

Complete Policy Title:
**Undergraduate Course Management
Policies**

Policy Number (if applicable):
N/A

Approved by:
Senate

Date of Most Recent Approval:
June 13, 2007

Supersedes/Amends Policies dated:

- **Senate Resolutions on Course Outlines – last revised date: June 14, 1995**
- **Guidelines for Student Evaluation – last revised date: March 10, 2004**
- **Examination Ban – last revised date: March 1995**
- **Academic Integrity Statement for Course Outlines – last revised date: April 13, 2005**
- **Turnitin.com Guidelines – last revised date: April 13, 2005**

Responsible Executive:
[Associate Vice-President \(Academic\)](#)

Enquiries:
[University Secretariat](#)

***DISCLAIMER:** If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

PREAMBLE

This document brings together policies approved by the Senate of McMaster University related to the management of undergraduate courses. These policies are intended to communicate clearly the university's expectations with regard to the responsibilities of both students and instructors and to assist students in planning ahead and managing their time and resources accordingly. Each section addresses a separate issue and the appendices provide additional useful information.

- Appendix I Approved language for information to be included in course outlines
Appendix II McMaster University Grading Scale
Appendix III Examples of course outlines

SECTION A: COURSE OUTLINES

A course outline sets the expectations for students and what they can expect in terms of instruction they will receive, the format in which the course will be delivered and the knowledge and skills that can be gained. The outline introduces the course and the instructor and sets out the expectations of the instructor so that students are aware of how they will learn, what level of participation will be expected and how they will be assessed.

1. Since Calendar descriptions of courses are necessarily brief, instructors are required to provide students with a more detailed course outline describing the administrative and academic details of the course. Such outlines are to be made available to students at the beginning of the course and must be kept on file for 10 years in the department administering the course.
2. Students will expect the course to unfold as described in the course outline and will plan their time and resources accordingly. As questions or concerns during the course will be referred back to the course outline, instructors are encouraged to anticipate issues that might arise and specify how those issues will be addressed (e.g., late submission of assignments, missed tests).
3. The arrangement proposed in the course outline should not be interpreted in a way that discourages flexibility in course presentation and organization. If an instructor wishes to reserve decisions to be made as the course progresses, that intention should be stated in the course outline (for example, see the final paragraph on page 9 which begins, "At certain points in the course...").
4. If it becomes necessary to make changes to some part of the course during the term, reasonable notice and communication between the instructor and students is critical. Students should be provided with an explanation and an opportunity to comment. The instructor is encouraged to use multiple communication methods with students (e.g. class announcements, message sent to an e-mail list, message posted on the course web-site, etc.). Any significant changes should be made in consultation with the department chair.

5. The University reserves the right to change dates and/or deadlines etc. for any or all courses in the case of an emergency situation or labour disruption or civil unrest/disobedience, etc.

6. A course outline should include the following:

Administrative Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact information Office hours or how/when available Session and term of the class 	<p><i>If applicable include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TA and/or Course Coordinator contact information Website address or alternative methods of communication
Course Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of course objectives (by the end of the course, what should the students know, be able to do, value, demonstrate etc.) 	
Materials & Fees	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of all required materials e.g. textbooks, materials (calculators, art supplies, etc). Any additional expenses which may be required (e.g., trips) 	
Course Overview and Assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear breakdown of the course requirements or expectations including the weight given to each and due date (if possible) How work is to be submitted Policy on missed work, extensions, and late penalties 	<p><i>If applicable include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final exam (specify if a final is included, and whether it tests cumulative knowledge) Weekly breakdown of class topics and readings Attendance requirements Class participation expectations Group work expectations and how group work will be evaluated Grade adjustment techniques Where possible, include the criteria to be used in evaluating a student's work
Additional statements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Integrity statement – see Appendix I Notice regarding possible course modification Any other policy relevant to the course 	<p><i>If applicable include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turnitin.com statement –see Appendix I On-line statement for courses requiring online access or work – see Appendix I Reference to Research Ethics

For sample course outlines please see Appendix III.

