

## **TEACHING DOSSIER**

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## 1. Brief Biography

As a PhD candidate in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies at Queen's University, I have enjoyed the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant in several courses, including health policy. I have further designed and instructed my own course, Critical Perspectives in Mental Health, which contained a unit on Canadian health policy generally, and mental health policy specifically. I am in the ABD phase of writing my dissertation, expected to complete in Fall 2015. I am examining the politics of the mental health crisis in postsecondary education in Canada, considering issues of health policy, university health promotion strategies, and impacts on students.

## 2. Teaching Philosophy

*The empowerment and passion I feel after your class is something I have not felt before in my undergraduate career. I feel lucky that I have found something that I am so passionate about. I am now trying to think about how I can apply this passion to a career, perhaps in public health. I would love to be able to shed a critical eye on existing and future programs. I'm certainly going to miss this class when it is over.*  
(4<sup>th</sup> year student, email received 2013)

This powerful comment represents the overarching goals that I always have for student learning: I aim to challenge and inspire students, but also to build their capacities so they feel confident creating the change they wish to see in the world. To achieve these goals, I focus on fostering intellectual rigor, building a learning community, and attending to student development.

### Intellectual Rigor

As a critical scholar and pedagogue, I often introduce students to material unlike anything they have been asked to engage with before, as I prompt them to question and evaluate their unexamined assumptions about health and physical activity, to articulate what they value about these areas, and to consider the relationship of the social, historical, economic, and political context to these assumptions and values.

Students find this work very difficult, but I find that they rise well to challenges that they can anticipate. I express my high expectations for them at the outset of each course and reiterate them often. I make space to discuss anticipated learning outcomes not only on the first day of class, but also when I have students describe how upcoming assignments target both course learning outcomes and other potentially valuable outcomes that I may not have identified. I want students to feel supported in their learning so they can better take responsibility for what they wish to get out of their education.

### Building a Learning Community

Learning is not a safe and predictable confirmation of what we think we already know; rather, it requires us to push beyond our comfort level. I find that when students are dealing with the sometimes controversial discourses that frequently comprise my classes, they benefit from support in their risk-taking and from a sense of a shared, rather than isolated, journey.

Since I often ask students to navigate tumultuous material with divergent points of view and contradictory interpretations, I establish order and constancy in classroom structures. Although each class is not identical, I am purposeful in my lesson planning to create familiar patterns that allow students feel settled in a routine even as the class content is unsettling.

I teach students to value language and to be deliberate and thoughtful in their verbal and written expression; as a result, they feel respected and free to articulate complex and sometimes emotionally laden ideas. I often ask students to work on structured activities in small groups, guiding them as they engage multiple perspectives, build interpersonal capacities, and gain the confidence to make persuasive, informed arguments about issues.

Besides creating an environment with clear expectations and boundaries, I have found that humour and honesty are indispensable in the classroom, and I practice both. Students feel that they know me well in the context of my educational aspirations, and similarly, my genuine wish to know them and what they value in their education encourages them to strive to do their best.

### Student Development

While an undergraduate degree represents a certain level of competency, or knowledge and skills in a field of study, student success is better measured in capabilities, or the ability to navigate within various contexts and make meaningful contributions to the situations and dilemmas that arise. Much of the work that I have students perform and that I assess is focused on identifying issues in health and sport that students find deserving of intervention, and practicing thoughtful, effective, persuasive communication.

I have students work in stages towards a learning goal, and hold in-class, skill-building workshops because too often in theoretical classes, we ask that students acquire skills without the benefit of instruction or a chance to practice with evaluation and feedback. As instructor and as head teaching assistant, one of my consistent learning objectives is clear and concise writing. Writing is a process, and students work progressively to improve their written communication while I provide scaffolding to help students advance their skills, no matter what their starting point. Bolstered by my emphasis on formative assessment, my students have come to recognize how much a continual loop of feedback and self-reflection allows them the space to take risks and adjust their approaches, to be creative, flexible, and confident in all that they do.

## **3. Queen's University: Teaching Experience**

My classroom teaching experience has all taken place in the multi-disciplinary School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, where I have enjoyed an opportunity to engage with a number of theoretical approaches and epistemological perspectives.

### **3.1 Course Instruction**

#### **HLTH 495 – Critical Perspectives in Mental Health Studies (Fall 2013; Fall 2014)**

This was a special topics course open to 25 fourth-year students majoring in any of the three School of Kinesiology and Health Studies concentrations (Health Studies, Kinesiology, and Physical Education). It was mandatory for approximately one third of the students. This course was offered for the first time in 2013 when I proposed it to the School as an addition to the 400-level programming.

The course involved a three-hour class once per week for 12 weeks. I divided classes into three parts, with lesson plans usually consisting of structured reading group work, a mini-lecture, and a skill-building workshop. These shifts in learning strategies were facilitated by my use of one of the new Active Learning Classrooms in my second year teaching.

I was responsible for all preparation, delivery, and assessment. Please see Appendix A for the syllabus, Appendix B for the structured reading group details, and the section on Teaching Effectiveness for students' and colleagues' feedback on the course.

### 3.2 Guest Lectures

#### **HLTH 415 – Program Design and Evaluation (Fall 2011)**

60 Students

80-minute lecture

Topic: *High-risk and population approaches to preventive health: When are we promoting health inequities?*

#### **KNPE 167 – Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Sport and Physical Activity (Winter 2011)**

150 Students

50-minute lecture

Topic: *Disability, society, and sports*

#### **HLTH 434 – Health Social Movements (Fall 2010)**

30 Students

50-minute lecture

Topic: *'Moral panic' and 'ethical duty': Framing victim and citizen identities in a neoliberal age*

### 3.3 Teaching Assistantships

#### Assisting with Classroom Instruction

HLTH 434 – Health Social Movements (2010)

#### Leading Tutorials

HLTH 405 – Canadian Health Policy (2013)

HLTH 101 – Social Determinants of Health (2011, 2012)

HLTH 333 – Contemporary Issues in Sexuality (2012)

KNPE 167 – Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Sport and Physical Activity (2010, 2011)

#### Assessing Assignments and Exams

HLTH 331 – Advanced Human Nutrition (2015)

KNPE 367 – Fitness, the Body, and Culture (2014)

HLTH 102 – Physical Determinants of Health (2011)

HLTH 315 – Theory and Practice of Health Behaviour Change (2009)

## 4. Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

### 4.1 Formal Student Evaluations

**The University Survey of Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT) evaluation** was administered both years that I instructed HLTH 495. Scores rated on a five-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Question	Year	Mean Rating	Department Mean
Overall, this is an excellent course	2014	4.6	3.7
	2013	4.3	3.9
Overall, this instructor is an effective teacher	2014	4.8	4.0
	2013	4.4	3.9
I learned a great deal from this course	2014	4.7	3.8
	2013	4.4	3.1
I felt that this course challenged me intellectually	2014	4.8	3.7
	2013	4.5	3.7
My interest in the subject has been stimulated by this course	2014	4.4	3.6
	2013	4.2	3.8
The instructor has fostered a positive learning environment	2014	4.8	4.2
	2013	4.5	4.2

**Teaching Assistant evaluations** were administered by the department upon request. Scores rated on a five-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Comparison means not available.

