ARTS&SCI 3CU3: Alumni Experience Inquiry  
(Term 2) 2014-2015  
Course Outline

Instructor: Laura Fenwick-Sehl  
fenwicl@mcmaster.ca  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9 – 10 AM  
C105  
Class Time: Wednesdays, 7 – 10 PM  
KTH B107

Course Description:

This course will explore the world of work through the lens of the Arts & Science experience, as well as more broadly through examining the social causes and effects of current employment trends in North America. Arts & Science alumni will be involved as mentors throughout the course, providing students with the opportunity to explore different applications of an interdisciplinary degree. The course topics, including social capital, social inequality, work and gender, diversity and intersectionality, and social change, will provide a context in which to understand broader trends in employment. Using an inquiry methodology, the course will integrate more traditional lecture-style presentations with interactive sessions, led by the instructor, students, and alumni.

Students will have multiple opportunities to interact with Arts & Science alumni throughout the course. For many of the scheduled classes, alumni will help to facilitate a portion of the class discussion. Students will also have the opportunity to learn from individual Arts & Science graduates through completing an informational interview and a job shadow placement.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:
1. Describe and discuss a variety of issues relating to social aspects of employment in North America  
2. Reflect on the experiences of completing an informational interview and job shadow and relate these experiences to relevant course themes  
3. Identify and distil key ideas from one week’s readings through an engaging and interactive class presentation  
4. Critically explore a current employment trend and comment on its social causes and impact

Required Course Texts:

Alumni Experience Inquiry 3CU3 Custom Courseware, available at the Campus Store.

Additional course readings are available through McMaster’s online holdings, or online.

Assessment:

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Interview Reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 4, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Shadow Reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 25, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>TBD (Sign up in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 25, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>February 25, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>April 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment Descriptions:

The following is a brief description of each assignment. More detail will be discussed in class and made available on Avenue to Learn.

**Informational Interview Reflection:** At the beginning of the term you will be assigned to one Arts & Science graduate to conduct an informational interview. You should work with your assigned graduate to find a convenient time to have a one hour phone or Skype conversation about his or her post-Arts & Science career path. More guidance about how to conduct an effective informational interview will be provided in week 2. After completing the interview, you will be required to submit a 2-3 page reflection on your conversation. Your reflection should include an analysis of what you have learned, both about a new potential career path, and about yourself. You should highlight how this conversation has shifted your thinking about your future.

**Job Shadow Reflection:** Each student is required to complete a job shadow experience (minimum 4 hours) with an assigned job shadow supervisor. After your job shadow experience, you are required to write a 2-3 page reflection on your experiences, highlighting what you have learned. You will need to connect your experiences to 1-3 of the course readings, highlighting how your job shadow deepened your understanding of one or more of the course themes.

**Class Presentation:** Working in groups, you will be required to facilitate a class discussion about one of the week’s themes and readings. Your presentation should include three critical discussion questions that help your peers to engage with the ideas from the texts. You are encouraged to include active learning strategies including hands-on activities, demonstrations, and games in your presentation. Presentations should be 45 minutes in length. On the week that your group presents, you will be required to submit a short summary (1-2 paragraphs per article or chapter) of each of the class readings to the alumni class facilitators.

**Research Proposal, Presentation, and Paper:** In the research proposal, students will develop a research question that critically examines the social causes and impacts of a current employment trend. The research proposal should be 2-3 pages long. It should clearly state the research question and outline the approach to its response. The research proposal should show evidence of engagement with 3-5 academic texts related to the topic.

In the research presentation, students will summarize their research proposal in a 5-minute PechaKucha-style presentation. Further details about specific presentation format will be provided in class.

In the research paper, students will endeavour to answer their proposed research question using a variety of academic sources as well as their own critical analysis. The paper should be 3000 words and should use consistent referencing throughout.

**Participation:** Your on-going attendance and participation is critical for the success of the course. Students are expected to attend class regularly, complete all scheduled readings, participate meaningfully in class discussions, listen respectfully, and ask relevant questions. Additionally, your engagement with alumni will be evaluated. You are expected act and communicate professionally and respectfully with your assigned mentors, and pose thoughtful questions to class presenters.

**Submitting Assignments:**

All assignments must be submitted in hard copy, at the beginning of class, on the date they are due. The penalty for late assignment submission is 3% per day, to a maximum of 7 days, including weekend days.

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 www.mcmaster.ca/sustainability. All written work should be submitted in the following format: double-sided printing; no title page; 1.5 line spacing; sans-serif font.
Schedule of Topics and Readings:

**Week 1**  
**Introduction to the Course. Personal Narratives**  

**Week 2**  
**Mentorship, Networks, and Social Capital**  


**Week 3**  
**An Introduction to Social Inequality**  


**Week 4**  
**Work and Gender**  


**Week 5**  
**Diversity and Intersectionality**


**Week 6**  
**Case Study: Unpaid Internships**


**Week 7**  
**Presentation Week**

No assigned readings

**Week 8**  
**Acknowledging Privilege**


**Week 9**  
**Building Social Capital**


“Pathways to Education: Program Introduction and Overview.” *Pathways to Education*. Online: [http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/Overview%2021_10_10_0.pdf](http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/Overview%2021_10_10_0.pdf)
Week 9 cont’d

Week 10
Education and Social Mobility


Week 11
Occupational Stress and Self-Care


Week 12
Creating Social Change


Week 13
Reflection Evening

No Readings
Please Note:
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 students to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

University Policies:

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.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):
This is an on-line, self-reporting tool for students to report absences due to minor medical situations that last up to 5 days and to request accommodation for any missed academic work that is worth less than 30% of the final grade. Please note that this tool cannot be used during any final examination period. It is the prerogative of the instructor to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work. You may submit a maximum of one request per term. The form should be filled out immediately when you are about to return to class after your absence. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately (within two working days) about the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent for more than 5 days, have missed academic work worth 30% or more, or exceed one request per term, you must see Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program office (C-105). You will be required to provide supporting documentation.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:
Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or email sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.