

## Labour Studies 770 | Labour Movements and Social Transformation

<b>Semester &amp; Year:</b>	Winter 2022	<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Stephanie Ross
<b>Day(s):</b>	Thursdays	<b>Email:</b>	stephross@mcmaster.ca
<b>Time:</b>	2:30 – 5:30 pm	<b>Office:</b>	KTH 719 / Zoom
<b>Classroom:</b>	KTH 732 / Zoom	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Thursdays 12:00 – 2:00pm or by appointment

### Course Description & Format

Labour movements are both the products and the agents of major social change. Workers' organizations emerged as a response to the rise of capitalism, and have always been subject the pressures of an ever-changing economy. However, labour movements are also an active response to social change, in which workers define themselves, their interests, their forms of action, and the kind of world they want to live in. This course explores the dynamic nature of the labour movement as it both responds to and creates economic and social transformation.

In particular, this course focuses on the various attempts to revitalize the labour movement through the development of new strategies and organizational forms. In particular, the course will explore the nature and critiques of the post-war model of unionism and labour relations; debates around the need for and meaning of labour movement renewal; the rise of reform movements inside existing unions aimed at fostering deeper membership participation; the development of alternative strategies for organizing new union locals, particularly in the private service sector; the use of workplace organizing strategies that remain outside the legal framework (through forms of non-majority unionism); and the spread of non-union workers' organizations such as worker centres. Students will assess the promise and pitfalls of these renewal strategies, placing them in the context of the economic and political changes that, since the 1970s, have eroded the traditional bases of labour movement power. The focus is on the Canadian and US contexts. However, because the working class in both Canada and the US is diverse and global in its connections, we will pay attention to the way that various styles of organizing are carried with workers from diverse locations and influence debates around labour movement renewal.

Whether on Zoom or in person, we will meet once a week for three hours, with a 30-minute break in the middle. The class will be organized as a seminar. The purpose of a seminar is to allow students to collectively engage in critical discussion of challenging reading material. Each seminar should provide students with a clearer grasp of the key arguments in the weekly readings, an understanding of what some of the main issues are on the topic, and how this relates back to key course themes and other material covered so far. The professor's role is to facilitate discussion, clarify issues and controversies, provide background, and ask probing questions, but not to lecture. The class will therefore involve a great deal of student interaction with each other and the professor. All this means that, for the class to be successful, you must be ready to bring yourself to the classroom having read and thought about the week's readings, and ready to participate and share with all of us.

### Required Texts

All required readings will be supplied by the instructor on Avenue to Learn.

### Evaluation (In Brief)

Requirement	Due Date	Value
Critical Reading Commentaries	throughout the term, but at least one by February 17, 2022	40%
Discussion Questions	Throughout the term	10%
Research Paper		50%

Research Proposal and Bibliography	February 4, 2022	10%
Annotated Bibliography	March 11, 2022	15%
Final Paper	April 22, 2022	25%

## Evaluation (In Detail)

### Critical Reading Commentaries

**40%**

Students will submit five critical commentaries on the readings from weeks of their choice. Your grade will be based on the best four commentaries. They will be due **one week after those readings are discussed in class**, and should be no longer than 750 words in length, typed and double-spaced. ONE of these commentaries must be submitted before the Winter Reading Break, that is, by the class on **February 17**. The commentaries should evaluate and comment critically on a theme, concept or debate that emerges from that week's readings. The commentaries should deal with **at least three of the week's readings**. Your critical commentary should not merely summarize; rather, it should engage with the readings in a critical way: how do they compare in their treatment of a particular idea? What are their relative strengths and weaknesses? What did you learn? What unanswered questions are raised? Refer to the guide for seminar preparation at the end of the course outline for other questions you could take up in your commentaries.

### Discussion Questions

**10%**

Five times over the semester, students will submit a question for discussion in that week's seminar. The question should arise from that week's readings, and should be submitted 24 hours before the class we will take up those readings (in other words, by Wednesdays at 2:30pm each week). This assignment is basically pass/fail – submit a relevant question and you pass.