Question	Course	Mean Rating
My TA in this course was an effective teacher	HLTH 333 (2012)	4.54
	KNPE 167 (2011)	4.5
	HLTH 434 (2010)	3.96
I learned a lot from my TA in this course	HLTH 333 (2012)	4.36
	KNPE 167 (2011)	4.25
	HLTH 434 (2010)	4.0
My TA in this course showed concern for students	HLTH 333 (2012)	4.86
	KNPE 167 (2011)	4.75
	HLTH 434 (2010)	4.61
My TA for this course was well prepared	HLTH 333 (2012)	4.73
	KNPE 167 (2011)	4.5
	HLTH 434 (2010)	4.86
My TA was interested in what she was teaching	HLTH 333 (2012)	4.73
	KNPE 167 (2011)	4.75
	HLTH 434 (2010)	4.86

## 4.2 Informal Student Evaluations – Representative Comments

### Intellectual Rigor

“I loved how much this course challenged me. Excellent teaching methods and lots of positive feedback made for a comfortable environment.” (2014)

“Andrea has helped me become a stronger writer and has pushed me intellectually beyond what I thought I was capable of through her feedback on my work.” (2013)

“She was always pushing us to dig deep into the issues and make connections in ways that we may not have thought to.” (2011)

“I like that the course required me to read and think critically rather than to memorize facts. While it definitely takes me more time and effort to produce the kind of writing required by this course, I am happy with the work I produced.” (2014)

“This course has taught me how to write and participate in a critical discussion. This has easily been my favourite course I’ve taken at Queen’s.” (2014)

### Learning Community

“Allowed for students to express themselves in a safe environment without the fear of being ‘wrong.’” (2011)

“She made it fun and interesting.” (2011)

“Andrea is an amazing teacher: she clearly explains and understands the concepts relevant to the course.” (2014)

“She was able to make difficult concepts easy by relating them back to everyday life experiences.” (2012)

“Probably the best teacher I have ever had.” (2013)

### Student Development

“You seem passionate about both the education of your students as well as their successes and it is this that makes you such a good instructor.” (2013)

“The prof genuinely cared about the students and provided a great deal of resources to help students succeed” (2014)

“She helped me to think about issues in a different way that I can carry over into other classes.” (2012)

“This course was amazing! I learned so much, and changed my perspective about so many things.” (2013)

“Andrea has been exceptional at facilitating deeper and more critical thinking and providing insight and feedback to improve writing.” (2014)

#### **4.3 Colleague Evaluations – Representative Comments**

“You have a relaxed and comfortable style; the students clearly felt comfortable with you.” (Course Instructor commenting on guest lecture, 2011)

“Students seem to appreciate your friendly, thoughtful approach to teaching. You come across as knowledgeable, organized, and well prepared. You are thoughtful of students and the way they learn.” (Educational Developer observing HLTH 495, 2013. See Appendix D for full letter)

#### **4.4 Teaching Award Nomination**

##### **The Health Studies Professor Award (2013/2014)**

Nominated for HLTH 495, Queen’s University

Adjudicated by the Health Studies Departmental Student Council to recognize the outstanding contribution of a teacher in the Health Studies department in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies. Candidates are student-nominated on the following criteria: engaging and inspiring; available beyond class time hours; friendly and approachable; knowledgeable; and presents well-prepared lectures.

### **5. Curriculum Development and Classroom Innovation**

#### **5.1 Course Design**

##### **HLTH 495 - Critical Perspectives in Mental Health Studies**

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen’s University  
Summer 2013

Conceived and designed a new course to respond to the paucity of opportunities university-wide for undergraduate academic engagement with the topic of mental health, using principles of Backward Design, Constructive Alignment, and Universal Design.

In a movement away from inputs towards outputs, I developed learning outcomes that would prepare students for future experiences that would require careful analysis and contextualization of complex issues, self-reflection to clarify their own assumptions and priorities, and tools to decide when and how to react to dilemmas they face. Working backward from these learning outcomes, I established assessments and classroom strategies that together could help students achieve these capabilities.

I chose material that would encourage students to engage with diverse viewpoints and varied the formats and delivery of course texts to increase the accessibility of content for different learning styles. See Appendix A for syllabus.

##### **HLTH 101 - Social Determinants of Health**

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen’s University  
Summer 2013

With a colleague, I revamped the major written assignments for this large, mandatory first-year course to align better with course objectives; created a student reference guide to reinforce principles of academic writing; and redesigned tutorials to provide students with skills to succeed in written assessment.



## 5.2 Selected Teaching Innovations

### Inside the Class

**Structured Reading Groups** held weekly to encourage deep learning approaches to class material, as well as practice in interpersonal interaction, in influential and respectful argumentation, and in engaging with diverse perspectives (see Appendix B for details).

**Building Final Project Rubric** together as an in-class activity to raise student investment in and understanding of assessment.

**Reading, Writing, and Grading Workshops** integrated into lesson planning in a shift from primary focus on content to include more emphasis skill building.

### Outside the Class

**Assigning Artistic Forms** for weekly “readings” such as podcasts, poems, and spoken word performances to complement the more traditional scholarly articles and book chapters and as a way of privileging underrepresented voices.

**Creative Project Options** for final assignment to allow students space to express theoretical understandings in forms that can translate to real-life interventions (examples of student work include designing training sessions for health care professionals and forming a Health Social Movement group).

**Online Teaching Platform** (Moodle) used to extend discussions beyond the classroom—for instance, as a question and answer forum, and for online learning and assessment in a blended learning format.