SECTION B: EARLY FEEDBACK

When students are aware of their progress early in a course they can make informed decisions.

1. All students should receive feedback regarding their progress prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without academic penalty.
2. For the majority of undergraduate courses this feedback must equal a minimum of 10% of the final grade.
3. For supervised study, thesis, capstone, inquiry, and independent research/study courses, clear and early feedback must also be provided.

SECTION C: ASSESSMENT BAN

1. Purpose:

The Assessment Ban is intended to enable students to continue to attend classes and start preparing for examinations held during the official University examination period.

- a) There is a university-wide ban on examinations and tests in the final week of classes: see below for exemptions. Each year the dates will be listed in the SESSIONAL DATES section of the undergraduate calendar.

2. Application:

- a) Assignments worth more than 10% of the final course grade cannot be assigned during the examination ban period.
- b) Tests and exams cannot be scheduled during the examination ban period.
- c) Take home exams worth more than 10% of the final course grade cannot be due during the examination ban period.

3. Exemptions:

- a) Tests, including lab tests, are exempt when they have the following characteristics:
 - The test is held in the normal class or lab time slot;
 - The test is worth no more than 10% of the final course grade.
- b) Requests for a waiver of the ban must be approved by the Faculty or Program Office before being considered by Undergraduate Council.

Note: the Assessment Ban does not apply to the M.D. or B.HSc [Midwifery] program offered by the Faculty of Health Sciences.

SECTION D: TURNITIN.COM

1. McMaster University approves the use of Turnitin.com for the following reasons:
 - a) prevention – if students know their academic work is being checked for plagiarism, they will hopefully use proper citation methods
 - b) protection of honest students and their work
 - c) detection – with the type of technology in common use today, it is necessary to use a detection tool which checks academic work against the Internet

 2. Guidelines for the use of Turnitin.com
 - a) papers should be submitted to Turnitin.com only with the student's knowledge
 - b) the instructor should indicate that Turnitin.com will be used in the course outline and/or on the assignment details
 - c) the use of Turnitin.com cannot be mandatory*. If a student refuses to submit his or her work to Turnitin.com, he or she cannot be compelled to do so and should not be penalized. Instructors are advised to accept a hard copy of the assignment and grade it as per normal methods. The assignment can be subjected to a Google search or some other kind of search engine if the instructor wishes.
- * Some students object to the use of Turnitin.com because of ownership issues. All work submitted to Turnitin.com becomes part of their database and is used to check authenticity of other student's assignments. Some students object to their work being put in the database and others object to their work being used by Turnitin.com.

RELATED POLICIES:

1. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) applies to universities. Instructors should take care to protect student names, student numbers, grades and all other personal information at all times. For example, the submission and return of assignments and the posting of grades must be done in a manner that ensures confidentiality - see <http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/fippa/fippa.cfm>
2. [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
3. [Academic Accommodation of Students With Disabilities Policy](#)
4. [Student Code of Conduct](#)
5. [Research Ethics Policy](#)
6. Risk Management policy for field trips – see [Field-Trip-and-Electives-Planning-and-Approval-Program](#)
7. [Conflict of Interest-Undergraduate and Graduate Studies](#)
[Rights and Responsibilities of Undergraduate Students During Work Stoppages that Substantially Disrupt Academic Activities](#)

APPENDIX I: APPROVED LANGUAGE FOR COURSE OUTLINES

1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY LANGUAGE FOR COURSE OUTLINES

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

2. TURNITIN.COM LANGUAGE FOR COURSE OUTLINES

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

3. LANGUAGE FOR USE IN COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

In this course we will be using X. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

X = e-mail, LearnLink, WebCT, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.

APPENDIX II: MCMaster UNIVERSITY GRADING SCALE

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

APPENDIX III: SAMPLE #1

HISTORY 1B03
The Americas and the World: From the Colonial Period to the Twentieth Century

FALL 2006

Professor Anita Holiday
007 Chester New Hall, x. 12345
bondjames@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00-2:00 or by appointment.

