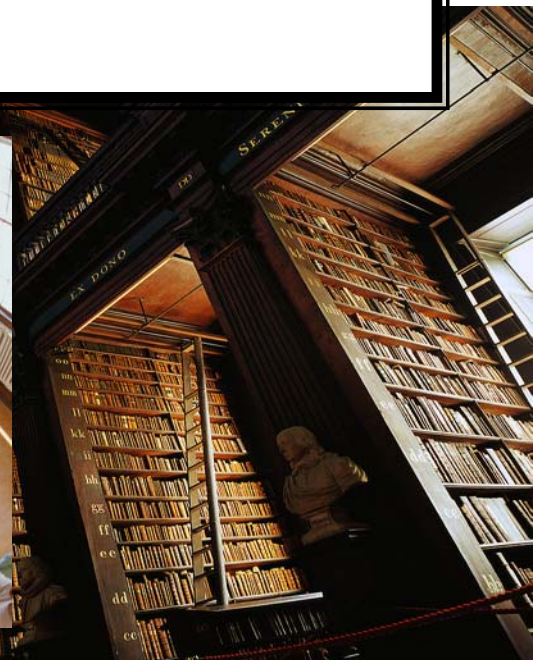


# A Guide for Teaching Assistants

The Department of English & Cultural Studies

September 2018 - 2019



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## **T.A. ASSIGNMENTS**

Teaching assistants are primarily involved with the Level I and Level II English & Cultural Studies and Critical Theory (CSCT) courses. Some T.A.s will, however, be assigned to third year courses and to other departments or programs. Assignments will be determined by the T.A. Chair. T.A.s may make their preferences known to the T.A. Chair (on a form sent to all T.A.s in the summer). Some courses are also offered in the evening; anyone desiring to assist in these sections should make his/her preference known to the T.A. Chair.

Please note that the T.A. Chair will, in consultation with the course instructors, employ the criteria listed below in making these assignments:

- the need to make these opportunities for broader teaching experience available to as many PhD students as possible (i.e., all else being equal, a PhD who has only taught in Level I will take precedence over one who has already had the opportunity to teach in other courses)
- the candidate's seniority in program (MA students will normally teach in Level I)
- the candidate's knowledge in the area of the course (related graduate research or coursework)
- the importance of maintaining a good proportion of experienced T.A.s in Level I English

These criteria are not in order of priority and are meant to serve only as guidelines in the assignment process. The Department maintains its right and responsibility to determine work assignments.

## **Level I English & CSCT Courses**

### **English 1A03 - Literature in English: Shorter Genres**

A selection of shorter literary texts (short stories, poems, essays) will be studied. Students will be introduced to the elements of various genres and to a variety of interpretive approaches. Considerable emphasis will be placed on the development of critical skills in reading and writing.

2 lectures; 1 tutorial per week; one term

### **English 1AA3 - Literature in English: Longer Genres**

A selection of longer literary texts (novels and plays) will be studied. Students will be introduced to the elements of the various genres and to a variety of interpretive approaches. Considerable emphasis will be placed on the development of critical skills in reading and writing.

2 lectures; 1 tutorial per week; one term

### **ENG/CSCT 1CS3 – Studying Culture: A Critical Introduction**

An introduction to the fields of Cultural Studies and Critical Theory with a study of a range of theoretical approaches to culture as a site of meaning, identities, power, and pleasure. Considerable emphasis will be placed on the development of effective writing skills.

2 lectures; 1 tutorial per week; one term

### **English 1C06 - A History of English Literature**

A survey centring on the history of English literature from its origins to the present providing a grounding in literary historical periods, genres, and critical approaches to works by canonical and non-canonical authors. Emphasis will be placed on critical skills in reading and writing.

2 lectures, 1 tutorial per week; two terms

### **General Information on Level I Courses**

The first-year courses are divided into large sections, with about 100-288 students in each. The sections meet twice a week for lectures by a faculty member. While most teaching assistants for Level 1 courses receive 2 course assignments, one for Term 1 and one for Term 2, those for 1C06 will be assigned to their section for the whole school year.

Each section is further divided into tutorial groups which meet once a week for discussion of a fairly informal kind. Each teaching assistant undertakes responsibility for leading one or two of these groups. The size of each tutorial varies according to enrolment and departmental resources, but every attempt is made to keep the tutorials equal in size. In the case that the assigned room for the tutorial is overcrowded, T.A.s should request a change of room through the English office staff.

Instructors in all courses with T.A.s or markers will be responsible for meeting regularly with the teaching assistants assigned to their section. Matters such as the following will be discussed: essay topics, the progress of students, problems with grading and plagiarism, and other pedagogical concerns. Instructors may also request to visit a tutorial to observe a T.A.'s pedagogical methods and to offer advice. These tutorial visits are mandatory if the T.A. is teaching for the first time and should be conducted early in the term. As described below, T.A.s may also request that the instructor visit the tutorial and are encouraged to do so.

The assignment of teaching duties is handled by the Teaching Assistants Chair, who acts as the immediate supervisor in matters concerning teaching assistants assigned to courses in the English and Cultural Studies Department. The T.A. Chair, your instructor, and the Departmental Chair are always available to help solve problems. (See pages 15-16 for a list of committee members and "Where to go with Problems".)

