

SOC SCI 2US3: Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder

Course information:

- January 11 to April 12, 2021, Online/Asynchronous
- Instructor: Leilani Llacuna
- Office: Online (Teams or Zoom)
- Office hours: By Appointment (between 6pm-8pm)
- Email: llacunl@mcmaster.ca

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Course Overview

Course Description:

This course examines the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) it’s core features and the evolution of the conceptualization of Autism Spectrum Disorder and the diagnostic criteria. This course provides an introduction to a neurodevelopmental and behavioural understanding of children with ASD.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Explain the diagnostic criteria used for ASD in the DSM IV and 5, and relevant diagnostic assessments used in the field of ASD.
- 2) Identify key assessments used to measure cognitive, adaptive and academic skills in order to contribute to the development of the child’s profile and/or treatment plan.
- 3) Explain the neurological, behavioural, and developmental characteristics of children with ASD
- 4) Identify various treatment approaches used for young children with autism and methods to assess their efficacy.
- 5) Survey and identify available community services for children with ASD and their family’s, issues and barriers for individuals with ASD throughout their lifespan.
- 6) Conduct research and evaluate scientific literature and determine its relevance and application to clinical practice in ASD.

Course Format

Information will be presented through asynchronous online forum, case study analyses and online forum discussions.

Required Texts:

- 1) Boucher, J. M. (2017) *Autism Spectrum Disorder: Characteristics, Causes and Practical Issues* (2nd ed.). London, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd.
ISBN: 978-1-4462-9566-3

Additional Suggested Readings

Additional journal articles will be introduced as the course progresses. Each of these will be posted on the Avenue to Learn course site.

Course Requirements/Assignments

Requirements Overview and Deadlines

Assessment Activity	% of Grade	Date Due
Online Forum Discussion # 1: Changing Rates and Perspectives of ASD	5%	Forum Closes: January 25, 2021
Online Forum Discussion # 2: Understanding the DSM-5 Guidelines	5%	Forum Closes: February 12, 2021
Online Forum Discussion # 3: Considerations for Treatments	5%	Forum Closes: March 19, 2021
Midterm Exam	25%	February 22, 2021
Final Group Research Summary Report <i>*Topics to be submitted to instructor for review by Jan. 29, 2021</i>	15%	March 15, 2021
Final Group Presentation	10%	April 5, 2021
Presentation Reflection & Discussions	5%	April 5-April 12, 2021
Final Exam: Cumulative	30%	Exam Period: April 15-April 30, 2021

Requirement/Assignment Details

1) Online Forum Discussions (15% total)

Online forum discussions will take place between students on different topics or statements of question related to the field of ASD. Discussions are graded for completion and level of understanding of the topics discussed. Completion and participation includes a minimum of one post, with grading consideration for replies to other discussion posts. Forums will have posted opening and closing times. Students are permitted to continue to post following the

submission date, however only those submitted within 24 hours from the submission date will be graded.

2) Midterm Exam (25% total)

The midterm will consist of 75 multiple-choice questions which will be completed online through Avenue2Learn. Online proctoring will be in place for tests and exams. Midterms can be completed within a 24-48 hour window (students will have until February 23, 2021 at 11:59am to complete the midterm online).

3) Final Research Assignment (30% total)

The final group research assignment is comprised of three components described below.

a. Group Summary Report (15%)

Students will be assigned to a small group of up to 4 people to focus on research on one topic of interest related to Autism Spectrum Disorder. Students will be expected to conduct a literature review, with a minimum of 4 research articles from peer-reviewed journals, on a topic of interest that is approved by the course instructor. The group will engage in discussions on the research compiled and summarize group reflections in the summary. The final summary report will combine a summary of the research and group reflections into a **two-page, double-spaced** group summary report that will be submitted online through Avenue2Learn. ALL students in the group must be contributing members of the assignment. The final summary report should include

1. *A summary of the research (historical and current) on your topic of interest as well as any counter research with contradictory views. (1-1½ pages)*
2. *What did you learn? How did it change your initial viewpoints? Provide a summary of the group discussions related to the research (historical and current) on your topic of interest. Identify any contradictory views or interesting viewpoints in the discussions and connections to the impact of the research as it relates to ASD. (1/2 page)*

b. Group Presentation (Pre-recorded) (10%)

Following the final summary report, the group will develop a PowerPoint presentation and record the presentation on Zoom or Microsoft Teams, based on the content of the final summary report and upload the video file to Avenue2Learn. The presentation will be a maximum of 10 minutes. Students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation style and minimize reading the summary report. The presentation is meant to spark interest and conversation among their classmates who will be viewing the presentation on the last week of class.

c. Individual Reflection and Discussions (5%)

Each student will individually watch a minimum of 6 group presentations and engage in thoughtful discussions online with the presenters and other classmates. Students will be expected to ask questions on the online forum for presentations viewed and presenters are expected to respond and answer peer and instructor questions on the last week of class. All discussion responses can be uploaded between April 5th and April 12th, but all responses are expected to be submitted by April 12th at 11:59pm.

