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Office: Kenneth Taylor Hall, Third Floor #307 [#38 on this campus map]  
Office hours: Thursdays from 11:30am-12:30pm, or email to arrange another time  
Email: dasa@mcmaster.ca

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Course Description & Objectives

What is inquiry?
Inquiry is the process of developing skills to arrive at understandings of a problem, an issue, or a phenomenon, through the process of asking good questions, searching out good evidence, and arriving at well-considered conclusions. The process of critical inquiry promotes self-directed learning, helping you to develop the skills necessary to acquire and reflect on new knowledge and understanding, and that will be invaluable in your other university courses and your academic, personal, and professional lives.

Course Description
Inquiry courses are designed to teach students how to learn and how to share academic knowledge. The courses are skill-driven, rather than content-driven, with a focus on the skills required to perform effectively in university. These personal, transferable skills and approaches to learning will be useful in other university courses, and beyond. Students will engage in a process to begin to learn how to formulate good academic questions, gather and interpret scholarly evidence, draw reasoned conclusions, and communicate these conclusions, using as content, topics central to research in the Social Sciences (e.g., social identity, globalization, health, and gender).

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course you will have valuable experience in:

- developing a researchable question and refining it;
- demonstrating the ability to obtain relevant information to answer this question;
- critically evaluating the validity and relevance of academic research;
- communicating a well-considered response to the researchable questions; and
- critically reflecting on your learning process.

Developing Transferable Skills
You will work on developing academic skills that are transferable to your other university courses as well as to the workforce. These skills include:

- question formulation;
- critical reading and thinking;
- communication (oral, written and visual);
- self and peer evaluation;
- self-reflection;
- research skills; and
- group work skills. (Vajoczki, 2010)
Theme: Madness, Disability, Accessibility & Inclusion

While the focus of this course is on the process of inquiry, we will work with the thematic content of “Madness, Disability, Accessibility & Inclusion” to develop these inquiry skills.

This course takes a Mad(ness) Studies and Critical Disability Studies approach to understanding and engaging with the social constructions (creations) [1] [2] of madness and disability, and Mad and Disability Rights social movement efforts to advance accessibility and inclusion.

This means that our course:

- seeks to be an accessible, welcoming, and supportive space for not knowing, uncertainty, confusion, asking questions, learning, trying, experimenting, getting outside of our comfort zone, and saying what we need in order to learn and participate;

- recognizes that the “problem” of madness and disability does not reside within individual bodies or minds, but is the result of unfairly creating a society where some are wanted and included (those deemed “normal” and “sane”) and others are unwanted and excluded (those deemed “abnormal” and “insane”), which is a social (societal, not individual) problem that needs to be addressed;

- aligns with Mad and Disability social justice movements and their efforts to challenge prejudice and discrimination (ableism, sanism), reduce social and environmental barriers to accessibility, and increase equity and inclusion for people with disabilities and mental health concerns;

- privileges the knowledge of Mad people, people with disabilities, and service users that is gained through lived experience - including the knowledge of student scholars with disabilities - as a valued form of knowledge and legitimate scholarly method, including emotions and thinking processes that often get discounted as “irrational” (lacking reason) or “incompetent” (unintelligent, not scholarly);

- acknowledges that Mad and disabled people have been harmed by research and researchers and are often discounted as scholars and knowers, and seeks to be responsive to this history by engaging in respectful and relevant inquiry that contributes to scholarship in Mad and Critical Disability Studies and furthers the goals of Mad and Disability social movements;

- gets excited about creative, critical, curious, thoughtful, thorough, emotional, personal, passionate, precise, generous, and kind engagements with our topic matter.
Students will reflect on their own points of view and experiential knowledge related to disability, madness, and (in)accessibility, and will attend in a disability-related community event in order to explore different types of information and ways of gathering “data” that can contribute to scholarly inquiry in disability studies. We will also read varied genres of Critical Disability Studies research so that we can see a range of data production methods (qualitative social science methods, autobiography, community-based participatory research, peer research, survivor-led research) and presentation styles (formal academic writing, zines and artistic forms, first-person narratives, films) in action.

The course will help us ask and discuss important questions like: Who is the world designed for, and what does this tell us about whose lives matter? What is normal, who decides, and what are the consequences? Whose knowledge and telling of history counts? How have understandings of madness and disability changed over time, and how has this impacted the way we treat people? What kinds of violences have Mad and disabled people experienced, and what harms continue? What can be done to make campus and our communities more welcoming, accessible, and inclusive spaces? What role can I play?