### Research Paper

**3 Components = 50%**

All students will produce a research paper that addresses the basic question: **What strategies are needed to renew workers' collective economic and political power in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century?** In exploring this question, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the challenges workers and their established organizations face today and to explore the activities, prospects and limitations of a particular strategy now being pursued for renewing workers' power. The research paper will be broken up into two major components, due over the semester to permit feedback and help you make progress on the project through the term.

#### **Component 1 | Paper Abstract**

**10%**

A good research paper depends upon defining an interesting and manageable research question, a clear argument, and a broad outline of the work to be done. This is usually done in the form of an abstract, especially when you are submitting a paper to a conference for presentation. Even though the final form of your paper may depart from this abstract, writing it early will help you focus your thinking and your research. In about **500 words**, write an abstract that briefly explains your tentative answer to the question above (in other words, a **tentative thesis**), indicating which particular strategy for labour movement renewal you will explore and the concrete cases using that strategy you will explore, and justifying your choice in terms of its importance to understanding the prospects for labour movement renewal. Also provide a general outline of the proposed organization of the research paper. The assignment is **due on Friday, February 4, 2022**, should be typed, with 1-inch margins and a title page. You may single space this assignment.

#### **Component 2 | Proposed Annotated Bibliography**

**15%**

Identifying good sources – relevant, up-to-date and reliable—is also central to a good research paper. An annotated bibliography asks you to identify key contributions to the literature that you will use, provide a brief description of the content of each selected source, and explain its relevance to your research questions. In alphabetical order by the author's last name, and presenting the full and correct reference information for the source in **APA or Chicago format**, list **15 sources** that you intend to use in your research paper. The majority of these sources should be **academic/peer-reviewed** books, book chapters, and / or journal articles. You will likely use media coverage and grey literature in your final paper as well, but this assignment should focus on the scholarly literature. The assignment is due on **Friday, March**

11, 2022.

### ***Component 3 | Final Research Paper***

**25%**

Your research paper will be due on **Friday, April 22, 2022**. The paper will be **5000 words** in length, typed and double-spaced, with a bibliography presented in an established format (APA or Chicago). The research paper must also integrate a minimum of **five (5) course readings** as well as at least **fifteen (15) sources derived from your own research**.

### **Learning Objectives**

This course addresses five University Graduate Degree Level Expectations. In this class, you will have a chance to develop:

- a systematic understanding of the current problems confronting the labour movement informed by the leading research on the topic as well as your ability to critically evaluate that scholarship;
- your ability to apply insights from the existing literature on labour movement renewal to a concrete problem or organization;
- your ability to articulate and refine your own ideas, in both speaking and in writing, particularly in response to feedback;
- your ability to manage a larger and more complex research project;
- your awareness of your own and others' positions on the key issues, and to position yourself within a community of scholarship; and
- your ability to learn from other students equally and respectfully.