### The Class Itself

**Flexible Active Learning Classroom** requested and granted for Fall 2014 instruction of HLTH 495. The room featured flexible classroom design, allowing students to move in and out of group work, whole class discussions, and mini-lecture configurations with ease. (See <http://queensu.ca/activelearningspaces/classrooms/ellis-319-flexibility> for classroom description.)

**Interactive Display Active Learning Classroom** used for technologically enhanced writing instruction session. (See <http://queensu.ca/activelearningspaces/classrooms/ellis-333-interactive> for classroom description and Appendix D for peer evaluation of the session.)

## 6. Educational Leadership and Mentorship Experience

### 6.1 Presentations for Educators

#### **Showcase of Teaching and Learning at Queen’s (2015)**

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen’s University

Presentation detailing the successes and challenges of a deep learning approach that allows students to develop skills in negotiating discussions of sensitive and sometimes contentious topics.

Presentation: *Making meaning in structured reading groups*

### Teaching Development Day (2014)

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University

Invited to prepare and run a workshop at the CTL's annual TD Day, blending theory and practice designed to prompt educators to reflect on their own biases and expectations.

Workshop: *'But my students are so shy!' Improving communication in a quiet classroom*

## 6.2 Mentorship of Graduate Student Educators

### Course Design and Teaching Strategies Workshop for Teaching Fellows (2014; 2015)

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen's University

Collaborated with 2 Educational Developers from the CTL to design and deliver the department's inaugural TF workshop to build the skills and confidence of graduate students preparing to instruct undergraduate courses. Delivered over 2 days, with theory and practice in areas such as course design, classroom strategies, exam construction, and mentoring TAs. Invited to return in 2015 to co-facilitate a workshop for new TFs.

### Head Teaching Assistant (2013)

HLTH 101 – Social Determinants of Health

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen's University

11 Teaching Assistants

Shared responsibilities with a co-head TA to oversee the team of teaching assistants who ran tutorials and graded essays. My particular focus was on mentoring TAs as they taught students about textual analysis and graded the major written assignments.

## 6.3 Evidence of Educational Leadership Effectiveness

**Teaching Development Day workshop evaluation.** 46 respondents answered questions on a 5-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Comparison means not available.

Question	Mean Rating
Overall this was a good session	4.5
This session was interesting	4.5
The teaching and learning methods were effective	4.5
This session was useful	4.3
The learning environment was positive	4.7

## **Representative Comments**

### TD Day

“It was very useful discussion of a topic rarely addressed in an analytical way during tutorials and classes. Very relevant.” (TD Day participant)

“Very thought provoking.” (TD Day participant)

“Great use of strategies in the session that were being discussed.” (TD Day participant)

### TF Workshop

“This [workshop] is absolutely necessary for all new incoming TFs, adjuncts, and faculty.” (TF workshop)

“[I appreciated the] opportunity to discuss with other teaching fellows and create this community.” (TF workshop)

“Thank you for engaging with diverse opinions on teaching strategies in respectful and constructive ways.” (TF workshop)

### HLTH 101 Head TA

“[I found the provided marking materials] very, very useful.” (HLTH 101 TA)

“I have found the TA meetings helpful. I really enjoy hearing what the other TAs have done with their tutorials because it gives me ideas for how to improve my own approach.” (HLTH 101 TA)

## **7. Writing Pedagogy**

### **7.1 Writing Presentations and Workshops**

#### **KNPE 367 – Fitness, The Body, and Culture (2014)**

60 students

80-minute interactive workshop

Topic: *Writing and editing to create powerful short essays*

See Appendix D for classroom observation letter

#### **HLTH 101 – Social Determinants of Health (2013)**

550 students

30-minute presentation

Topic: *Writing your first university book review*

#### **Sport Psychology Lab (2012)**

Dr. Jean Côté’s graduate students

2-hour tailored workshop

Topic: *Writing for clarity and persuasiveness*

### Health Promotion Lab (2011)

Dr. Amy Latimer-Cheung's graduate students  
3-hour intensive workshop  
Topic: *Writing for clarity and persuasiveness*

## 7.2 Individual Writing Consultation

### Writing Specialist (2005-2009; 2014-present)

The Writing Centre, Queen's University  
Providing one-on-one consultation with undergraduate and graduate students designed to strengthen their skills at all stages of the writing process. Working with students from a wide variety of disciplines and with many English language learners, often for repeat appointments by request.

## 7.3 Evidence of Writing Pedagogy Effectiveness

**Writing Centre student evaluations** 2014/2015. Performance rated on a 5-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.

Question	Mean Rating	Unit Mean
This consultation addressed my concerns	4.57	4.55
The consultant used effective strategies during the session	4.67	4.55
I learned and/or practiced a writing strategy that I can apply	4.43	4.4
The consultant was supportive and easy to talk to	4.9	4.75

### Representative student comments (Writing Centre):

"She helped me to clarify my ideas and feel more confident."

"She was the best consultant I had so far."

"I really like that I was pushed to think about new ideas."

"I liked the pace, environment, and thoughtfulness of my tutor. A+!!"

### Representative colleague comments (Writing Workshops):

"Thank you SO MUCH for this. Wow. Lucky students." (Course Instructor, 2013)

"Your use of interactive technology was productive and was carefully balanced with other learning strategies." (Classroom Observation 2014; see Appendix D for full letter)

## **8. Professional Development**

### **8.1 Education Courses**

#### **Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2014)**

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University

12-week course designed to foster understanding and reflection about learning approaches and effective teaching in a university setting. In-depth coverage and practice of pedagogical issues such as assessment, class planning, and approaches to learning.

### **8.2 Teaching Workshops and Conferences**

#### **Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2014)**

STLHE Annual Conference, Kingston Ontario

Volunteer and participant in various sessions dealing with topics such as:

- Increasing student engagement
- Supporting student wellbeing
- Education for social justice
- Writing consultations and development
- Teaching and learning leadership

#### **Course Development and Design (2013)**

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University

2-day intensive workshop focused on the principles of backward design, constructive alignment, and universal design.

#### **Professional Development Day for Teaching Assistants (2008; 2009)**

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University

Sessions included:

- Cultural Competency
- Equity Issues
- Building a Learning Community
- Skillful Questioning for Effective Teaching and Learning

#### **Assessment Workshop: Grading and Giving Feedback to Students (2008)**

Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University

Interactive session detailing principles and strategies of effective assessment.