## T.A.s in Areas other than Level 1 English & CSCT

T.A.s and Markers may be assigned to any of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year English & CSCT courses, Faculty of Humanities courses, or other areas if necessary. Tutorials for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year courses will involve an informal discussion format, similar to that of first year courses. Contained in this booklet are the marking scheme and criteria for grading for first year courses.

At the beginning of the year, T.A.s in second and third year courses will be provided with a marking scheme and criteria for grading by their assigned instructor(s). T.A.s should consult their instructors for further details on their responsibilities in the course.

## RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN ENGLISH & CSCT

The following list indicates what the teaching assistant should regard as his/her duties as a tutor:

- (1) For ALL TAs: attendance at seminars on teaching methods at the beginning of September. Attendance at an organizational meeting with an assigned instructor before tutorials begin to fill out and sign the T.A. Hours of Work form and receive Assignment 1 in first year courses; and at two more meetings with each instructor to discuss marking and the progress of tutorials;
- (2) regular meetings with an assigned instructor, defined as one hour every 4 weeks, during which T.A.s can raise concerns about tutorials, share experiences and strategies with one another and the instructor, and provide feedback on the lectures and the readings to the instructor;
- (3) preparation and direction of one or two tutorials per week for 12 weeks in Term I and 12 weeks in Term II (please note: it is important that tutors keep a record of students' tutorial attendance for the purposes of preparing participation marks);
- (4) the marking of essays or other assignments in consultation with the instructors: you should spend an average of 20 minutes marking each essay (please discuss during the Hours of Work meeting how long should be spent on specific assignments); you will be required to submit all marked essays and a list of grades to the instructor **no later than 10 days after the essay due date**;
- (5) photocopying essay questions or assignment descriptions for distribution to the students in your tutorials as needed (T.A. photocopying budgets: please refer to *Appendix A* regarding Photocopying and Graduate Printing); appendix may be subject to changes;

- (6) availability for assistance to students in the form of office hours (averaging 1 hour/week for a full T.A.; ½ hour/week for a ½ T.A.) and email consultation (full T.A.s are encouraged to limit email consultation to 1 hour/week, ½ T.A. to ½ hour/week); however, the Department recognizes that student needs will vary week-by-week; in the first tutorial, T.A.s should convey to students when office hours will be held and how students can contact the T.A.; T.A.s are advised not to disclose their home phone number to students; all email communication with students must be conducted **using McMaster email accounts ONLY**;
- (7) attendance at a marks meeting after the final exam; the Department would like to stress the importance of this meeting, as it provides an opportunity for T.A.s to review how their students performed and to discuss borderline or extraordinary cases. **If a T.A. will be leaving campus prior to the meeting, s/he should ensure that the course instructor has contact information so that this consultation may take place in an alternate form. The marks meeting will be included in the Hours of Work form as part of the T.A.'s 133 hours of work per term;**
- (8) calculation and recording of final grades in the **specific spreadsheet file** provided by the Department;
- (9) potentially, lecture attendance; whether or not lecture attendance is required will be established at the beginning of the year when the course instructor and the T.A.s meet to fill out the *Hours of Work* form. This form will be provided in hard copy by the office;
- (10) managing time spent on each of your duties to conform with the agreement set out in the Hours of Work Form.

**Please note that these duties may be adjusted, according to enrolment and departmental resources; they will not, however, exceed the number of hours stipulated in the CUPE - McMaster Collective Agreement Local 3906 - Unit 1.**

Fuller comments on these duties will be found in the pages following. Important in the organization of all courses is the assumption that faculty members and teaching assistants will work as a team in close cooperation. And it is worth noting that undergraduates consider the work in which the T.A. is involved vital and rewarding: the discussion in tutorial, the essay grading, and the office-hour consultations.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR TUTORS**

A "senior tutor" will be assigned to each of the large first and second-year courses with multiple T.A.s. This will be an experienced T.A. who will not have a tutorial of her/his own,

but rather be an assistant to the Instructor and a resource person for their fellow T.A.s. The senior tutors will work the same number of hours per term as the regular T.A.s, i.e., 130 hours. Possible activities for these senior tutors may include:

- Holding optional writing workshops and exam review sessions open to students in all tutorials
- Helping to manage and update Avenue to Learn, the course's online learning management system
- Coordinating marks spreadsheets and Avenue to Learn grade sheets
- Aiding other T.A.s with questions regarding their tutorials
- Acting as a resource person for T.A.s with questions about their marking
- Aiding instructors in marking final exams
- Aiding instructors in assembling the audio-visual component of the course, where applicable
- Responding to student e-mails; **using McMaster e-mail accounts ONLY**
- Working with your T.A.s to ensure their time management conforms to their *Hours of Work* form

These responsibilities will be worked out in detail by the instructor and assigned senior tutor.

**Please note that these duties may be adjusted, according to enrolment, departmental resources, and course needs; they will not, however, exceed the number of hours stipulated in the McMaster - CUPE Collective Agreement Local 3906 -Unit 1.**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MARKERS FOR ENGLISH & CSCT COURSES**

The following list indicates what a marking assistant should regard as his/her duties:

- (1) attendance at seminars on teaching methods at the beginning of September, and at two more meetings with the assigned instructor to discuss assignments and marking criteria;
- (2) the marking of assignments such as essays, tests, journals, etc. in consultation with the instructor; you should spend an average of 20 minutes marking each essay (please discuss during the Hours of Work meeting how long should be spent on specific assignments); you will be required to submit all marked essays and a list of grades to the instructor **no later than 10 days after the essay due date**;
- (3) availability for assistance to students in the form of office hours and email consultation during the week before and week after assignments are due; the number of hours will be determined by the instructor and marker in their initial meeting to fill out the employment worksheet; all email communication with students must be conducted using McMaster email accounts ONLY;
- (4) potentially, lecture attendance; whether or not lecture attendance is required will be



established in the initial meeting of instructor and marker to fill out the employment worksheet.