## Class Schedule and Readings

<b>Week 1 / Jan. 13</b>	<b>Introduction to the Course: Labour Movements and Social Transformation</b>
<p>Does the COVID-19 pandemic present new opportunities for renewing workers' power? What does the current moment tell us about the role that labour movements are shaped by and pursue social transformation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Azzellini, Dario. 2021. The Pandemic and Class Struggle. In D. Azzellini ed. <i>If Not Us, Who? Global workers against authoritarianism, fascism, and dictatorships</i>. Hamburg: Rosa Luxemburg Foundation.</li> <li>• Lerner, Stephen and Saqib Bhatti. 2016. Organizing in a Brave New World. <i>New Labor Forum</i> 25(3): 22-30.</li> </ul> <p><b>For Next Week: Letter of Introduction:</b> Write a letter of introduction. Tell me a bit about yourself, why you chose this program, your interests, and especially your goals in this class: Why did you take this course? What are your experiences with the labour movement? What is at least one thing you want to learn in this class? What would you say are your strengths as a student, and what areas would you like to improve? Are there any circumstances that might affect your performance in this class that you'd like me to be aware of? Please upload this letter to Avenue to Learn by <b>Thursday, January 20, 2022</b>.</p>	
<b>Week 2 / Jan 20</b>	<b>The Political Economy and Sociology of Labour Movements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyman, Richard. 1975. <i>Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism</i>. Pluto, 1975</li> <li>• Brookes, Marissa. (2013). Varieties of Power in Transnational Labor Alliances: An Analysis of Workers' Structural, Institutional, and Coalitional Power in the Global Economy. <i>Labor Studies Journal</i>, 38(3), 181–200.</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 3 / Jan. 27</b>	<b>Post-War Union Structures and their Critics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camfield, David. 2011. The Roots of Today's Problems. In <i>Canadian Labour in Crisis: Reinventing the Workers' Movement</i>. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.</li> <li>• Clawson, Dan. 2003. The New Deal System: Employer Offensive, Labor Response. In <i>The Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social Movements</i>. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press / Cornell U P.</li> <li>• Kumar, Pradeep and Chris Schenk. 2006. "Union Renewal and Organizational Change: A Review of the Literature" in Kumar and Schenk eds. <i>Paths to Union Renewal: Canadian Experiences</i>. Garamond.</li> <li>• Ross, Stephanie. 2021. Business Unionism and Social Unionism in Theory and Practice. In Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.), <i>Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada 2<sup>nd</sup></i> ed. Halifax: Fernwood.</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 4 / Feb. 3</b>	<b>Equity, Diversity and Representation in the Labour Movement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mills, Suzanne and Tyler McCreary. 2021. Which Side Are You On? Indigenous Peoples and Canada's Labour Movement. In Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.), <i>Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada</i>. Halifax: Fernwood.</li> <li>• Ng, Winnie and Carol Wall. 2021. Interrogating the Union Politics of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity. In Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.), <i>Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada</i>. Halifax: Fernwood.</li> <li>• Briskin, Linda. (1999). Feminism, Feminization and Democratization in Canadian Unions. In K. Blackford, et.al. (Eds.), <i>Feminist Success Stories</i>. Ottawa: U of Ottawa P.</li> <li>• Hunt, Gerald and Jonathan Eaton. 2007. We Are Family: Labour Responds to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Workers. In D. Rayside and G. Hunt (eds.), <i>Equity, Diversity, and Canadian Labour</i>. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 5 / Feb. 10</b>	<b>Alternative Conceptions of the Labour Movement: Social (Movement) Unionism and Community Unionism</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clawson, Dan. 2003. New Tactics, Community and Color. In <i>The Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social</i></li> </ul>	

*Movements* (pp. 90-130). Ithaca, NY: ILR Press / Cornell U P.

- Fletcher, Bill, Jr. and Fernando Gapasin. 2008. The Need for Social Justice Unionism. In *Solidarity Divided: The Crisis in Organized Labor and a New Path Toward Social Justice*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ross, Stephanie. 2008. "Social Unionism and Membership Participation: What Role for Union Democracy?" *Studies in Political Economy* 81.
- Tufts, Steven. 1998. Community Unionism in Canada and Labour's (Re)Organization of Space. *Antipode* 30, 227-250.
- Tattersall, Amanda. 2013. The Elements of Coalition Unionism. In *Power in Coalition: Strategies for Strong Unions and Social Change*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

**Week 6 / Feb. 17**

**The Organizing Model in Theory and Practice**

- Fletcher, Bill & Richard Hurd. 1998. Beyond the organizing model: The transformation process in local unions. In K. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Organizing to win: New research on union strategies*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
- Lerner, Steven. 1991. Let's Get Moving: Labor's survival depends on organizing industry-wide for justice and power. *Labor Research Review* 18: 1-15.
- MacAlevey, Jane. 2016. The Power to Win is in the Community, not the Boardroom. In *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*. New York: Oxford University Press.