### **8.3 Certifications and Other Training**

Human Rights 101 (2015)

Accessible Instruction for Educators (2014)

Accessible Customer Service (2013)

Mental Health First Aid (2013)

Conflict Resolution (2012)

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Appendix A

Sample Course Syllabus

SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY & HEALTH STUDIES



**HLTH 495/3.0 - Advanced Topics in Health Studies II: Critical Perspectives in Mental Health -  
Fall 2014**

**Instructor:** Andrea Phillipson

**E-mail:** a.phillipson@queensu.ca

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

**Location:** KHS 301X, except September 16, 23, and 30, when I will hold initial meeting office hours at The Common Ground. Details are provided below.

**Seminar Day/Time:** Tuesday 11:30 am – 2:30 pm

**Location:** Ellis 319

Course Description: This seminar positions contemporary understandings of mental health and illness in a broad social, historical, and cultural context. Drawing on scholarly literature from sociology, anthropology, disability studies, media studies, history, and mad studies, students will consider the implications of measuring, defining, and treating mental illness; the social meanings of mental health and its promotion; and the relationships between mental well-being and systems of privilege and oppression. We will critically examine widely held beliefs and values about mental health, popularized health promotion interventions, recovery and resilience paradigms, and biopsychosocial treatment preferences, attuned to how these shape the political climate, frame public discourse, and drive mental health policy and research agendas. Students will engage with a variety of theoretical approaches to become more careful consumers and purveyors of mental health information.

Intended Student Learning Outcomes:

Full engagement in this course will help enable students to

- **Recognize** the current and historical issues, debates, and questions taken up in mainstream and alternative discourses about mental health to contribute to complex and potentially controversial discussions with a foundational understanding of the issues at stake
- **Evaluate** the strengths and weaknesses of arguments made by various scholars and commentators to assess their usefulness, reliability, and persuasiveness

- **Apply** critical theory to various case studies, scenarios, and situations to appreciate the social, historical, and political dimensions in which these events and experiences unfold
- **Devise** strategies of intervention to enable high-level engagement in health policy and planning decision making

### Course Expectations

I do not expect that you will agree with everything that you encounter in this course, but I do expect that you will treat all material with due attention and respect. It is your responsibility to read/listen both *charitably* and *critically*, keeping in mind how and why some perspectives are privileged in our society's daily discourses while others are discounted or discredited. My humble hope is that you will emerge from this course with a clear understanding that every position that we take on mental health is just that: a position that emerges from a particular social, historical context and that we do ourselves credit to recognize the choices we make as well as their potential implications, from repeating common statistics about mental illness prevalence to participating in Mad Pride activities.

As is standard for university courses, you should plan to spend 3 hours doing work outside of class for every hour that you spend in class. In other words, you should budget 9 hours per week for class preparation and assignments. While it may not be realistic to expect that a full-time undergraduate student will spend 60 hours each and every week doing schoolwork, you know well by now that there are many weeks (i.e., when term papers are due) that you will exceed that amount by far. This course is designed to encourage you to begin your final project research early so that you can equalize your time as much as possible.

### Textbook &/or Courseware Package:

There is only one required hard copy text for this course:

Lefrançois, Brenda A., Menzies, Robert, & Reaume, Geoffrey. (Eds.) (2013). *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press.

The text costs \$47.33 new or \$35.50 used at the Campus Bookstore and is listed here:

<http://www.campusbookstore.com/Textbooks/Course/13868-HLTH495-FALL14>

The Bookstore also has a textbook rental program, which may help you to save money. Details are available here:

<http://www.campusbookstore.com/Textbooks/Rental/>

Also, this title will be available on reserve in Stauffer library.

Readings from this text will begin in week 3.



Assessment Guide

ASSIGNMENT	DATE DUE	GRADE
Introductory chat	16, 23, or 30 Sept	5%
Worksheets for class preparation	Weekly	35%
Discussion leadership	As per schedule	10%
Mental health campaign analysis	30 September	10%
Research topic for in-class workshop	7 October	--
Annotated bibliography	28 October	10%
Final research project plans	18 November	--
Final Project	2 December	30%

*Introductory chat*

During week 1, students will sign up online (at [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0At1qxXX8q-x\\_dFptTlhSR05IbTFacGJsYnBjZlBrTIE&usp=drive\\_web#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0At1qxXX8q-x_dFptTlhSR05IbTFacGJsYnBjZlBrTIE&usp=drive_web#gid=0)) for a 10-minute time slot during which they will either meet with me in person at the Common Ground or use Skype for a video or IM chat. These introductory chats will take place over weeks 2, 3, and 4 (Sept 16, 23, 30) and will be your opportunity to let me know what you hope to get from the course, to share any concerns you may have, or just to give us a chance to meet in an informal setting. You will receive the full 5% grade for taking time out of your schedule to meet.

*Worksheets for class preparation (Reading group portfolio)*

As this is a 4th year course, I have high expectations for your level of class preparation. I expect you will arrive not only having read (or listened to or watched) the assigned material, but that you have engaged with it deeply, have taken notes, have thought about each piece individually and in relation to the other class materials, and have insights to share. To help guide this work, you will submit worksheets to prepare for weekly reading groups; these submissions as a whole will form a Reading Portfolio that is worth 35% of your final grade. I will provide feedback on your submissions each week via Moodle, and I will provide a letter grade on your portfolio twice during the term (with each grade representing 50% of the portfolio grade). To receive feedback and a grade on your submissions, you must be present for the small group discussions. You will receive detailed instructions in class in week 2.

*Discussion leadership*

At least once during the term, you will take on the role of discussion leader in your reading group. In addition to the worksheet that you submit in preparation for the reading group discussion, you must facilitate this discussion, making sure that no one person (including yourself) dominates the conversation. You will be evaluated by the group (including yourself) for your facilitation.

*Mental health campaign analysis*

This short essay will give you an opportunity to perform an analysis of primary materials, and for me to give you feedback specifically about your writing in preparation for the final project. You will watch a spoken word performance by Andrea Gibson called "The Madness Vase," available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtZp7MQE2ZM> This poem is a raw and moving exploration of depression and suicide. Before the poem, Gibson mentions the "It Gets Better" project, noting that sometimes the message from that campaign has felt useful and other times it does not. Your task is to find a current mental health campaign and evaluate its ability to meet the needs that Gibson raises. In 3 double spaced pages (following APA format, as described below), explore one select issue raised by Gibson and formulate an argument about how Gibson would assess the campaign of your choice. You will not reference

other sources; however, you are expected to make a well-focused argument based on a clear thesis statement.