**Please note that these duties may be adjusted, according to enrolment, departmental resources, and course needs; they will not, however, exceed the number of hours stipulated in the McMaster - CUPE Collective Agreement Local 3906 -Unit 1.**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WRITING TUTORS**

- (1) Writing T.A.s should hold an average of 8 hours of office hours per week for the 12 weeks of each term. These office hours may be extended during essay-writing periods, but must average 8 hours per week. The other 68 hours of work (34 hours each term) for the year are to be devoted to preparation, to holding 2 or 3 writing workshops each term, and to meetings with the T.A. Chair (twice per term).
- (2) By the second week of Term I, Writing T.A.s should establish and post their office hours and should visit all first and second year lecture sections to advertise their services. Writing T.A.s should also notify all faculty members and T.A.s in the Department of their office hours (there are Departmental email lists that may serve this purpose). By the second week of Term II, Writing T.A.s should visit and advertise their services at all first and second year lecture sections that begin in Term II. Faculty members and other T.A.s should be apprised of any changes to office hours for Term II. Writing Workshops should be advertised well in advance.
- (3) The Writing Tutors should be available to help students in **all** English & CSCT courses (but only students of those courses) and so should encourage all Instructors and T.A.s in the Department to direct students with writing problems to them.
- (4) Writing T.A.s are responsible for answering e-mail writing queries from students, using McMaster email accounts **ONLY**. The time spent at this task should count as part of the Writing T.A.'s office hours. This responsibility is to be shared among the Writing T.A.s, who should set up a rota system to handle such queries at the beginning of the year.
- (5) At the beginning of Term I, Writing T.A.s should consult the *Guide for Writing Tutors* on display in the English Department office. The *Guide* contains provisions about office hours, and offers examples of Writing Tutor workshops. Writing T.A.s should consider adding examples of their workshops to the *Guide* for use by future T.A.s.

### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

Please remember that the Teaching Assistant contract is for 133 hours per term. In the past, T.A.s have found that they can easily go over the limit of 133 hours, particularly with student consultation (e.g., e-mails) and grading. Because the contract is limited to 133 hours, all Instructors and Teaching Assistants are asked to work together to ensure that the time limit is not exceeded. T.A.s are encouraged to consult the T.A. resources binder or the Avenue to Learn

TA Resources page for practical suggestions and strategies for time management, and to consult the CUPE 3906- Unit 1 Collective Agreement for information on the rights and responsibilities involved with T.A. positions.

If you are having problems with time management, please consult your Senior T.A, instructor, or T.A chair for help before it becomes a serious problem. We are here to help strategize and coach you through this!

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTORS TO T.A.s IN ENGLISH & CSCT**

- (1) Instructors are responsible for meeting with T.A.s and Markers at the beginning of the year to fill out the T.A. Hours of Work forms and to hand in these forms, along with any Workwell forms from new employees, to the department's Graduate Administrator. They must ensure that the time allotted for each duty on the T.A. Work Form accurately reflects the time necessary for the task, and each duty is described in detail. The total number of hours per term for a full T.A. should not exceed 133. At this meeting, the instructor and the T.A.s will establish whether or not the T.A.s will attend lectures as part of their duties.
- (2) Instructors will meet with T.A.s and Markers at the beginning of the year to discuss the structure of the course, the responsibilities of the T.A.s, the instructor's expectations and suggestions for tutorials, marking rubrics, etc. They will also discuss acceptable participation assignments with T.A.s at the beginning of each term. Instructors working with Senior T.A.s will attend one meeting of all Senior T.A.s and Instructors in September.
- (3) T.A.s and Markers will have 10 days to return marked essays to instructors.
- (4) Instructors of Level 1 and 2 courses with T.A.s are responsible for supplying their T.A.s with brief lecture outlines or summaries at least 2 weeks in advance of the coverage of material in lecture. These lecture outlines will indicate when particular topics are to be covered and provide summaries of the issues to be raised.
- (5) Instructors are responsible for providing essay topics to the tutors and for photocopying any general course materials.
- (6) Instructors are responsible for the ordering of desk copies for their T.A.s. Instructors should order desk copies for their T.A.s when ordering books for the course in the spring of the previous year. This can be done through the office secretaries who have form letters for ordering desk copies.
- (7) Instructors are responsible for reading all of the first assignments after T.A.s have marked them, and for checking a representative selection of subsequent assignments, and reviewing the list of grades assigned to all of the papers.
- (8) Instructors are responsible for conducting all lectures. If a graduate student requests

and is granted the opportunity to give a lecture, it will be understood to be professional development, not Teaching Assistantship employment.

- (9) Instructors will visit a tutorial of all T.A.s who are teaching for the first time and review the T.A.'s performance with him/her, preferably early in October. There is a form to record that these visits have taken place.
- (10) Instructors are responsible for grading any assignments submitted after the end of the course.
- (11) Instructors are responsible for handling all cases of Academic Dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism) and reporting them to the Office of Academic Integrity (MUSC 211, ext. 24303, [acinteg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:acinteg@mcmaster.ca)). The Academic Integrity Officer should be contacted as soon as a case of academic dishonesty is suspected.