**Case Study: Justice for Janitors**

- Rudy, Preston. 2004. "'Justice for Janitors' not 'Compensation for Custodians': The Political Context and Organizing" in *Rebuilding Labour: Organizing and Organizers in the New Union Movement*.
- Savage, Lydia. 2006. "Justice for Janitors: Scales of Organizing and Representing Workers." *Antipode* 38.8, 646-666.
- Waldinger, Richard et al. 1998. Helots No More: A Case Study of the Justice for Janitors Campaign in Los Angeles. In Kate Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Organizing to win: New research on union strategies*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

**Winter Reading Break: February 21-25, No Classes**

**Week 7 / Mar. 3**

**Social Unionism and Renewal: Teachers' Unions**

- Camfield, David. 2009. Sympathy for the teacher: Labour law and transgressive workers' collective action in British Columbia, 2005. *Capital & Class* 33: 81-107.
- Alter, Tom. 2013. "It Felt Like Community": Social Movement Unionism and the Chicago Teachers Union Strike of 2012. *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 10.3: 11-25
- Utrecht, Micah. 2014. *Strike for America: Chicago Teachers Against Austerity*. London: Verso (available as an e-book).
- McAlevey, Jane. 2016. Chicago Teachers: Building a Resilient Union. In *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blanc, Eric. 2019. The Power of Strikes. In *Red State Revolt: The Teachers' Strike Wave and Working-Class Politics*. London: Verso.

**Week 8 / Mar. 10**

**Varieties of Non-Majority Unionism**

- Nissen, Bruce. 2001. Building a "Minority Union": The CWA Experience at NCR. *Labor Studies Journal* 25.4: 34-55.
- Bossen, Colin. 2012. The Chicago Couriers Union, 2003-2010: A Case Study in Solidarity Unionism. *WorkingUSA: The Journal of Labor and Society* 15: 197-215.
- Lynd, Staughton and Daniel Gross. 2011. *Solidarity Unionism at Starbucks*. PM Press.
- Kolhatkar, Sonali. 2021. Starbucks Workers Victorious in Their Fight for a Union. *The Bullet*,

<https://socialistproject.ca/2021/12/starbucks-workers-victorious-in-fight-for-union/>

- Gupta, Arun. 2014. The Wal-Mart Working Class. In L. Panitch, G. Albo and V. Chibber (eds), *Socialist Register 2014: Registering Class*. London: Merlin.
- Rathke, Wade. 2009. A Wal-Mart Workers' Association? An Organizing Plan. *ChiefOrganizer.org*, <http://chieforganizer.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/wal-mart-chapter.pdf>

### **Week 9 / Mar. 17      Workers' Centres**

- Avendano, Ana and Charlie Fanning. 2014. The CLEAN Carwash Initiative: Building Worker Power and Fighting Austerity through Community and Workplace Organizing. *Labor Studies Journal* 39.2: 101-117.
- Cranford, Cynthia and Deena Ladd (2003, Fall). Community Unionism: Organizing for Fair Employment in Canada. *Just Labour* 3, 46-59.
- Fine, Janice. 2005. Community Unions and the Revival of the American Labor Movement. *Politics and Society* 33 (1), 153-199.
- Tait, Vanessa. 2005. 'Organizing Where We Live and Work': The Independent Workers' Center Movement. In *Poor Workers' Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below* (pp. 129-160). Boston: South End Press.

### **Week 10 / Mar. 24      Im/Migrant Rights Organizing**

- Choudry, Aziz and Mark Thomas. 2013. Labour struggles for workplace justice: Migrant and immigrant worker organizing in Canada. *Journal of Industrial Relations* 55.2: 212-226.
- Djiembowska, Maria. 2010. NDLOM and the History of Day Labor Organizing in Los Angeles. In Ruth Milkman et al. (eds.), *Working for Justice: The LA Model of Organizing and Advocacy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Poo, Ai-jen. 2011. A Twenty-First Century Organizing Model: Lessons from the New York Domestic Workers Bill of Rights Campaign. *New Labor Forum* 20.1: 51-55.
- Gardner, Karl, Dani Magsumbol and Ethel Tungohan. 2021. The Politics of Migrant Worker Organizing in Canada. In Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.), *Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada*. Halifax: Fernwood.