Lectures: Monday, Thursday, 12:30-1:20, TSH/B128

Important Note:

This course uses WebCt to post the course outline, assignments, and other notices. Go to <http://webCT.mcmaster.ca> to find out how to log-on to the course's home page.

Course Description:

This course examines the creation and nature of the Atlantic world, from the Columbian encounter in the fifteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century and the emergence of new political and social organizations. In bringing together the histories of Europe, Africa, and the Americas, the course prepares students to undertake more specialized studies in the history of the Atlantic world. Readings include articles written by leading scholars in the field of Atlantic history as well as primary sources. The course will be organized in weekly lectures and discussions.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course students should be able to,

- define, describe and analyse key events and themes in the history of the Americas
- demonstrate critical reading skills, particularly in the area of evaluating historical arguments and interpretations
- apply historical research skills introduced in class
- demonstrate verbal communication skills through regular discussions

Required Texts:

These are available at Titles, the university bookstore.

1. Timothy J. Shannon, *Atlantic Lives: A Comparative Approach to Early America* New York: Pearson Longman, 2004.
2. Carol Berkin and Betty S. Anderson, *The History Handbook*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003.
3. Philip D. Curtin. *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999; 1990.
4. Sidney W. Mintz. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.
5. Courseware package.

Course Evaluation:

Tutorial Participation 15%

Students are expected to attend every tutorial and to be prepared to discuss the assigned weekly readings. Students must participate regularly to receive a good grade in this section of the course; attendance alone will not be enough. Students who have a legitimate and documented reason for missing a tutorial must submit a brief paper based on the readings for that week to receive participation credit for the missed class. (These papers should be approximately 750 words in length, or around 3 pages.) The tutorial leader will set the assignment. This assignment is in addition to the discussion paper that may also be due in the tutorial.

Note about changing tutorials:

If you need to change tutorials, contact Joe Smith or Jane Doe in the History Department office, CNH, 6th floor (next to the elevators).

Library Assignment 5%

A library class will be held on September 28th, during the lecture period, in TSH/B128. Attendance is mandatory. A library assignment will be distributed during this session and must be completed and submitted during tutorial the following week.

Discussion Papers 20% (2 x 10%)

Students are to submit **two (2)** brief discussion papers. The papers should be 3-4 pages in length (or approximately 850 to 1,000 words). In each paper, students will respond to a question based on the course readings. These papers are designed to help students with the weekly readings and to help them participate in the tutorial discussions. The papers are due at the beginning of the tutorial. Late papers will not be accepted, unless students have a legitimate and documented reason.

Discussion paper 1 is due in lecture, October 12th.

Discussion paper 2 is due in tutorial, in the week of October 30th.

Discussion paper 1: Answer question 4, p. 124, in Shannon. In answering this question, you must develop and prove an argument. The paper must be properly referenced, with footnotes and a bibliography (these are not included in the required page length). More detail to follow in class.

Discussion paper 2: Compare the arguments and main themes in the articles by Beckles and Galenson. In this paper, you must develop and prove an argument. The paper must be properly referenced, with footnotes and a bibliography (these are not included in the required page length). More detail to follow in class.

Essay 30%

Students will submit a paper based on Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power* (the assignment will be distributed later in the term). The papers should be 7-8 pages in length (or approximately 1,750 to 2,000 words).

This assignment is due November 23rd.

Final Examination **30%**

The final examination will be held during the examination period at the end of semester.

Written Work and Late Submissions:

All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. More details about the marking scheme are posted on the course website. All essays must be properly referenced, with footnotes and a bibliography. Use the Turabian (Chicago) style for referencing; examples can be found at [McMaster University Library-Guides](http://www.library.mcmaster.ca/guides) or in Berkin and Anderson, chapter 11. Students are encouraged to visit the Centre for Student Development to improve their essay skills (MUSC B107; x24711). For information about the Writing Clinic and the Centre's other services, visit the Centre's website: <http://csd.mcmaster.ca>. Chapter 12 in Berkin and Anderson is also useful.