## TUTORIALS

The instructors and T.A.s in consultation will establish the relationship between lectures and tutorials, so that the two activities do not work at cross-purposes.

Tutorials are intended to function as discussion groups. The role of the tutorial leader is to encourage and guide discussions; s/he should not lecture. The tutor must keep his/her students well informed about the topic for discussion at the following week's meeting. Discussion may centre on the literary text, film, genre or critical issue currently being studied in the lectures, or it may focus on improving students' writing skills, or a combination of both. A number of tutorial sessions, or parts of several tutorials, **must** be devoted to improving the students' writing skills. Suggestions for methods of teaching writing skills will be provided. T.A.s should not expect good, lively discussion from a group all the time, but carefully prepared questions should elicit response and stimulate renewed discussion. Remember, you can vary the discussion format: break up the class into pairs or small groups for a 10-minute discussion and then have them report back to the class as a whole; arrange debates; have students write on a topic for 2-5 minutes and then discuss it as a group. See the "English and Cultural Studies TA Resources" Avenue to Learn site for more ideas, and please feel free to contribute your own classroom methods to that site. Should you require visual materials to use in your tutorials, these must be booked in advance through Library Services in Mills Library by the instructor. See <http://library.mcmaster.ca/forms/reserve-video-film> for the booking form. If the room you are teaching in does not have the audio-visual equipment you require, you will also have to book the equipment in advance through Classroom Audio-Visual Services (CAVs) by e-mail at [equipbkg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:equipbkg@mcmaster.ca) Please include the following information in your e-mail: your name and position, the course name and code, the instructor's name, the tutorial number, the room number, and time of tutorial (e.g. Thursday, October 17, 10:30-11:20). Please cc the Undergraduate Administrator, [engdept@mcmaster.ca](mailto:engdept@mcmaster.ca), when you e-mail to book equipment. Audio-Visual Services advises you to book as far ahead as possible. Data

projectors for PowerPoint presentations are particularly scarce and must be booked far in advance.

The assigned instructors may visit tutorials and give advice about how they are conducted. T.A.s wishing to receive feedback or to build a more detailed teaching dossier may also request a tutorial visit from the instructor. Student evaluations at the end of Term 1 provide another form of feedback and should be used to help you improve your work with the students. If you encounter difficulties with individual students, these should certainly be discussed with your assigned instructor as soon as possible. If you have ESL (English as a Second Language) students in your tutorials who are in need of assistance, please inform the instructor and refer the student(s) to the Student Success Centre (Gilmour Hall 110, Ext. 24254).

Obviously tutors must not, except in an emergency, miss or be late for the tutorials which they have contracted to lead. Should you be unable to attend a tutorial, notify the instructor and the office staff as early as possible, since s/he may be able either to take it or to arrange for some other replacement, or notify the Department in the event of a cancellation so that proper signs can be posted.

### **RECORDS OF PROGRESS**

You must keep neat and careful records of your tutorial groups, starting at the beginning of each term.

You should certainly notice a student's frequent or extended absence and inform your assigned instructor that this student is not obtaining the benefit of tutorial work; action will then be taken to determine why the student is absent and to warn him/her of the probable result.

A neat, accurate and complete record of grades for each student will be of the greatest help when you come to assess an overall mark for the year. Keep a record of all marks, even for those students who have stopped attending tutorials. For all grading, including F grades, record a numerical mark as well as a letter grade (consult conversion table provided on p. 13). As well as a written record, T.A.s will record all students' grades electronically in a spreadsheet provided by the Department.

Tutorial class lists will be available the day before your tutorial begins. (These lists will of course be subject to change until after the drop and add period ends.) You will have to pick these lists up in the department office from the Undergraduate Administrator. They will not be sent to you.

An electronic template (i.e., a spreadsheet) to be used to record all the grades for each student in your tutorial will be made available to each T.A from the department office. The template will already have the percentages of the marking scheme for the particular course you are attached to encoded in it. **Do not create your own template. Please do not attempt to change the template without the help of the Undergraduate Administrator ([engdept@cmaster.ca](mailto:engdept@cmaster.ca)) , or the Graduate Administrator ([englgrsc@mcmaster.ca](mailto:englgrsc@mcmaster.ca)).** Since the template is different for each course, do not exchange them with other T.A.s.

## **SEPTEMBER SEMINARS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

No tutorials are held in the first week of 3-unit courses commencing in Term 1. In Term 2, 3-unit courses do not have tutorials the first week, but 1C06 does. In September, the Teaching Assistants Committee organizes a series of seminars designed to assist tutors in the following areas: employment issues, leading tutorials, marking and grading essays, teaching writing skills, and anti-discrimination/anti-oppression work in the classroom. **Attendance is mandatory for ALL NEW T.A.s.** Returning T.A.s are expected to fulfil their 6 hours of training at this time as well. Senior T.A.s will meet with the Instructors to whose courses they have been assigned. There will also be an informal meeting of Cultural Studies instructors and T.A.s, to discuss particular issues involved in the teaching of Cultural Studies. Please see chart on p. 18 for the September calendar of events.