### **Week 11 / Mar. 21      Minimum Wage and Living Wage Struggles**

- Abramsky, Sasha. 2013, December 20. The Life of a Fast Food Striker. *The New Yorker*. <http://www.newyorker.com/currency-tag/the-life-of-a-fast-food-striker>
- Evans, Bryan and Carlo Fanelli. 2016. A survey of the living wage movement in Canada: prospects and challenges. *Interface* 8.1 (May): 77-96.
- Gupta, Arun. 2013, November 11. Fight For 15 Confidential. *In These Times*. [http://inthesetimes.com/article/15826/fight\\_for\\_15\\_confidential](http://inthesetimes.com/article/15826/fight_for_15_confidential)
- Luce, Stephanie. 2011. What next for the US living wage movement? *Canadian Review of Social Policy* 65-66.
- Reynolds, David and Jen Kern. 2001-02. "Labor and the Living-Wage Movement," *WorkingUSA* 5: 17-45.

### **Week 12 / Apr. 7      Organizing the Gig Economy**

- Freeman, Richard and Joel Rogers. 2002, Spring. Open Source Unionism: Beyond Exclusive Collective Bargaining. *WorkingUSA* 5.4: 8-40.
- King, Martha. 2014. Protecting and Representing Workers in the New Gig Economy: The Case of the Freelancers Union." In Ruth Milkman and Ed Ott (eds.), *New Labor in New York: Precarious Workers and the Future of the Labor Movement*. Ithaca NY: ILR Press.
- Nack, David and Jimmy Tarlau. 2005. The Communications Workers of America Experience With "Open-Source Unionism". *WorkingUSA* 8.6: 721-732.
- Gray, Paul Christopher Gray (forthcoming). "'The same tools work everywhere.'" Organizing Gig Workers with Foodsters United,' *Labour / Le Travail*.

**Final Reflection:** Thinking about the course as a whole, which topics, concepts, readings or case studies did you find most and least useful? What was your favorite topic? What do you wish we'd spend more time on? Please upload to Avenue to Learn when you submit your final research paper.

## Course Policies

**Submitting Assignments** | All assignments must be submitted electronically via Avenue to Learn. You must use either Word or Open Office to submit your assignment, and it must appear exactly as you would submit it in paper format. Electronic submission will facilitate both academic integrity and the tracking of late submissions (see below).

**Late Policy** | You will have a total of **SEVEN grace days** to use to submit work related to the research paper after scheduled due dates, as they see fit, before a late penalty will apply. So, for example, you could hand all three components each two days late, or you could hand in one assignment seven days late, without a late penalty applying. However, after you have used your total number of grace days, the penalty for late submission of an assignment is **10% per day**, with the weekend counting as two days. For example, an assignment marked out of 20 submitted one day late will receive a deduction of 2 out of 20. Electronic submission of assignments is mandatory in order to allow me to keep track of your use of these grace days. Assignments submitted more than 7 days late will not be accepted, unless you have negotiated an extension (see below). Critical reading commentaries and discussion questions will not be accepted after the due date – simply write a response to the following week’s readings.

**Extensions** | Extensions can be arranged in cases of more serious medical problems or personal difficulties that can’t be accommodated by the grace days. Please talk with me as soon as you are aware of these difficulties to negotiate alternative arrangements. You do not have to tell me all the details, we just need to communicate in order to make sure you get the support you need and so we can make alternative arrangements.

**Grade Appeals** | You are entitled to ask questions about your grades, to understand the reasons behind an evaluation in order to do better next time, and to request a regrade if, after we speak, you think the assessment was unfair. I am very open to these conversations and strongly encourage them.