***Final Project (you are encouraged to work in pairs to conduct your final project)***

The final project is broken down into a number of stages to help facilitate your success. Below you will find a description of the two project options and the various stages of completion.

*Option 1*

Write a 12-page essay on a relevant issue of your choice. You are welcome to choose a topic we cover in this course, and I will be happy to recommend further readings. Please take the time to look at the weekly topics early, and if you find one or two that interest you, do the readings right away so you can begin to think about the unique contribution you can make to the ongoing debates and discussion. Choose a subject that will capture your interest for the entire term, and I will help you to refine your topic so that you have a manageable, meaningful, and interesting project. You will likely rely on secondary literature to construct your analysis (rather than collecting primary data from interviews, etc.). Although quantitative sources may be useful as background information, you should draw primarily on qualitative materials.

We will construct a rubric for this project together in class, but be aware that I will be looking for you to present a strong, original argument and not simply to summarize and repeat what you find in your research sources. Your analytical paper will answer a question of social, cultural, or historic significance. It will have the hallmarks of academic writing: an engaging thesis; tight, well-organized paragraphs; an argument that develops over the course of the paper; formal prose, etc. If you wish to discuss the elements of good essay writing, please come see me during my office hours and/or visit the tutors at the Writing Centre: <http://sass.queensu.ca/writingcentre/>

*Option 2*

Design a plan for teaching a mainstream audience about the critical perspectives you encounter in this course. You will need to choose a particular audience and decide on an appropriate method to engage that audience. This might take the form of an event, a campaign, or any format that you can argue will be effective and persuasive. As with the essay described above, you will need to choose an interesting and narrow subject. Your approach should be appropriate for the scope of the topic, and you may draw on your health promotion knowledge when designing it. Please use the full extent of your imagination.

The project you submit will include a substantive portfolio with any material you think I would require to have a clear sense of your approach. Some examples might include a panel description with panelists' abstracts, posters, video clip of an event, etc. You must also provide me with a 6-page paper explaining the details of your approach, your audience, and your justification for these choices. As with the essay, you will need to cite secondary sources as evidence for your argument. You must show that you have analyzed your topic and its social implications, and that your approach to addressing a mainstream audience takes the complexities of the course material and theoretical considerations into account. The standards of academic research and writing described in Option 1 will also apply to Option 2.

**We will discuss the details and expectations of both options at length in class.**

*Breakdown of final project steps:*

*7 October: Research topic*

No matter whether you choose option 1 or 2, you will be basing your project on a clear and compelling research topic. Please come prepared to class with a 1-3 sentence statement of the central issue you wish to explore in your final project. You will need to have already read and thought about your topic a great deal,

and will have a narrow focus proper to a term project. We will work on further refining a research question that can guide your work for the next 7 weeks. There will be no grades assigned to bringing your research topic to class, but failure to do so will result in a step deduction of the project final grade (e.g., a B+ will become a B).

*28 October: Annotated bibliography*

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, Internet materials, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (approximately 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph--the annotation. The purpose of the bibliography is to provide a review of literature on your topic, illustrate the quality of the research you are doing, and provide examples of the types of sources that are available. You must annotate at least 5 sources and at least 3 of these must be scholarly journal articles, book chapters, or books. I will provide feedback about the quality and applicability of your sources. We will cover how to write annotations in class.

*11 November: Final research project plan*

You will come to class prepared to discuss a detailed plan of your project with your peers. For Option 1, the plan will include a thesis statement (at least a provisional thesis) and an outline of the supporting premises. For Option 2, the plan will include a clear statement of intent for your project and an outline of the portfolio items, including brief justifications for their inclusion (i.e., a description of how each segment contributes to the main lessons you are trying to teach your audience). As with the research topic, there will be no grades assigned to bringing your plan to class, but failure to do so will result in a step deduction of the project final grade (e.g., a B+ will become a B).

*2 December: Final Project Due*

Please submit during my office hours, or to the SKHS essay drop box before 4pm.

Late Policy

SKHS departmental policy is that assignments are due on their due date. However, a one-week extension will be given (on the major written assignments), with no questions asked. There will be no mark deductions for assignments handed in during the one week grace period but these assignments will not be returned as quickly as those handed in on the due date. Assignments handed in after the extended deadline will not be graded and will be assigned a grade of 'F' (0%).

Note: 'No questions asked' goes both ways. That is, the instructor will not ask any questions but neither can the students. If clarification about the assignment is needed, those questions must be asked prior to the original due date.

**Students are strongly encouraged to plan their time wisely, hand their assignments in on time, and use the grace period only in exceptional circumstances.**

Requests for re-marking of assignments

Re-grading will be considered only if accompanied by a written explanation. This document must make explicit reference to all elements of the applicable rubric with a detailed and persuasive formal argument of the ways in which this assignment has met various levels of the rubric. Students should be aware that re-marking involves the possibility that the mark could be decreased

Grading Scheme

All components of this course will receive letter grades which, for purposes of calculating your course average, will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale (see below). Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale (see below).

**Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme**

Assignment mark	Numerical value for calculation of final mark
A+	93
A	87
A-	82
B+	78
B	75
B-	72
C+	68
C	65
C-	62
D+	58
D	55
D-	52
F48 (F+)	48
F24 (F)	24
F0 (0)	0

**Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale**

Grade	Numerical Course Average (Range)
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

Disability Accommodations Statement

*Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the DSO website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/>*

Select Resources

*Mad Students Society (MSS)* [www.madstudentsociety.com](http://www.madstudentsociety.com)

Mad Students Society is a community of students who are attending or planning to attend institutions of post-secondary or adult education and have past and/or present experiences with the psychiatric and/or mental health systems. We meet monthly and communicate through an email listserv to support each other, discover tools for self-advocacy, and connect with our history and broader social movements.

*Telephone Aid Line Kingston (TALK)* 613-544-1771

Crisis, distress, befriending, and information. Support through listening. Mon-Sun: 7pm-3am

*AMS Peer Support Centre (PSC)* Room 34, JDUC

PSC volunteers are compassionate and accepting of any issue, and our service operates according to a confidentiality agreement. 2pm-10pm, 7 days a week

*Health Counselling Disability Services (HCDS), Queen's University*  
LaSalle Building, 613-533-2506

Schedule of Topics and Readings **\*\*subject to change\*\***

Unless noted otherwise, all readings are either from the course textbook or are available in QCAT. Be sure to download articles early, as technical difficulty will not be an allowable excuse for lack of preparation for reading group. Detailed information and links available in Moodle.