Textbook and Additional Course Material
In this inquiry section, we will be using the following textbook:


This book can be read online for free through McMaster’s library catalogue. There are also several different editions you can borrow in hard-copy from the library. If you would like a hard-copy of your own, the 4th edition is available for purchase from the campus bookstore.

Additional materials (including those listed below) can be found in our course shell on Avenue to Learn. Several other books on research and writing skills and Critical Disability Studies will be available on reserve in the library so that students can borrow them for free. To borrow a book from reserve, you will need to request it from the Mills Library staff desk on the 1st floor. Bring your McMaster ID/library card!

Evaluation Components

Further information about assignment expectations, including thorough instructions and evaluation rubrics, are available on Avenue to Learn and will be discussed in class.
**A note about deadlines:** Our class meets on Thursday mornings. Most assignments are due to be uploaded to the corresponding Dropbox on Avenue to Learn the Friday after class by 11:59pm, or a window of a few days after class. The exception is 5 reading response submissions, which are to be submitted by 8pm the Wednesday evening before class. This is to ensure that students have prepared in advance for class and come ready to discuss their assigned article. Absent or late reading group submissions will significantly impact a student’s participation grade.

Critical Reading, Reflection, and Communication Skills - worth 47.5%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Attendance</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
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</table>
| This includes: completion of in-class worksheets, activities, and tasks; engagement during small group work and large group discussion; preparation for class activities (such as completing required reading and attending class ready to discuss it).  

*There is a handout on Avenue with further explanation of what participation will include and how it will be evaluated.*|
| 3 Understanding and avoiding plagiarism module  | Assessed for completion (part of participation mark) | November 1 at 8pm |
| 4 Academic skills test (in-class)              | 6% personal mark 4% group mark | November 2 in-class |
| 5 Reading group portfolio                      | 17.5% total 5 x 2% each = 10% 5% 2.5% | Responses due day before class at 8pm  
  September 20 October 4 October 25 November 8 November 22 |
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Research topic brainstorm</td>
<td>Assessed for completion (part of participation mark)</td>
<td>In-class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Initial reflection</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>September 15 at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Research proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>September 29 at 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>October 20-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Observation &amp; photography</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>November 3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Assignment outline</td>
<td>Optional (for feedback only)</td>
<td>November 3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assignment draft</td>
<td>Assessed for completion &amp; individual/group feedback (part of participation mark)</td>
<td>November 13-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Assessed for completion (part of participation mark)</td>
<td>November 29 at 8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Final assignment (early submissions welcome!)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>December 5-11</td>
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**Course Requirements and Expectations**

**Keeping On Track With Assigned Readings**

Students are strongly encouraged to do their best to keep up with the weekly readings. While knowledge of the content of the readings will not be formally evaluated through an exam, the ideas they offer will support your successful completion of your capstone assignment; the
habits and strategies suggested will take you through a step-by-step process of building a thoughtful, thorough, polished, and impactful research paper.

Class Attendance and Participation
Class participation is an important component of this course and of learning at university. Accordingly, students in this course are expected to attend and actively engage in class learning activities and contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. This class recognizes that active participation will look different for different people and may change throughout the semester. To support participation, the class will incorporate a variety of opportunities to engage with course content and each other. These are further outlined on Avenue to Learn.

Students are encouraged to approach the instructor early on if you are concerned about your ability to be physically, intellectually, and/or emotionally present or to fully engage in the course. If aspects of group work or class discussion are nerve-wracking, uncomfortable, or inaccessible for you, please connect with the course instructor to think about how we might mediate these barriers.

Participation will be assessed by the completion and submission of assigned tasks and in-class small group activities, and the instructor's observations of your engagement (in whatever ways this looks like for you) with course material and your colleagues throughout the course. Students will also complete a self-assessment of their participation. Your participation grade will be significantly influenced by your active involvement in class, and the quality of that involvement. Lack of participation, or distracting, off-topic, disrespectful, or unkind participation will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

Use of Technology in the Classroom
In the past, students and faculty have found 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.