1. You should normally **wait one week** after you’ve received a grade before we will discuss it.
2. You should show that you’ve **read and understood the feedback** given on the assignment.
3. You should **ask specific questions** about the substance of the feedback, or **provide specific reasons** for why you believe the work has been improperly evaluated.

**Instructor’s Email Tips** | I am generally quite accessible by email, but there are a few tips to follow for effective and professional email communication:

- **Use your university email account** | This minimizes the chance that your email will get lost in the spam filter.
- **Include the course number in the subject line** | This will help me sort out more quickly which student from which class is asking for help. A subject line like “W&S 770: question about readings” is a better than “Hi” or “Question”, which can also look like spam.
- **Politeness is appreciated** | You don’t have to be formal, but opening with “Dear Prof. Ross” or “Dear Stephanie” is preferred.
- **Sign your full name** | I like to know who I’m talking to.
- **Acknowledge my response** | You can simply put “Thanks: EOM” in the subject line (EOM = “end of message”; handy for one-line emails, since you don’t have to write an actual full email).
- **Be patient** | I am usually quite diligent about getting back to students quickly, but will aim to respond within 48 hours.
- **Follow up** | If you email me and do not receive a reply within 48 hours, assume that I did not receive your email, and try again.
- **Check your own email regularly** | There will be times when we must change arrangements or get in touch quickly, and it is important for you to check your email regularly to keep on top of these things.

## Department and University Policies

**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 the 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. 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.

**Academic Dishonesty |** <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.html>

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is *your responsibility* to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
4. In this course, we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy for this purpose.

**Turnitin.com |** In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. 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 to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

**Submission of Assignments |** Labour Studies staff do not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of student papers. All papers should be submitted/returned in class, in tutorials or during Professor/TA office hours. Instructors who utilize Avenue to Learn will provide instructions on that preference.

**Code of Conduct |** <http://studentaffairs.mcmaster.ca>

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

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

**Course Modifications |** The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term.

The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email AND Avenue to Learn (if used by instructor) regularly during the term to note any changes.

**E-Mail Communication Policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences** | All e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own **McMaster University e-mail account**. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor/TA receives a communication from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. **Please always include student name, ID, course # and TA name in messages.**

**Evaluations (Online)** | <http://evals.mcmaster.ca>, and log in via MACID.

These help faculty and the School of Labour Studies to meet our goal of continually improving teaching effectiveness. All students in the course are invited and encouraged to complete the evaluation.

**Student Accessibility Services** | <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/> MUSC-B107 905-525-9140 x28652

*NOTE: Disclosure of disability-related information is personal and confidential.*

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. They work with full-time and part-time students. SAS provides or assists students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, and Classroom Accommodations. Please inform the instructor if there are disability needs that are not being met.

**Academic Accommodation For Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)** | Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty 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.

**McMaster University Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities & McMaster University Anti-Discrimination Policy**

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

**Student Success Centre** | <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/> GH-110 905-525-9140 x24254

Some services include: student orientation, academic skills, volunteerism, educational planning, employment and career transition. Writing Support: <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html>

**Student Wellness Centre** | <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/> MUSC-B101 905-525-9140 x27700

The SWC provides services in Personal and Psychological Counselling, Mental Health Support, Medical and Health Services.