WEEK	IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES	PREPARATION
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>Introduction to Critical Perspectives</b>	
9 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is mental health?</li> <li>• Film: <i>Beyond the medical model</i></li> </ul>	
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>A brief history of mental health care in Canada</b>	
16 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The art of questioning” workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fierlbeck (2011). <i>Health care in Canada: A citizen’s guide to policy and politics.</i></li> <li>• Pickersgill (2012). What is psychiatry? Co-producing complexity in mental health.</li> <li>• Teghtsoonian (2009). Depression and mental health in neoliberal times: A critical analysis of policy and discourse.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>A brief history of Mad Studies</b>	
23 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #1</li> <li>• Film: <i>The inmates are running the asylum</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas and Bracken (2004). Critical psychiatry in practice.</li> <li>• Reville, David. (2013). Is Mad Studies emerging as a new field of inquiry?</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<b>Debating diagnosis</b>	
30 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #2</li> <li>• “The art of reading” workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Campaign Analysis due</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linder (2004). Creating post-traumatic stress disorder: A case study of the history, sociology, and politics of psychiatric classification.</li> <li>• Lafrance (2007). A bitter pill: A discursive analysis of women’s medicalised accounts of depression.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 5</b>	<b>Treating madness and assessing evidence: Who’s an expert? (Part I)</b>	
7 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #3</li> <li>• Research topic workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Research Topic due</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weitz (2013). Electroshock: Torture as “treatment”</li> <li>• Hall (2008). Bipolar medication myths: Joanna Moncrieff (Radio interview).</li> <li>• Brosh (2013). Depression Part Two (Web log post).</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<b>Issues of social control; Or rather, how social conditions create “common sense”</b>	
14 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #4</li> <li>• “The art of writing” workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hall (2010). Schizophrenia and Black politics: Jonathan Metzl (Radio interview).</li> <li>• Voronka (2013). Rerouting the weeds: The move from criminalizing to pathologizing “troubled youth” in <i>The review of the roots of youth violence.</i></li> </ul>

<b>WEEK 7</b>	<b>Critical breaks at critical moments</b>	
21 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-term review of major concepts</li> <li>• Assessing essays workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carefully review the final project rubric and sample essay (available on Moodle)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 8</b>	<b>Critical takes on popular paradigms: Recovery and resilience discourses</b>	
28 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #5</li> <li>• Film: <i>Voices matter</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Bibliography due</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Howell and Voronka (2012). Introduction: The politics of resilience and recovery in mental health care.</li> <li>• Morrow (2013). Recovery: Progressive paradigm or neoliberal smokescreen?</li> <li>• Aubrecht (2012). The new vocabulary of resilience and the governance of university student life.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 9</b>	<b>Telling stories and “involving users”: Who’s an expert? (Part II)</b>	
4 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #6</li> <li>• Defining peer support workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costa et al. (2012). Recovering our stories: A small act of resistance.</li> <li>• Chamberlin (2005). User/consumer involvement in mental health service delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>Shatter the <del>Stigma</del> Sanism</b>	
11 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #7</li> <li>• Building a rubric workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read et al. (2006). ). Prejudice and schizophrenia: A review of the "mental illness is an illness like any other" approach.</li> <li>• Poole et al. (2012). Sanism, 'Mental Health', and Social Work/Education: A Review and Call to Action.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	<b>Globalizing mental health</b>	
18 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading group discussion #8</li> <li>• Final project plan workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Project Plan due</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Howell (2010). Sovereignty, security, psychiatry: Liberation and the failure of mental health governance in Iraq.</li> <li>• Hall (2011). Exporting mental disorders: Ethan Watters (Radio interview).</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>Decolonizing mental health</b>	
25 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What is mental health?” revisited</li> <li>• Special guests from 4D Aboriginal Student Centre</li> </ul>	

Recommended Readings

Recommended additional readings for all weekly topics, plus others identified in class, will be posted to Moodle.

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Appendix B

Sample Classroom Activity

## HLTH 495 Reading Group Discussion Guidelines<sup>1</sup>

Each week, as listed on the syllabus, you will meet in reading groups to discuss the assigned readings (or radio programs or other assigned material) for 30 minutes.

### Purpose

Many of the issues we cover in this class are sensitive and sometimes contentious, and they can be especially difficult to discuss with depth in a large group. These smaller reading groups will perform several functions:

- As you meet each week and get to know one another well, your comfort level will grow
- You will have a chance to “try out” your ideas in front of a smaller group before sharing them with the whole class
- The different roles that you will play (described below) encourage you to consider the issues from multiple perspectives and to develop empathy, both for those who might endorse such ideas and for your classmates, who have performed or will perform these same roles in other weeks
- You will practice presenting thoughtful and researched arguments about difficult issues
- You will be assessed over time, rather than at one point only, giving you an opportunity to practice the skills needed to succeed, and to receive feedback on that ongoing practice

This weekly task is meant to strengthen your ability to meet all of the course learning objectives:

**Recognize** the current and historical issues, debates, and questions taken up in mainstream and alternative discourses about mental health to contribute to complex and potentially controversial discussions with a foundational understanding of the issues at stake

**Evaluate** the strengths and weaknesses of arguments made by various scholars and commentators to assess their usefulness, reliability, and persuasiveness

**Apply** critical theory to various case studies, scenarios, and situations to appreciate the social, historical, and political dimensions in which these events and experiences unfold

**Devise** strategies of intervention to enable high-level engagement in health policy and planning decision making

### The Roles

Each week you will play one of 5 unique roles. You must play each role at least once during the 8 possible weeks; you may play the reporter role only once. You may have 1 pass without penalty. However, each week must have a Discussion Leader. The benefit of playing the Discussion Leader role twice is that your leadership grade will be taken from the higher of the two. You will negotiate your weeks off with the group, remembering that the group will need a critical mass to function properly.

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<sup>1</sup> Activity adapted from Parrott, H.M., & Cherry, E. (2011). Using structured reading groups to facilitate deep learning. *Teaching Sociology* 39(4), 354-370.