The Workwell program at McMaster is administered by the Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services. All employees of the university are required to take the Health and Safety training courses that are pertinent to their positions. Any T.A.s who have not completed these courses before (i.e., have not worked at McMaster before) will need to complete five courses on-line: Fire Safety, Ergonomics, Slips Trips and Falls, Asbestos Awareness, and Office WHMIS. These courses must be completed before your first meeting with your assigned instructor to fill in the hours of work form. Once you have completed each course you will be prompted to print out a form indicating that you have successfully finished it. You will need to sign all five forms and bring them to the meeting with your assigned instructor so that s/he can sign them and hand them in to the Graduate Administrator along with the hours of work form. Please go to the following web-site for more information and to take these courses, either on your own computer or on a computer in the English Computer Room (beside the Department Office): <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/eohss/>

## **LEVEL 1 ESSAYS**

### **Requirements**

In Level 1 instructors will be responsible for setting the essay topics. A student in 1C06 is expected to write three essays during the year: one short essay of approximately 750 words and a longer essay of 1,000 words in the first term, and one essay of 2,000 words in the second term. A student in 1A03, 1AA3, or 1CS3 is expected each term to write one short paper of approximately 500 words and one longer essay of approximately 1000 words.

Documentation and presentation guidelines for essays, based on the MLA Handbook, will be given to all students as part of the on-line Handbook for Level One English and Cultural Studies Students <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~english/undergraduate/FirstYearHandBook/Levelonehandbook.pdf>. The tutor should insist from the beginning on at least minimum standards of neatness and scholarly presentation. Knowledge of the purpose and function of footnote references and bibliography may help to diminish the likelihood of plagiarism. **Rewrites are not an option.**

### **Essay Format**

Essays should follow the format guidelines in the on-line Handbook for Level One English and Cultural Studies Students, based on the MLA Handbook. Students should use a staple to fasten pages (no binders or plastic covers). Students should be directed to the Checklist for Essay Writing in the on-line Handbook for Level One English and Cultural Studies Students.

### **Due Dates**

Please consult with the course instructor, who will establish the due dates and whether assignments are to be submitted in tutorials or in class lectures.

### **Penalties For Late Essays**

All essays are due at the beginning of the class or tutorial in the relevant week. An essay handed in after this time (including any time after the tutorial has begun) will be docked one grade-point a day. If an essay is worth a B+, but was handed in a day late, it will be given a B; two days, a B-; three days, a C+; and so on up to seven days. Saturdays and Sundays count as working days.

The University could be responsible for paying for medical certificates when faculty demand them; in order to avoid the possibility of incurring such expenses, we are being told not to require medical certification from students. Please do not include such a requirement on your course outline or on lists of essay topics. If a student asks for an extension due to serious illness, s/he should contact her/his faculty's Associate Dean.

Please ask your instructor about MSAF regulations.

You should make a point of returning marked essays punctually.

### **Essay Submissions and Returns**

Students should submit essays directly to the teaching assistant. Essays should also be returned directly to the student by the teaching assistant. Departmental administrators **are not permitted** to act as intermediaries. Unreturned essays should remain in the possession of the teaching assistant until the end of the formal April examination period. Thereafter, essays still unclaimed should be delivered to the Undergraduate Administrator who will file them in Department storage until the expiry of the official appeals period before being permanently disposed of.

### **Grading Guidelines**

Every attempt is made to achieve a uniform grading standard for all tutorial sections. Study the explanation of the grading system below carefully. The experience of most T.A.s suggests that, in an average class, most students will score in the B, C and D categories with one or two A's and one or two failures. You should try to make the range of marks reflect the full range of ability in your group.

The first set of graded essays should be submitted to your instructor for review before they are returned to the students. Thereafter, you should let the instructor see a sample of the work you have marked and submit to your instructor a complete list of essay grades for each assignment. Generally, T.A.s will find that they have established a consistent standard by the time they have marked their second set of essays.

Constructive comments are very valuable to the student. Too many comments (especially if they attempt to pinpoint a multitude of errors) may well confuse. Prompt marking and good comments really help a student to improve and to feel that s/he is not working in a vacuum.

### **The Meaning of Letter Grades A to F**

**First Class (A+, A, A-): Excellent.** The essay thoughtfully develops an interesting thesis or shows a sophisticated understanding of concepts under study. The student is in command of the topic and shows some originality and enthusiasm in discussing it. The essay is well organized, convincingly argued, and clearly expressed -- a pleasure to read. It is virtually free of errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, and uses the conventions of scholarly documentation correctly.

**Second Class (B+, B, B-): Very Good to Good.** A competent, accurate treatment of its topic but not as sophisticated as essays in the A range. The essay is well written and has a clear thesis or shows a good grasp of concepts under study. Essays at the bottom of this range may not have fully digested the material, and may lean uncritically on secondary sources. The organization is good and the sentences are all comprehensible. There are few errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation. The essay follows standard conventions of scholarly documentation.

**Third Class (C+, C, C-): Good to Fair.** A fairly basic or superficial treatment of the question or a fuzzy comprehension of concepts under study. The thesis is unclear, or trivial, or undeveloped. Much of the essay is summary or paraphrase, with only occasional analytical comment. There may be inaccuracies; essays at the bottom of this range may rely exclusively on secondary sources. The essay is disjointed; some sentences may be convoluted and incomprehensible. There may be mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as carelessness about scholarly documentation.

**Credit (D+, D, D-): Poor.** Has serious inaccuracies or inconsistencies. The student has some grasp of the topic, but not much. Where sources are cited, they tend to be misused or misinterpreted. The student may express opinions, but does not support them with evidence or argument. The essay lacks coherence, is unclear, and has many errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation.