<b>Participation: Evaluation Criteria</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<b>A+ Exceptional</b>	-original thinking -very strong knowledge base -strong capacity for analysis / synthesis / critical evaluation, including well-thought out reasons for positions -ability to make linkages both within and outside the course material -asks interesting and relevant questions -always participating, but does not dominate	-has done all readings -demonstrates superior grasp of readings / concepts -regular and very capable use readings in discussion
<b>A Excellent</b>	-strong knowledge base -frequent participation, asks questions -shows some capacity for analysis / synthesis / critical evaluation	-has done most readings -demonstrates strong grasp of readings / concepts -frequent use of readings in discussion
<b>B to B+ Good to Very Good</b>	-good knowledge base, with some misunderstandings -analysis / critical evaluation somewhat underdeveloped, with arguments less well supported -participation is variable	-has done most readings -does not always read readings closely -familiar with concepts and issues, but at vague level which still requires some precision -occasional use of readings in discussion
<b>C to C+ Fairly Competent to Competent</b>	-fair knowledge base, but with many more gaps and misunderstandings -basic level of understanding, but without much analysis or critical evaluation -reasoning behind arguments absent / poorly thought out / knee-jerk -participation / questions infrequent	-has done less than half of readings -tends to rely on outside knowledge / unsupported opinions rather than knowledge gained from readings -rare use of readings in discussion
<b>D to D+ Barely Passing to Passing</b>	-poor knowledge base; superficial grasp of concepts or issues -very little critical thinking or analysis -rarely participates or asks questions	-does readings infrequently -shows little familiarity with concepts -almost never refers to readings in discussion
<b>E to F Failing</b>	-never participates -does not even show superficial understanding of ideas	-never does readings

#### **Ways you can participate |**

- initiate a topic or question
- provide information when needed by professor or other students
- offer a positive or negative reaction to something under discussion or ask for positive or negative reactions
- state when you disagree with what the professor or other students have said, and why
- restate what someone else said to ensure you understand
- give examples when needed, or ask others to give examples
- synthesize or summarize part of the discussion
- encourage or help others in the group

#### **To participate effectively, you must |**

- have done the reading
- be willing to share what you think you understand, so that others can learn and so you can check that your understandings are accurate
- be willing to say that you don't know or understand something, and ask for further explanation

# How to Read for Seminar Participation and Preparation of Critical Commentaries

## General Guidelines |

- It is crucial that everyone read for the seminar to work as a collaborative learning environment.
- **Active reading** is important. While highlighting and underlining may seem like an efficient way to get through a reading, one often ends up with too much highlighted and not very much retained. Therefore, it is wise to make notes on key issues and concepts, whether in the margins or on a separate piece of paper.
- Some of the readings may be very challenging, and it is not expected that you will understand them right away. **You may need to read readings twice**, especially if you are to be the facilitator. As well, the classroom is the space in which we work together to clarify our understandings and then build our assessments of the readings. It is important to be willing to talk about things that we are unclear about or find particularly difficult.

## Consider and take notes on the following questions when reading and preparing for seminar |

1. Do you understand the basic terms and concepts used by the authors?
  - list the concepts with which you had difficulty
  - try to write an explanation or definition for these concepts
  - try to think of examples to clarify concepts
2. What are the authors trying to demonstrate or argue? What is their thesis?
  - try to write out in two sentences at most what you think the main point of the reading was
3. What theoretical framework or approach are they using / advocating or refuting?
4. How sound are their arguments?
  - Do they make logical argument?
  - Do they use sound / adequate evidence?
  - What kind of methodology are they using?
5. How do their ideas or arguments relate to concrete examples that you are familiar with?
6. What is new or surprising in their arguments? How do they challenge or confirm your existing thinking?
  - What are the interesting questions being addressed?
  - What do you think was most important about what the author said?
7. How does the reading relate to other material in the course?
  - How does their treatment of the major concepts or issues compare with other authors?
  - Does the reading substantiate or contradict a point in an earlier reading or class discussion?
8. Do you agree or disagree with their arguments and why?
  - what parts do you agree with?
  - what parts do you disbelieve or find useless?
  - what are your justifications for these conclusions?

## In the seminar |

- Pose questions that will help clarify the themes that run across readings, and that encourage us to situate the readings relative to each other.
- Be ready to ask follow-up questions of
- Refer to notes which remind you of the things you want to say, and speak using your own words in a spontaneous manner. Do not prepare a text that you will read—this is neither effective presentation nor facilitation, and the audience will be bored.
- Pay attention to who is and is not speaking. Keep a speakers' list and give first-time speakers priority over those who've already contributed. Try to ensure everyone has a chance to speak.