Role	Task
<b>Discussion leader</b>	<p>Develop a series of 3 thoughtful questions (and brief answers) based on the principles of good questioning that we will discuss in class on week 2. These questions should highlight the main points of the assigned reading(s) and invoke a lively conversation.</p> <p>It is also the discussion leader's job to facilitate this discussion, making sure that no one person (including yourself) dominates the conversation. You will be evaluated by the group (including yourself) for your facilitation.</p>
<b>Passage master</b>	<p>Choose 1 important passage from the readings, providing page numbers or time stamps as reference so I can find it. Passages might be considered "important" because they give key information, provide evidence for key information, or summarize key information. They can be passages that are controversial, contradictory with other material, or interesting for some other reason. Provide a (very) brief summary of the passage and an explanation for your choice, analyzing the passage by drawing on class material and other scholarship to make your points.</p>
<b>Devil's advocate</b>	<p>Develop a list of 3 thoughtful questions challenging points made in the reading(s) that could be raised by critics or others with differing viewpoints. You do not need to own the viewpoints, but they should be as well thought through as possible. Provide explanations for your choices, including information (supported by evidence) about where you believe such questions would emerge (e.g., which scholars, particular branches of social movements, or specific groups would want to raise the points that are raised by each question) and how you think the authors of that week's readings (or another week's readings) would respond. The questions do not have to be consistent in their ideology (i.e., all 3 questions need not emerge from the same point of view).</p>
<b>Creative connector</b>	<p>Make 1 substantive connection between the reading(s) and other social, cultural, political, or economic ideas. These could be connections to other assigned readings, to other scholarship that you have encountered in other classes, or to artifacts in popular culture (e.g., a clip from YouTube). Be sure to include references and to upload any relevant material and links to Moodle. Elucidate the connection by addressing issues such as how you chose this connection, what the similarities and differences are between the assigned reading and the piece you've chosen, any reasons that someone might have for challenging this as a connection, etc.</p>
<b>Reporter</b>	<p>Provide an analysis of the reading group discussion. Include basic points such as: what was discussed (in general terms), points of agreement or disagreement, points of confusion, and points of interest. Also be sure to include your own commentary. What did you learn from this discussion? Where was the discussion especially strong or weak and why? When you perform this role, you can still participate in discussion, but it is not necessary. I do not want minutes of the conversation. You can take notes on a computer, then make sure to turn them into a coherent report for submission.</p>

### Discussion Leadership Grade

Your grade will be based on peer review. Each week everyone in the group, including the discussion leader, will submit a questionnaire about that week's meeting on Moodle. (See below for draft questionnaire. We will negotiate the finer points in class.) The questionnaire will be due within a week following the discussion, although I strongly urge you to complete it while the session is still fresh in your mind.

### **Reading Group Portfolio**

Each week that you are signed up for a reading group role, you must submit your prep work on Moodle before class (i.e., by 11 am on Tuesday). The exception is if your role is “reporter,” in which case your report of the group discussion is due two days following class (i.e., by 11:55 pm on Thursday), to give you a chance to tidy your notes before submission. **Your submissions should be no less than one and no more than two single spaced pages, with 1-inch margins and 12-point Times New Roman font.**

I will provide feedback on your submissions each week via Moodle. Your submissions as a whole will form a Reading Portfolio that is worth 35% of your final grade. To receive feedback and a grade on your submissions, you must be present for the small group discussion. Feedback will be focused on the content, and it will be designed to help you strengthen your contributions.

Twice during the term I will provide (letter) grades for your portfolio; each grade will represent 50% of the total portfolio grade.

### Reading Group Role Sign-up Sheet

On September 15th, you will decide who is completing each role on each day. The roles should rotate, and each of you should complete each role at least once. You will need 7 portfolio submissions to receive a full grade.

Group Number:

Names of Group Members:

Date	Discussion Leader	Passage Master	Devil's Advocate	Creative Connector	Reporter
23 Sept					
30 Sept					
07 Oct					
14 Oct					
28 Oct					
04 Nov					
11 Nov					
18 Nov					

**Reminder:** There are 5 roles, and you must play each role at least once during the 8 possible weeks. You may have 1 pass without penalty. However, each week must have a Discussion Leader. The benefit of playing the Discussion Leader role twice is that your leadership grade will be taken from the higher of the two. You will negotiate your weeks off with the group, remembering that the group will need a critical mass to function properly.

### Sample Discussion Evaluation Form<sup>1</sup>

Name of Discussion Leader:

Date:

How much did you

- |                                 |         |            |              |
|---------------------------------|---------|------------|--------------|
| Learn from the group discussion | • a lot | • a little | • nothing    |
| Participate in the discussion   | • a lot | • a little | • not at all |
| Enjoy the discussion            | • a lot | • a little | • not at all |

How effective was the group in allocating time and getting work accomplished:

- Very
- Somewhat
- Barely
- Not at All

Incidence of Productive and Counterproductive Discussion Behaviour – Check any you engaged in and circle any you observed in others.

- Asked, gave information
- Asked, gave reactions
- Asked, answered questions
- Restated ideas/points in articles
- Restated ideas/points of discussants
- Asked for/gave examples
- Asked for/gave summary
- Asked for/gave evidence or support for ideas
- Redirected group to return to task
- Monitored time
- Encouraged, supported other ideas
- Elaborated on others' ideas
- OTHER – Please specify:
- Monopolized discussion
- Called attention to self
- Chronic interruptions
- Criticized others (put down)
- Changed subject often
- Frequent irrelevant comments
- Withdrawn, did not participate
- Apologetic
- OTHER-please specify:

As a learning experience I would evaluate the discussion as

- A. Poor      B. Fair      C. Average      D. Good      E. Excellent

Give reasons for your rating. Be specific, give examples:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: *Discussion Evaluation Form*, Humber College Centre for Teaching and Learning.  
<http://www.humber.ca/centreforteachingandlearning/instructional-strategies/teaching-methods/course-development-tools/creating-assignment-rubrics.html>

What aspects of your own behaviour do you need to change to be a more effective group member?

What aspects of other group members' behaviour need to change to enhance the group's learning?

What did the Discussion Leader do that facilitated effective, whole-group discussion?

What did the Discussion Leader do that inhibited effective, whole-group discussion?

What should the Discussion Leader do or not do to improve the quality of whole-group discussion?