**Failure (F): Below University Standards.** A serious misunderstanding or inability to grasp basic concepts. The essay is disorganized, obscure, full of grammatical errors, and difficult to understand. (This grade is also given for plagiarism.)

**Notes:** (1) Students will be penalized for not writing on the assigned topic. (2) University English grades are for most students considerably lower than high-school grades. You must explain this in your tutorials. (3) Second-class standing (B- or higher) is usually required for admission to an English programme. (4) For more details about essay style consult the writing guide recommended by your instructor.

### **Conversion Table**

A+	=	90-100 (12)	B-	=	70-72 (7)	D+	=	57-59 (3)
A	=	85-89 (11)	C+	=	67-69 (6)	D	=	53-56 (2)
A-	=	80-84 (10)	C	=	63-66 (5)	D-	=	50-52 (1)
B+	=	77-79 (9)	C-	=	60-62 (4)	F	=	0-49 (0)
B	=	73-76 (8)						

### **Plagiarism**

This is a serious matter. The University's Academic Integrity Policy is available online at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>.

There is also a memorandum ("Plagiarism: A Note for Students") in the on-line Handbook for Level One English and Cultural Studies Students. You should also explain plagiarism to the group, emphasizing its seriousness and its consequences. When you suspect that an essay is plagiarized, do not assign any grade to the paper, and do not return the paper to the student. Contact the course instructor immediately and give him/her the paper and evidence you have collected. The instructor must contact McMaster's Academic Integrity Office (MUSC 211, ext. 24303, [acinteg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:acinteg@mcmaster.ca)), meet with the student (possibly with you present), and permit the student to respond to the charge. If the instructor determines an offence has taken place, s/he will check with the Office of Academic Integrity to find out if this is a first offence, and then determine an appropriate penalty.

Clear instruction given to the class on the proper way to use and acknowledge secondary sources (in footnotes and works cited) will obviate most problems, particularly if you also direct them to read the memorandum on plagiarism in the on-line Handbook for Level One English and Cultural Studies Students, tell them how to access the University's Academic Integrity Policy, and stress that internet sources must be documented as carefully as any others. Make sure they are aware that cases of plagiarism are recorded in the Academic Integrity Office, and depending on the severity and number of offences, penalties for plagiarism range from:

- 1) A reduced grade for the assignment.
- 2) A grade of zero for the assignment.
- 3) Failure of the Course and Transcript Notation. A Faculty Adjudicator may levy a grade of F in the course and he/she may recommend that a notation "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty" appear on the student's transcript.
- 4) Suspension or Expulsion. A Faculty Adjudicator may recommend a penalty of suspension or expulsion be levied.



## **TUTORIAL PARTICIPATION**

In 6-unit Level 1 English the 10% participation mark is assigned by attendance (5%) and participation (5%). In 3-unit Level 1 English & CSCT, the 20% participation mark will be determined by an organized assignment worth 10%, as well as the student's attendance (5%) and participation in tutorial (5%). You must keep a record of attendance. Evaluation of tutorial participation in other courses will be determined by the instructor.

In 3-unit Level 1 English & CSCT courses, T.A.s and instructors will agree on a required participation assignment. This may consist of group presentations, response papers, discussion questions or another activity that will allow each student to participate in the tutorial.

## **EXAMINATIONS**

### **1A03/1AA3/1CS3**

1A03/1AA3/1CS3 do not have a mid term test, but there are two-hour final examinations for them. Instructors will need your assistance in arriving at an overall mark for the students in your groups.

**NOTE: YOU SHOULD NOT LEAVE CAMPUS UNTIL YOU HAVE DISCHARGED ALL YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR TUTORIAL GROUPS. (See Undergraduate Calendar for term dates.) If a T.A. will be leaving campus prior to the final marks meeting for the course, s/he should ensure that the course instructor has contact information so that this consultation may take place in an alternate form.**

### **1C06 FINAL EXAMINATION AND OVERALL STANDING**

In the case of 1C06 the final three-hour examination is written at the end of the second term. It covers the work of the entire course. The instructor will need your assistance in arriving at an overall mark for the students in your groups.

## **YEAR END EVALUATION**

Student evaluation of the Teaching Assistants is not obligatory but is highly recommended. If you would like to have an evaluative letter in your employment file, you may ask your assigned instructor to write one. To aid the instructor in this you may (1) hand out tutorial evaluations to your students at the end of the course (evaluation forms are kept in the Department); (2) ask your assigned instructor to visit your tutorial. Please note that instructors **must** visit the tutorials of T.A.s teaching for the first time, preferably early in October, but that instructor visits are not otherwise mandatory. The instructor may request to visit a tutorial to observe the T.A.'s pedagogical method and to offer advice. Please note as well that students' written evaluations should be treated confidentially. Once you have handed out the evaluation forms in tutorial, you should ask a student to place the forms when completed in an envelope with your instructor's name on it, to seal it, and to deliver it to the Department Office.

## **WHERE TO GO WITH PROBLEMS**

**T.A. Chair** (Mary Silcox): for problems related to your status as an employee - e.g., you need to change tutorial times; you want to stop work; any demands for rereads (do not tell your students this is an option, unless they ask for it); troubles with marking, tutorials, or instructor.

**Assigned Instructors** (the instructor teaching your section of a course): any problems with leading tutorials, with marking, with problem students; if you cannot make your tutorial (e.g. for reasons of bereavement, illness, injury, etc); if you have trouble meeting deadlines.