All written work must be submitted in tutorial, on the due date. Do not submit essays by email and do not slide them under the instructor's door. Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day (weekends will count as one day). Late penalties will not be waived unless your Faculty/Program Office advises the instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date.

Academic Integrity:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

At certain points in the course it may make good sense to modify the schedule outlined below. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly (in class and post any changes to the course website).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND LECTURES

<i>September 7</i>	Introduction to course No tutorials this week
<i>September 11</i> <i>September 14</i>	Europe before 1492 First Contacts: Africans and Europeans No tutorials this week Reading: "Introduction: What is Atlantic History?," in Shannon, pp. 1-5 Carol Berkin and Betty S. Anderson, <i>The History Handbook</i> . Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003, pp. 1-24
<i>September 18</i> <i>September 21</i>	European Expansion The Caribbean Experiment No tutorials this week. Reading: Curtin, chapters 1, 2, 3
<i>September 25</i> <i>September 28</i>	The Conquest of Mexico and South America Library class. Attendance is mandatory. <u>Note: Tutorials start this week.</u> Reading: David Watts, "Early Hispanic New World Agriculture, 1492-1509" (courseware) Berkin and Anderson, pp. 36-45.
<i>October 2</i> <i>October 5</i>	Exploitation and Settlement in Spanish America Competition for the Americas Tutorial Reading: Curtin, chapters 4 and 5 Shannon, pp. 107-125. <u>*Discussion paper 1 due in tutorial [changed to Oct 12th]</u>
<i>October 9</i> <i>October 12</i>	Thanksgiving. No class. Buccaneers and the Balance of Power in the Americas Reading: Curtin, chapter 7 Marcus Rediker, "'Under the Banner of King Death': The Social World of Anglo-American Pirates, 1716-1726" (courseware) *Note: no tutorials this week.

<i>October 16</i> <i>October 19</i>	The Reformation and English Exploration The Dutch and the French in the Americas Tutorial Reading: Shannon, pp. 127-147. **Tutorials should discuss the questions on pp. 145-6.
<i>October 23</i> <i>October 26</i>	Atlantic Economies Colonies of Exploitation and Settlement Tutorial Readings: Hilary Beckles, "A 'Riotous and Unruly Lot': Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713" (courseware) David Galenson, "Economic Aspects of the Growth of Slavery in the Seventeenth-century Chesapeake" (courseware) *Discussion paper 2 due in tutorial [changed to week of Oct 30th]
<i>October 30</i> <i>November 2</i>	Settling the Colonies: European Migration Africa and the Slave Trade Tutorial Reading: Curtin, chapter 3, 9. Shannon, pp. 65-83. **Tutorials should discuss the questions on p. 82.
<i>November 6</i> <i>November 9</i>	Agriculture and Slavery Cultural Exchanges Tutorial Reading: Curtin, chapters 6, 8, 10 Mintz, "Introduction," and chapters 1-3.
<i>November 13</i> <i>November 16</i>	Africa, Slavery and Europe Resistance to Slavery Tutorial Reading: Mintz, chapters 4-5
<i>November 20</i> <i>November 23</i>	The American Revolution and the Atlantic World The Spread of Revolution: France and St. Domingue Tutorial Reading: Curtin, chapters 11, 12 Shannon, pp. 208-228. **Tutorials should discuss questions on p. 227. *Note: The essay is due on November 23rd

November 27
November 30

**The Spread of Revolution: Spanish America
The End of Slavery**

Tutorial Reading:

Curtin, 13, 14

John Thornton, "I am the Subject of the King of Congo': African Political Ideology and the Haitian Revolution" (courseware) Stanley Engerman, "Emancipations in Comparative Perspective: A Long and Wide View" (courseware)

**Tutorials should compare the arguments and main themes in the articles by Thornton and Engerman. What factors led to the end of slavery?