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Appendix C

Student Letters of Teaching Assessment



My name is Liora Altman and I was lucky enough to be taught by Andrea Phillipson, the instructor of the class titled HLTH495 Critical Perspectives in Mental Health. Andrea's teaching method stood out to me amongst other professors I have had throughout my time at Queen's University. It was evident that Andrea worked exceptionally hard to prepare each class seminar: a three hours lecture once a week. It is very difficult to stay engaged for three hours in class content; however, Andrea arranged the three hours strategically to maximize how much we took from each class. The class was broken down into small group discussions, videos, articles to read as a class, and special guests.

Andrea was extremely accommodating, which I have found to be very unique in an instructor at a University. An important element to the class was to discuss as a group the week's topic. A number of students, myself included, were hesitant to speak aloud in front of the class. Andrea was open to any feedback and suggestions to alleviate this discomfort and used our feedback in order for each student to participate in class discussion.

Andrea pushed students to write to their greatest ability. She challenged the class to think critically and gave us the opportunity to improve each assignment before the final draft was handed in. Her feedback on my rough drafts of assignments was clear and detailed and shaped my writing immensely. Outside of class hours, Andrea was extremely flexible with her availability to meet with us if we needed further assistance. Andrea has helped me become a stronger writer and has pushed me intellectually beyond what I thought I was capable of through her feedback on my work.

Another element of Andrea's unique teaching approach was that the syllabus to the seminar included a mandatory meeting with her within the first 2 weeks of class. During this meeting, she got to know us better as people as well as discussed what we want to take from the class. Andrea made a strong impression on my experience at Queen's. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be challenged by her and to end my time at Queen's on a high note.

For Reference: Andrea Phillipson  
Instructor - Health 495 – Critical Perspectives in Mental Health Studies  
Fall 2013

To whom it may concern,

I am a newly graduated Health Studies student, who had the pleasure of being taught by Andrea Phillipson in one of my fourth year seminars. “Critical Perspectives in Mental Health Studies” was as interesting and applicable a course as I have taken during my four years at Queen’s, and this is due largely to Andrea’s teaching ability.

The first element of Andrea’s teaching that I would like to highlight actually explains why I am comfortable calling a professor by her first name – her commitment to not only meeting, but also actually getting to know all of her students personally. At the beginning of the term, Andrea set up individual meetings at a local coffee shop with all students in this tutorial. While the meetings were informal and short, I felt that they set the course’s tone for the entire semester. I thought that this meeting was an effective strategy because it allowed me and likely many other students to feel comfortable speaking freely and expressing our opinions in front of Andrea. This led to better seminar discussions as many more students spoke often and took a more active role in the course than they would have without these personal meetings with the professor. I found that these meetings also solicited improved effort from students because Andrea demonstrated commitment to her students, and made an effort to hear what they had to say, which resulted in many students feeling that the course deserved their best efforts in return.

The second element I would like to highlight is not entirely tangible. It is the way in which Andrea managed to present material which was often contentious or at odds with many dominant social structures. Andrea presented material clearly and with a broad outlook (course material draws on “literature from sociology, anthropology, disability studies, media studies, history, and mad studies”) (excerpt from fall 2013 course syllabus). This broad outlook enabled students to examine how they, as individuals, formed many of their beliefs, and also provided them with the tools to challenge these beliefs or social structures should they choose to do so.

To conclude, Andrea Phillipson was an exceptional instructor who made the course memorable through her efforts, commitment, knowledge and ability.

Sincerely,

Fraser Titley  
BAH Health ‘14

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Appendix D

Peer Evaluation Letters

Teaching Observation of Andrea Phillipson  
21 Jan, 2014

Andrea,

Here are my thoughts on the writing instruction workshop you facilitated on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014 for KNPE 367.

You clearly put a lot of thought and effort into preparing for this workshop. Your decision to structure this workshop around two activities that foregrounded student participation worked well. The first activity in which students wrote down the one comment they most frequently received in marked writing assignments was effective as it allowed for individual reflection before collective discussion. The subsequent activity that allowed students to be their own teaching assistant was also engaging and productive. Your practice of letting students work in smaller group before sharing with the entire class produced a remarkable amount of student engagement. Students clearly understood the relevance of the tasks, and their comments were fruitful.

You showed grace and patience in listening and rearticulating students' comments throughout the workshop. You reframed unclear comments in order to ensure that the entire class always benefitted from this type of instruction. For example, when a student mentioned the need to edit and proofread your work, you asked the student to differentiate between the two more clearly, allowing the class to understand the nuances of the writing process. You also repeatedly seized upon opportunities to emphasize one of your takeaway points: to read your work aloud. This method of reinforcement ensured that students understood the overarching goals of this workshop.

You facilitated student engagement well. Your use of interactive technology was productive and was carefully balanced with other learning strategies. You provided ample opportunities for students to share their ideas and opinions. You deftly guided class participation by asking that the presenter from each table be the person who has spoken the least for the semester so far. Your body language was also receptive. In a room where your workstation was at the centre of class and students were spread around tables all over the room, you made sure to walk around in order to ensure that all tables felt involved. You can strengthen this aspect of your teaching style by ensuring that you do not read into the screen whenever you have to refer to something on the computer. Also, you should ensure that the table behind you in the corner of the room is not neglected as you often have your back to them and they were the last ones to present during group activities.

You confidently dealt with problems that came up in class. Noticing that time was running out, you explained that they would not get a chance to get to the final step of the editing activity in which they would be proposing revisions to the sample assignment. Nevertheless, thinking on the spot, you noted that you would post possible revisions on Moodle. Similarly, whenever problems arose in using the classroom technology, you ensured that students did not become distracted or idle, and you quickly found methods to work around these problems until they were fixed. While it is important to avoid these type of problems whenever possible, given that every teacher will run into unforeseen situations while teaching, your ability to remain calm and focused while finding solutions to these types of problems proves invaluable.

Your capacity for improvisation is another one of your strengths as a teacher. For example, since the professor routinely chimed in with comments and questions of her own, your ability to incorporate these into the workshop was crucial. In explaining the rationale for asking

the most reticent person at each table to be the presenter for the first activity, you mentioned the need to gain confidence in speaking aloud amongst peers. The professor asked if you were a shy student, and you used your positive admission to transition into emphasizing how becoming more vocal allowed you to get more out of your classes. This ability to think on your feet allows for an uninterrupted flow in your teaching style, ensuring that your class is productive.

Overall, your workshop came across as thoughtful and effective. You successfully combined different teaching strategies to create a workshop in which students seemed eager to learn. Your informed guidance and self-presentation helped these students get the most out of the experience.

Sincerely,

Kris Singh  
PhD Candidate  
English Department  
Queen's University