**Department Chair** (Peter Walmsley): problems with the course still unresolved; ethical issues.

**Department Administrators** Angie Zaya (Undergraduate) and Ilona Forgo-Smith (Graduate): for class lists, desk copies of texts, help with grade spreadsheets, help with electronic grade submission, general enquiries.

**Union** CUPE 3906 (ext. 24003; [cupe@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cupe@mcmaster.ca)): any concern or complaint arising from the collective agreement.

## **2018-2019 TEACHING ASSISTANTS COMMITTEE**

Mary Silcox (Chair)

Peter Walmsley (ex officio)

+ graduate student representatives

- Sheena Jary
- Megan Suttie
- Holly Corbett

**CALENDAR FOR ALL TUTORS 2018-2019: WEEK ONE**

**\*\*ALL TAs MUST ATTEND THE ENGLISH & CULTURAL STUDIES SEMINARS DURING THE WEEK OF AUGUST 29<sup>TH</sup> – 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2018\*\***

THESE TRAINING HOURS WILL BE INCLUDED ON THE TA HOURS OF WORK FORM

DATE	EVENT <i>(Please come to these sessions prepared to take notes)</i>	LOCATION/TIME
Aug. 29, 2018	<b>TA Information Session</b> A. Introduction for New TAs: 10:30-11:30am B. Working with Students and Professors, Knowing Your Role (with returning TAs): 11:30am-12:00pm	<b>CNH 106 (Chester New Hall)</b> A. New TAs: 10:30am – 12pm B. <u>All TAs</u> : 11:30am-12pm
Aug. 29, 2018	<b>TA Training</b> 1:00-1:30pm Being a TA for the First Time (New TAs) 1:30-2:00pm Markers: Your Role (All TAs) 2:00-2:30pm Being a TA Outside of the Department (All TAs) 2:30-3:00pm Senior TAs: Your Role (Returning TAs; New TAs welcome)	<b>CNH 106 (Chester New Hall)</b> <u>All TAs</u> 1:00-3:00pm
Aug. 29, 2018	<b>Communication Practices in the Classroom.</b> (Sheena Jary & Stacy Creech)	<b>CNH 106 (Chester New Hall)</b> New TAs: (returning TAs welcome to attend): 3:00-4:30pm
Aug. 29 - Sept. 5 <b>DEGREE REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>Complete the 5 Workwell Health and Safety on-line training courses as well as the, Academic Research Integrity and Ethics training (SGS 101) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Training (SGS 201)</b> <a href="http://cll.mcmaster.ca/eohss">http://cll.mcmaster.ca/eohss</a> (Workwell) , on <b>Avenue to Learn (SGS 101)</b> and <a href="http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/">http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/</a> (SGS 201)	
Aug. 30, 2018	10-10:30am CUPE: Your Rights and Benefits (Executive Council Members: Joel Guillemette and Sarah Wahab) 10:30-11:30am TA Resources, Plagiarism, SAS, MSAF (Dr. Amber Dean)	<b>CNH 106 (Chester New Hall)</b> <b>10:00-11:30am</b> <u>All TAs</u>
Aug. 30, 2018	<b>Grading/Lecturing</b> A. Introduction to the Grading of Essays and Assignments for New TAs (Anne Savage) B. <a href="#">How to Get Your Students Reading and Attending Classes (Megan Suttie, Alexandra Basekic and Kalin Smith)</a>	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>11:30am – 12:30pm</b> A. New TAs: KTH 106 B. Experienced KTH 107
Aug. 30, 2018	<b>Tutorials/Grading</b> A. Leading Tutorials –Skills Building and Other Approaches: 1:30-3:00pm (Megan Suttie & David Hou) B. <a href="#">Advanced Grading for Experienced TAs: 1:30-3:00pm (Anne Savage)</a>	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>1:30 – 3:00pm</b> A. New TAs: KTH 106 B. Experienced TAs KTH 107
Aug. 30, 2018	A. Introduction to Avenue to Learn (Barbara Ferguson) B. The Guest Lecture: Dr. Gena Zuroski, Robert Pasquini & Crystal Beamer	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>3:00-4:00pm</b> A. New TAs: KTH 106 B. Experienced TAs KTH 107
Aug. 31, 2018	<b>Teaching Writing</b> A. Introduction for New TAs (Holly Corbett & Jantina Ellens) B. <a href="#">Teaching Writing - Advanced Strategies for Experienced TAs (Cathy Grisé)</a>	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>10:00-11:00am</b> A. New TAs: KTH B104 B. Experienced TAs: KTH B105
Aug. 31, 2018	<b>Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Oppression Work in the classroom</b> <b>*Mandatory for new TAs</b> (Speaker TBA)	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>11:30am-12:30pm</b> KTH B104
Aug. 31, 2018	<b>Decolonization of the Classroom</b> (Margaret Boyce & Shandell Houlden)	<b>Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH)</b> <b>1:30-2:30pm</b> All TAs: KTH 104

**CALENDAR FOR ALL TUTORS 2018-2019: WEEKS TWO & BEYOND**

\* ENGLISH MA STUDENTS INTENDING TO TAKE THE THESIS OPTION MUST ATTEND THE MA THESIS FOUNDATION SEMINARS ON SEPT. 5<sup>TH</sup>, OCT. 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 AND FEB. 26<sup>TH</sup> AND APR. 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2019\*