Assignment Format and Polish
All written assignments are to be typed and double-spaced, with a standard 12 point font and 1 inch margins. Please include a title page with your name, student number, email address, and course code, the topic title of the assignment, and the date submitted. All written assignments are to be submitted to the corresponding electronic Dropbox on Avenue to Learn. Please use APA referencing, cite all sources, and include a bibliography.
Late Submissions
All work is due on the date and time stated, unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Since each assignment builds on the ones before it, it is important to keep pace with the scheduled due dates so that you can benefit as much as possible from in-class activities (where we will spend class time working on various assignment components) and instructor feedback. If you are concerned about keeping pace with the course or falling behind, please arrange to meet with the course instructor to put a plan in place. Failure to do so will result in late penalties of 3% per day, including weekends. Late submissions will be accepted and assessed fairly, but may receive less feedback and take longer to return to students.

Policy for Returning Assignments
Since it is important for student learning and skill development that you receive feedback on your assignments as you move through the course, you can expect to receive feedback on your assignments in a timely fashion. Feedback on the progressive components of your research paper will be prioritized. With the exception of the final paper, assignments will be returned within 7-10 days through the Avenue to Learn assignment Dropbox where they were submitted. Assignments will be read in the order in which they are submitted. This means, the earlier you submit your work, the sooner you’ll receive instructor comments! Early submissions are welcome.

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 result 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 the student’s 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 at http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

a) Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained;
b) Improper collaboration in group work; or
c) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
Academic dishonesty also entails a student having someone sign in for them on a weekly course attendance sheet when they are absent from class and/or a student signing someone in who is known to be absent.

**Originality Checking**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Digital work submitted via Avenue to Learn will be automatically submitted to Turnitin.com so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty, and so that the paper can be marked digitally using the service’s digital feedback system. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com have the right to arrange with the instructor an alternate submission method that bypasses Turnitin. 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 go to: [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

**Accessibility, Accommodation, and Support**

**Accessibility & Equity Statement**

McMaster University values diversity, and seeks to build an inclusive community on campus. This course takes these values seriously, recognizes that students learn and express their knowledge in different ways, and is committed to creating an accessible environment of mutual respect and full participation. Students in this course are expected to actively participate in welcoming diverse engagement styles, and identifying and mediating classroom accessibility barriers to enhance access for themselves and their classmates. For further information on accessibility at McMaster, visit McMaster’s newly redesigned [Accessibility Hub](http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility) website.

If there are aspects of the design or delivery of this course that result in barriers to your learning or inclusion, please be in touch with the course instructor as soon as possible to discuss ways to mitigate these. Students with disabilities are also welcome to connect with Student Accessibility Services to discuss how individual academic accommodations can support their learning.

**Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation can 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 Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.
Accommodation related to Religious, Indigenous, and Spiritual Observances

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religion or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out by their respective Faculty, as per McMaster’s 2015 Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances.

In most cases, students should contact their professor or academic advisor as soon as possible to arrange accommodations for classes, assignments, tests and examinations that might be affected by a religious holiday or spiritual observance. The procedure within the Faculty of Social Sciences can be reviewed at this link.

Additional Supports on Campus

There are many supports available both on and off campus to assist students with any number of concerns, such as: academic skills, English as an additional language, employment, housing, finances, food access, spirituality, isolation, emotional distress, sexuality, health, and harassment. This includes our Sexual Violence Response Coordinator, who can assist students who have been impacted by past or present experiences of violence, and the Equity and Inclusion Office, which can assist with matters related to students’ rights. Students are encouraged to seek out support as needed, and to get in touch with the course instructor if they can be of assistance in identifying and navigating options.

Course Management

Confirm Your Section Registration (1SS3 Section #CO1)

At McMaster, some courses have the same course code but multiple sections (C01, C02, C03, etc.) with different meeting times and instructors. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are attending the correct section of Inquiry 1SS3 so that your attendance and work can be evaluated by the designated instructor for your section. Consult your personal timetable and the Registrar’s course timetable to ensure that you are attending the correct section. If you would like to switch sections of 1SS3, consult with the Faculty of Social Sciences office to see if there is space in an alternate section for you to do so.

A Note About the Use of Avenue to Learn in this Course

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn to share course material and resources. 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 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. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure.

