

INSPIRE 3I13 – Multidisciplinary Inquiry
CO2 – Listening to Nature: Lessons on Community
Intersession Term, 2023

COURSE OFFERING

Term: Intersession 2023

Mode of Delivery: Virtual

Class Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00PM – 9:00PM

COURSE COORDINATOR(S)/INSTRUCTOR(S)

Name: Dr. Sheena Jary

Email: jarysm@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course challenges the presumptuousness of western epistemology (i.e., origins, nature, methods, and limitations of human knowledge)—specifically with respect to western ways of knowing—through the lens of nature. Western epistemology has historically placed human beings in a privileged position—as having the most power, possessing the most advanced and “relevant” knowledge, and having an infinite generative capacity. This course takes a more reverent approach to nature, looking to nature as a teacher, not a servant. This sort of paradigm shift creates a space in which we—the students—embrace humility as we learn from nature, moving from topics such as community, interconnectivity, and a culture of care; to resilience, holism, and agility; and to communication, systems, and collaboration.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS

This course will be taught on MS Teams. You will receive an invitation to join the course shell before the course begins. Any announcements for the course will be posted on Teams and Avenue to Learn. To contact me, please send me an email (jarysm@mcmaster.ca) for the fastest response. I will respond to Teams messages as well, but not as frequently as I check email.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Deconstruct basic assumptions of western epistemology that make nature subordinate to humankind;



2. Explain how their thought processes have been shaped historically, and how each student enters the course informed by their unique lived experiences;
3. Think across the boundaries of various academic disciplines, recognizing that solutions to problems may require a multidisciplinary approach;
4. Mobilize a “pay it forward” approach to building compassionate, equitable, inclusive, and diverse communities;
5. Translate their observations of nature into actionable ideas that can be employed in their daily lives;
6. Explain some basic premises of systems thinking, particularly that method of evaluating relationships between people, elements of nature, and other systems (e.g., state governance) to find sustainable solutions to difficult social problems.

CLASS STRUCTURE/SCHEDULE/SESSION TOPICS

Date	Topic
Tuesday, May 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course • Basics of systems thinking • Community as a system
Thursday, May 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncovering relationships • Building relationships
Tuesday, May 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butterfly effect • Interconnectivity and social responsibility
Thursday, May 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectivity • Agility • Resilience
Tuesday, May 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holism • Different ways of knowing
Thursday, May 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and synergy • $1 + 1 \neq 2$
Tuesday, May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership: model the way
Thursday, May 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying it forward • Reciprocity

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

All course materials will be available on Avenue to Learn.



ASSESSMENT AND COURSE DELIVERABLES

Assessment Type	Percentage Total	Due Date	Brief Explanation
Small Group Discussions	4 x 5% = 20%	May 7, 14, 21, 28	Each week, you will work in groups to complete a workshop related to nature and human societies. Emphasis is placed on the quality of critical thinking and imagination, not objectively factual data.
Pay it Forward Challenge	15%		This is an ongoing assignment that will run the span of the course. You will keep a running log of your experiences with “paying it forward” and random acts of kindness, and you will also reflect on these experiences to learn about how you build community in your daily lives.
Mapping Your Concept of Nature	20%		This assignment asks you to unite your imagination with your critical thinking skills. You will conduct some basic research on a functioning “system” in nature (e.g., mushrooms, carpenter ants, ocean life, etc.); then you will reimagine a new explanation of how this system functions.
Learning Portfolio	45%		This creative assignment asks you to share your greatest takeaways from the course. This is a chance to reflect on the small changes you have integrated into your life, as well as your understanding of nature a resource for



			<p>advocating for social change. Examples of format: digital scrapbook, personal website, video presentation, flipbook, etc.</p>
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ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES AND MISSED/LATE WORK

Late assignments will be deducted 2.5% each day (including weekends). If you need an extension, please ask in advance; it is not guaranteed, but I am happy to *consider* granting extensions when absolutely necessary. **All assignments will be due on Avenue to Learn by 11:59pm EST on the designated due date.**

POLICY ON MISSED WORK, EXTENSIONS, AND LATE PENALTIES

Standard McMaster policies pertaining to missed work (e.g., MSAFs) will apply. Understanding this, extensions and late penalties will be considered and addressed on a case-by-case basis. See below regarding academic accommodations, missed work, and related issues.

VIRTUAL COURSE DELIVERY

To follow and participate in virtual classes it is expected that you have reliable access to the following:

- A computer that meets the performance requirements [found here](#).
- An internet connection that is fast enough to stream video.
- Computer accessories that enable class participation, such as a microphone, speakers and webcam when needed.

If you think that you will not be able to meet these requirements, please contact uts@mcmaster.ca as soon as you can. Please visit the [Technology Resources for Students page](#) for detailed requirements. If you use assistive technology or believe that our platforms might be a barrier to participating, please contact [Student Accessibility Services](#), sas@mcmaster.ca, for support.

E-MAIL POLICY

E-mails must originate from a valid McMaster account and be sent to the instructor's McMaster email. Please do not use the Avenue messaging function. You must use your McMaster email account to message the instructor. Any email originating from another provider will be deleted (we cannot confirm that the email has come from you).

STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS (SAS)

Please discuss your accommodations with the instructor early in the term so that accommodations can be in place before they are needed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your registration and continuous participation to the various learning activities of INSPIRE 3I13 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture or through other communication vehicles. It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly. Lack of awareness of the course policies cannot be invoked at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly.

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. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

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.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld

(e.g., online search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use online elements (e.g. email, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the 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 a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities Policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

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.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to 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.