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION/TIME
Week of September 4 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>	Instructors and TAs must meet to discuss how to grade in their specific courses, expectations for the conducting of tutorials for the lecture section, suggestions as to how time might be apportioned in the tutorials etc. <b>**MUST complete and sign the TA Hours of Work form for submission to the Graduate Administrator**</b>	<i>Please contact course instructor to arrange the place and time for this meeting beforehand.</i> <i>(Forms available in CNH 321)</i>
Sept. 4 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>	Graduate Chair and CSCT Program Director Office Hours Dr. Susie O'Brien: By Appointment (Term 1, Fall 2018) Dr. Melinda Gough: By Appointment (Term 2, Winter 2019) Dr. Donald Goellnicht: By Appointment	CNH 301 CNH 329 CNH 225
Sept. 4 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>MA Thesis Foundation Seminar Part I: Dr. Cathy Grisé</b> <b>**Mandatory for English MA Thesis Students**</b>	Location/Date/Time: TBA
Tuesday, Sept. 4, 2018	Undergraduate classes begin (Tutorials do not begin until September 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018)	
Wednesday, Sept. 5, 2018	TEACHING & LEARNING FORUM: Professional Development for Graduate Students & TAs *Mandatory for new TAs <a href="https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2018-teaching-learning-forum-tickets-48647076716">https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2018-teaching-learning-forum-tickets-48647076716</a>	Location: McMaster University Student Centre (MUSC) 9:00am-12:10pm <b>Registration Required</b>
Sept. 5, 2018	Professionalization Seminar: <b>APPLYING FOR GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS</b> (SSHRC applications due October 5, 2018)	Location: CNH 317* Time: 1:00-2:30pm *BSB B103 (@ 1:30pm depending on attendance numbers)
Sept. 5, 2018	NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS ORIENTATION MEETING	Burke Science Building BSB 104 2:30-3:20pm
Sept. 5, 2018	<b>GRADUATE STUDENT WINE AND CHEESE WELCOME PARTY</b>	UNIVERSITY CLUB 3:30-6:30pm (Great Hall: Upper Level)
Sept. 10 <sup>th</sup>	GRADUATE CLASSES BEGIN	<i>See Graduate Course Timetable</i>
Sept. 11 <sup>th</sup>	UNDERGRADUATE TUTORIALS WITH TAs BEGIN	
Sept. 28 <sup>th</sup>	SSHRC PROPOSAL WORKSHOP (Dr. Lorraine York)	CNH 307 (Chester New Hall) 2:30-4:00pm
Oct. 5 <sup>th</sup>	SSHRC APPLICATIONS DUE: (A hard copy of the application to be completed, signed and submitted in person, to the Graduate Administrator in CNH 321)	
Oct. 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	TERM 1 - MID-TERM READING BREAK	
Oct. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Seminar: English M.A. Thesis Foundations: Part II Dr. Cathy Grisé	CNH 307 (Chester New Hall) 3:30-5:30pm
Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2019	MA Thesis Foundation Seminar: Part III Dr. Cathy Grisé	CNH 332 3:00-5:00pm
April 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2019	MA Thesis Foundation Seminar: Part IV Dr. Cathy Grisé	CNH 332 3:00-5:00pm

**Appendix A\*****PHOTOCOPYING & GRADUATE PRINTING****Photocopying and Printing**

All students will have access to log in to the copier/printer in the Graduate Lounge (CNH 320), by using their *Printsmart* account. All copying, printing and scanning to email is done using multi-functional machines which are accessed using your Student Card or your MacID and password. The cost to copy/print is \$0.10 per side.

We are currently working on allotting Teaching Assistants a set number of **free copies/term**. Details to be announced at the beginning of the fall term.

TAs will receive these copies directly on their Student Account at the beginning of the fall/winter terms. Once you have used up your free copies, you will then be responsible for adding more money to your account. Ink and Paper are provided by the Department. Please ask for help with the copier when it requires paper or service. **Please note: Students with TA positions outside the department, will not be allotted free copies by the Department of English & Cultural Studies. TAs are encouraged to inquire about the photocopy policy in other departments before making copies for their tutorials.**

**To add money to your account:**

1. Click on the *Printsmart* icon on any public computer or go to <http://printsmart.mcmaster.ca> on your personal computer/ graduate lounge computer.
2. Log in using your MacID and password; then add value to your account using a credit or debit card.
3. You may then access your account by using your MacID and password to login when completing a print or copy job, or to scan to email from the copier; or from the computers in the Graduate Lounge.

**Be sure to log out of your account once you are finished printing or copying.**

Detailed instructions for printing and copying are posted in the Graduate Lounge (CNH 320).

## **Appendix B**

### **WORKING AT MCMASTER: INFORMATION & FORMS FOR TA'S, MARKERS, TUTORS, RA'S IN LIEU OF TA:**

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/elr/collective-agreements/cupe-unit1/>

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3906, Unit 1, represents all part-time employees, including professional engineers, in Ontario, employed as teaching assistants, demonstrators, tutors and super tutors, markers, and research assistants who receive a research assistantship in lieu of teaching assistantship.

- CUPE Unit 1 Collective Agreement 2016-2019
- TA Hours of Work Form (doc)
- Declination/Deferral of TAship Form
- Pay Schedule
- CUPE 3906 website: <https://cupe3906.org/>
- Dental Benefits and Forms: <https://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/unit-1-benefits/>