December 4

Summary and Review

APPENDIX III: SAMPLE #2

Physics 1B03 Sections 1–3 Course Outline for Term 1 2006-2007

Home page: <http://www.physics.mcmaster.ca/phys1b03/>

This course is an introduction to the physics of particles and waves. We begin by studying the classical mechanics of point particles with a particular emphasis on work and energy. The course then continues with the physics of waves, especially the wave properties of light, and an exploration of the physical properties of fluids. Applications in the life sciences are included. The application of these ideas in modern physics is the main subject matter of Physics 1B03.

Instructors:

Sections 1, 2	I. Loveteaching	ABB 002	45678	asdf@mcmaster.ca	Office Hours Wednesdays 12:00 – 2:00
Sections 3	R. U. Sleeping	ABB 003	56789	Jklh@mcmaster.ca	Office Hours Thursdays 9:30 – 11:30

Required Texts:

Physics for Scientists and Engineers with Modern Physics, A Strategic Approach, Randall D. Knight, Pearson/Addison Wesley, 2004.
Physics 1B03 Practical Exercises & Supplementary Material, September 2005.

Calculator:

Only the McMaster Standard Calculator will be permitted in tests and examinations. This is available at the McMaster Bookstore.

Course Aims:

- To come to appreciate that equations don't solve physics problems – ideas solve physics problems!
- To move beyond being able to recite the laws of mechanics to being able to use them.
- To understand that a wide range of problems can be tackled with a few basic concepts.

Course Objectives:

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

- Define, describe and apply the laws of mechanics
- Demonstrate a conceptual approach to problem solving in physics
- Apply basic physics concepts to solve a wide range of problems
- Use common language to explain solutions to physics problems

Format:

- Each class meets three times per week. The format is similar to that of inquiry courses in which **the topics will be discussed amongst the members of the class.**
- There will be assignments most weeks. We will be using the software tool called Computer-Assisted Personalized Approach (CAPA). This tool generates individualized assignments for you to print. Later, you can enter your answers which the program will grade. CAPA is accessed through WebCT.

- There will be two tests on the evenings of the weeks indicated below. You will be informed of the actual time and location at a later date.
- The material studied in class is supported by practical exercises. There are practical sessions every week each lasting 2 hours. All the sessions are in BSB B114.

Marking Scheme:

Assignments	7.5%
Tests	30%
Class Activity & Quiz	5%
Practical Exercises	12.5%
Exam	45%

Missed Lab Work:

Lab work missed due to illness or personal circumstances may be made up. You must submit appropriate documentation (e.g. note from physician) to your Faculty/Program office. It is your responsibility to follow-up with the lab supervisor. No mark will be entered for the missed work unless the Faculty/Program office gives its approval.

Academic Dishonesty:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In case of discrepancy between the online and handout version of the course outline, the handout version shall be taken as correct.

Schedule of Topics:

Week		Topic	Chapters	Practical Exercise
begins	Number			
Sep 4	1	Kinematics	1	
Sep 11	2	Uncertainties, Kinematics	2 & 4	Uncertainties / Data Studio
Sep 18	3	Newton's Laws	5.1–5.4, 5.6	Kinematics in One Dimension
Sep 25	4	Newton's Laws	6.1–6.3, 8	Forces I
Oct 2	5	Momentum; TEST1 – Oct 6, 2005	9.1–9.5	Forces II
Oct 9	6	Momentum; Energy;	9 & 10.1–10.6	No lab
Oct 16	7	Energy; Work	10 & 11.1–11.5, 11.9	No lab
Oct 22	8	Work, Simple Harmonic Motion	11 & 14.1–14.6	Impulse and Momentum
Oct 30	9	Simple Harmonic Motion, Waves	14 & 20.1–20.5	Conservation of Energy
Nov 6	10	Waves, Superposition; TEST2 – Nov 10, 2005	20 & 21.1–21.8	Simple Harmonic Motion
Nov 13	11	Superposition , Interference	21 & 22.1–22.2	Waves, Reflection and Superposition
Nov 20	12	Interference, Fluids	22 & 15.1–5.5	Interference of Two Waves
Nov 27	13	Fluids	15	Interference of Light Waves
Dec 4	14	Fluids; Catch up, review	15	