4) Final Exam: Cumulative (30% total)

The final exam will consist of 90 multiple-choice questions and 1 long answer question on cumulative content, which will be scheduled through the Office of the Registrar during the exam period. Online proctoring will be in place for tests and exams.

Assignment Submission and Grading

Form and Style

Submitting Assignments & Grading

Written Assignments:

- All written assignments are to be typed and double-spaced. Use APA formatting. Please include a title page with your name, student number and email address, the topic title of the assignment and the date submitted. Number all pages (except title page).
- Forum discussions do not require APA formatting.
- For the Final Group Summary Report, please submit **one** file copy per group to the appropriate Dropbox in Avenue2Learn.
- For the Final Group Presentation, please submit **one** video file per group to the appropriate Dropbox in Avenue2Learn.
- **Submitting Assignments Electronically:** Individual assignments submitted electronically must include your last name in the filename or Group # and a brief title of the assignment (e.g. Group1-FinalSummaryReport.doc)
- **Late Submissions:** All work is due on the date stated, by 11:59pm, unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Students will be given a grace period of 24 hours to submit assignments without a penalty. Beyond 24 hours, a late penalty of 5 percentage points per day will be applied (weekends included).

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 with the course instructor.

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.

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.

Student Responsibilities

- Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.
- In the past, student and faculty have found that 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.
- Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

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.

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](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity), 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.

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., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

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.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must 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 for further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

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.

Religious, Indigenous and 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.

E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that 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 becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, they may not reply.

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.

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".

"Relief for missed academic work **worth less than 25%** of the final grade resulting from medical or personal situations lasting **up to three calendar days**:

- Use the [McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#) on-line self-reporting tool. No further documentation is required.
- Students may submit requests for relief using the MSAF **once per term**.
- An automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students **must immediately follow up** with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate the opportunity for relief."

A version of the full Regulation is copied on the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) website.

Relief for any missed academic work in this course will accommodate students to submit assignments **3 days** from due date (weekends included).

Course Weekly Topics and Readings

Week	Date	Topics & Assignments	Readings
1	January 11, 2021	Introduction to course, course outline Introduction to the diversity of ASD	Boucher (2017): Chapters 1 & 2 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
2	January 18, 2021	Diagnosis of ASD, Assessment and Screening	Boucher (2017): Chapters 3 & 11 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
3	January 25, 2021	Reflection Week Discussion #1 closes January 25 th Submit final topics to instructor for approval by January 29 th	No readings
4	February 1, 2021	The Dyad of Impairments: Socio-Communication	Boucher (2017): Chapters 3, 9 & 10 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
5	February 8, 2021	The Dyad of Impairments: Restricted and Repetitive Behaviour Discussion # 2 closes February 12 th	Boucher (2017): Chapters 3 & 9 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
	February 15, 2021	MIDTERM RECESS BREAK	No readings
6	February 22, 2021	Midterm Exam on Avenue2Learn	No readings
7	March 1, 2021	Co-morbid Conditions and ASD	Boucher (2017): Chapter 4 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn Supplementary
8	March 8, 2021	Evaluation and Practice Discussion # 3 closes March 19 th Midterm Exam Re-write (if required)	Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
9	March 15, 2021	Treating Socio-communication deficits Final Group Summary Report due on Avenue2Learn	Boucher (2017): Chapter 12 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
10	March 22, 2021	Treating Restrictive and Repetitive Behaviour	Boucher (2017): Chapter 12 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
11	March 29, 2021	ASD Throughout the Lifespan	Boucher (2017): Chapters 5, 13 Supplementary Articles: See Avenue2Learn
12	April 5, 2021	Final Group Video Presentations due on Avenue2Learn Individual Reflections & Discussions Online Final Exam Review	No readings
13	April 12, 2021	Individual Reflections & Discussions Online	No readings
14		Final Exam Period: April 15 th to April 30 th (Scheduled through Registrar's Office)	