ARTSSCI 3CU3 / Alumni Experience Inquiry

2018-2019, Term 2

Instructor: Dr. Mat Savelli   Office: KTH 230

E-mail: savellm@mcmaster.ca   Office Hrs: M/W 12:30-2 (general)

Class time: Tuesdays, 7-10pm, KTH B107   W 3:30-4:30 (Artsci only)

Course Description: When leaving university, graduates are confronted with a series of choices in relation to their work and life more broadly. In the process, they must attend to both the ideals they have formed throughout their university time, as well as the practical demands of their social life, family, and career. Although idealism and pragmatism have typically been portrayed as dichotomous, this course encourages students to move beyond that binary to assess the complex ways in which these philosophies guide decision making in everyday life. Through dialogue with Artsci alumni, students will gain exposure to the wide career paths and life courses open to Artsci graduates, and will develop an understanding of how an interdisciplinary education might shape responses to the demands of pragmatism and idealism.

Course Objectives: In completing the course, students should:

1. Gain a stronger understanding of how an interdisciplinary education can prepare them for their careers.
2. Develop a deeper appreciation for how the demands of idealism and pragmatism interact and play out within work and life settings.
3. Enter into debates regarding trends in career and lifestyle, with particular attention to largescale economic change.
4. Critically analyze the rigid division between career and life.
5. Enhance their ability to analyze and communicate the arguments and ideas from a wide variety of academic and non-academic disciplines, subfields, and media.

Required reading:
1) Zygmunt Bauman, *The Art of Life* (available at Titles)
2) Han Kang, *The Vegetarian* (available at Titles)
3) All other readings are available on *Avenue to Learn*.

Jan 8: Introduction

Jan 15: Exploring Work, Life, Idealism, and Pragmatism [*Interviewees assigned*]
Reading: Bauman, "Introduction" and "Miseries of Happiness"

Jan 22: Exploring Work, Life, Idealism, and Pragmatism II
Reading: Bauman, "We, The Artists of Life," and "The Choice."

Jan 29: Public Policy [**Proposals Due**]
Reading: Moser Jones, "Paternalism and Its Discontents: Motorcycle Helmet Laws, Libertarian Values, and Public Health" / Michael Crawford Urban, *Abandoning Silos*

Feb 5: Law
Reading: John I. Laskin, "Forget the Wind-Up and Make the Pitch"

Feb 12: Education
Reading: Parker Palmer, "The Heart of a Teacher" / David Graeber, "On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs: A Work Rant"

Feb 19: READING WEEK

Feb 26: Business
Reading: Dave Eggers, Tom Scocca, Alexander Wells, and Malcolm Gladwell, curated discussion on Selling Out, Snark, and Smarm.

Mar 5: Medicine
Reading: The debate over EBM by Moer, Zachar, and Gupta in *Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology*.

Mar 12: Digital World [**Essay due**]
Reading: Sheelah Kohlkatar, "Dark Factory" / Peter S Goodman, "Sweden Adds Human Touch to a Robotic Future" / *Ideas* podcast episode "Facebook, Google, Apple, and Amazon."

Mar 19: Arts
Reading: Han Kang, *The Vegetarian.*

Mar 26: Career Fluidity
Reading: Gary Greenberg, "In the Kingdom of the Unabomber."

Apr 2: Revisiting the Work/Life & Idealism/Pragmatism Divides [**Final Project Due**]
Reading: Bauman, "On Organizing and Being Organized."

April 9: Final Class wrap up

Assignments:
Interviews with alumni: 0%*
Paper Proposal (29 January): 20%
Discussion (ongoing): 20%
Major Essay (12 March): 35%
Final Project (2 April): 25%

Interviews*: In the first class, each student will be assigned alumni volunteers that they should interview by phone or in person. Although there is no formal interview guide, students should discuss the alums' post-Artsci life path and career, the relationship between the Artsci program and their work lives, and how they have navigated issues related to idealism and pragmatism (among other things). Although this is a formal requirement for the course, please think of it as an opportunity to both build and reinforce the Artsci community, as well as a chance to gain insights into the life possibilities provided by your education. These interviews will be used to inform other aspects of the course assignments, notably the final project. Students who do not contact their assigned alumni will not pass the course.

Proposal: Students must complete a 4 page proposal for their major essay on the course's key themes. In this proposal, they should outline the research question they intend to investigate for their major paper, explore the literature surrounding this topic (using at least 6 sources), and explain how their topic connects to the broader themes of the course. Proposals must include a bibliography.

Major Essay: In a 10-12 page paper, students should explore their own research question related to the themes of work, life, idealism, and pragmatism. Original research is not required for this assignment, but you may optionally include insights or commentary gleaned from your alumni interviewees. You work should be grounded in a substantial degree of secondary literature, including academic and potentially non-academic sources.

Final Project: For their final projects, students must combine traditional academic work with a creative element. This project should in some way reflect upon their experience in the course, the knowledge they gained by communicating with alumni, and other components of the course (readings, the essay project, the co-facilitators' insights). The project may take any form, but must include both a short (3-4pages) formal written component and some sort of creative component (which could be written or non-written). The formal written component should act as an explanation/analysis of the creative component, relating it to course discussions and themes. All projects should be discussed with the instructor prior to completion.

Policy Statements

Assignment Deadlines & Missed/Late Work:

Students are expected to hand in all assignments on the specified due dates. Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 3% per day (including weekend days). Assignments submitted after the beginning of class on the due date will be counted as one day late. All assignments should be submitted as hard copies directly to class. Late assignments should be submitted to Shelley or Rebecca in LRW.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

In the event of an absence, students should review and follow the Academic Regulations in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work." Please consult the MSAF statement on our website (https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/forms-requests/) and direct any questions or concerns to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program Office.

McMaster Policy on Academic Integrity:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences—e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at: 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 other credit has been obtained. 2) Improper collaboration in group work. 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:

Students who require academic accommodation 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 *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

Sustainable Written Work Submission Guidelines

The written work submission guidelines have been chosen to support the more sustainable use of paper, energy, and toner, and meet the Platinum standard of the Office of Sustainability; http://www.mcmaster.ca/sustainability/. All written work should be submitted in the following format: double-sided pages, reduced line spacing (1.5 lines), exclusion of title page, sans-serif font.

Email Contact and Student Responsibility Statement

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, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L, and/or McMaster email. It is the responsibility of students to check **their McMaster email** and course websites regularly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

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

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous, or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office (i.e. to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program 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.