cases of rude or distracting behaviour (as described in the second paragraph of this section). Furthermore, when these rare and more serious situations occur, I may find it necessary to pursue further action through the “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” (which is described in the third paragraph of this section).

Course Schedule

The course schedule below identifies the course topics, the approximate dates when the topics will be addressed, and the required readings for the topics. We may progress a little faster or a little slower than the dates below indicate. You will be given reasonable notice if more significant changes have to be made to the course schedule (e.g., dropping a topic because we have run out of time).

Part I: Utilizing and Building on an Education in Sociology

Employer Expectations of Skills and Personal Attributes (Sept. 9).
Required Reading: Tymon (courseware).

Required Reading: DuPre & Williams (courseware).

Development of Skills and Personal Attributes through a Sociology Degree (Sept. 16).

Required Reading: Lambert, Introduction (textbook).

Required Reading: Finkelstein (courseware).

After a Sociology Degree I: Pursuing Further Education (Sept. 23).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 5 (textbook).

Required Reading: Spalter-Roth & Van Vooren (courseware).

After a Sociology Degree II: Directly Seeking Employment (Sept. 30).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 6, Chapter 7, Chapter 8, and Chapter 9 (textbook).

Part II: Preparing for Further Education or Seeking Employment

The Prospects for Sociology Graduates (Oct. 7).

Required Reading: Guppy et al. (courseware).

Required Reading: Senter et al. (courseware).

Mid-Term Recess (No class on Oct. 14).

Self-Assessment and Sociological Reflection (Oct. 21).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 1 (textbook).

Required Reading: Knoblock (courseware).

The Resume or Curriculum Vitae (Oct. 28).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 2 (textbook).

Required Reading: Miller & Morgan (courseware).

Letters of Recommendation (Nov. 4).

Required Reading: Payne et al. (courseware).

Required Reading: Sternheimer (website). The article can be accessed through this link:

[Link to Article by Sternheimer](#)

Part III: Seeking Employment

The Job Search I: Research and Strategies (Nov. 11).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 3 (textbook).

Required Reading: Cotton et al. (courseware).

The Job Search II: Strong Ties, Weak Ties (Nov. 18).

Required Reading: Sharone. (courseware).

Required Reading: Spalter-Roth et al. (courseware).

The Job Search III: Implications of Social Media (Nov. 25).

Required Reading: Fitzpatrick et al. (website). The article can be accessed through this link:

[Link to Article by Fitzpatrick et al.](#)

Required Reading: Drouin et al. (courseware).

Job Interviews and Hiring Decisions (Dec. 2).

Required Reading: Lambert, Chapter 4 (textbook).
Required Reading: Bills (courseware).