**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 5 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.

**E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, 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/her/their discretion. Email Forwarding in MUGSI: 
[http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html)

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link (Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)*

**Course Modification Policy**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may changes 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/their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

**Course Weekly Topics and Readings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Read &amp; Prepare Before Class (materials on Avenue to Learn)</th>
<th>Material Due</th>
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</table>
| Sept 7: **What is inquiry?** | **Story**: Pedagogy of the confused  
**Film Clip**: What is accessibility at McMaster?  
**Excerpt**: What is Critical Disability Studies?  
**Website**: Elements and standards of thinking |  |
| Sept 14: **What is research?**  
*Intro to Theme: Madness, Disability, Accessibility & Inclusion*  
*Research Purposes & Questions that Matter* | **Booth**: The Uses of Research (chapter 1, p. 9-15); From Topics to Questions (chapter 3, p. 31-50)  
**Website**: Elements of reasoning  
**Library Modules**:  
1: Introduction to McMaster Libraries  
Clip: How to book a study room  
2: Choosing Sources | **Reflection due September 15** (day after class) at 11:59pm |
| Sept 21: **What kinds of knowledge and evidence are there?**  
*Points of View* | **Reading group article (assigned 1 of)**:  
- What are mental health service users' priorities for research in the UK?  
- The researched opinions on research: Disabled people and disability research  
**Library Modules**: | **Reading group preparation due September 20** (day before class) at 8pm  
**Bring to class**: Reading response |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 28</td>
<td>Planning a Project</td>
<td>Booth: From Questions to a Problem (chapter 4, p. 51-66); Drafting Your Report (chapter 13, p. 187-202)</td>
<td>Research proposal due September 29 (day after class) at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Searching for Evidence</td>
<td>Library Modules: 8: Searching the Web Effectively 9: Evaluating Websites</td>
<td>Bring to class: Research proposal</td>
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</table>
| Oct 5       | Library Skills Workshop    | Reading group article (assigned 1 of):  
- Drawn out of dejection  
- Vision, passion, action: Reflections on learning to do disability studies in the classroom and beyond  
Library Modules: 3: Creating a Search Strategy 4: Using Library Databases 5: Finding Journal Articles | Reading group preparation due October 4 (day before class) at 8pm       
Bring to class: Reading response & research proposal                                           |
| Oct 12      | Reading Week - No Class    |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                      |
| Oct 19      | Critical Thinking and Reflection | Chapter on Avenue: “Developing critical thinking and critical reading skills”  
Library Module 10: Citing Sources  
Module: Academic Integrity                                                                                                                                                      |
|             | Writing from “I”          |                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Annotated bibliography due October 20-23                                                      |
| Oct 26      | Creating an Outline       | Reading group article (assigned 1 of):  
- Negotiating identities, negotiating environments: An interpretation of the experiences of students with disabilities  
- Creating, resisting or neglecting change: Exploring the complexities of accessible education for students with disabilities  
Booth: Planning (chapter 12, p. 171-186)                                                                                                                                 |
|             | Integrating Sources       |                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Reading group preparation due October 25 (day before class) at 8pm       
Bring to class: Reading response                                                                                                                   |
<p>| Nov 2       | Arguments and Interpretations | Booth: Making Good Arguments (chapter 7, p. 103-119)                                                                                                                                                      | Academic Skills Test (beginning of class)                                                      |
|             |                            | Website: Assessing the quality of thinking                                                                                                                                                                | Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism                                                         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Skills Test</th>
<th>Module: Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism (takes approx 1 hour to complete)</th>
<th>Module - submit certificate of completion by Nov 1 (day before class) at 8pm</th>
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| Nov 9: **Significance, Implications, and Impact** | Reading group article: TBD  
Booth: Introductions and Conclusions (chapter 16, p. 232-248) | Reading group preparation due November 8 (day before class) at 8pm  
**Bring to class:** Reading response |
| Nov 16: **Knowledge Translation** | Readings TBD | Assignment draft due November 13-20 Ungraded |
| Nov 23: **Revision** | Reading group article: TBD  
Booth: Revising Your Organization and Argument (chapter 14, p. 203-210) | Reading group preparation due November 22 (day before class) at 8pm  
**Bring to class:** Reading response |
| Nov 30: **Reflection** | Readings TBD | 2 PowerPoint slides describing final project due November 29 (day before class) at 8pm  
**Reading group portfolio due December 1 (day after class) at 11:59pm** |

**Event reflection due by December 5 at 11:59pm**

**Final paper due December 5-11** (early submissions welcome!)