



Guide for Teaching Assistants

Department of English
and the Creative Writing Program

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Advice for Teaching Assistants

Resources at Dal

[CUPE3192 Teaching Assistants Guide](#)

Offers general advice on working as a TA at Dal, knowing your rights and responsibilities, working with instructors and supervisors, and getting help from CUPE representatives

[Teaching Assistant Enrichment Program \(TAEP\)](#)

Offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning, this program is one-year flexible course of instruction that “includes workshops, teaching exercises, reflection on teaching and learning, and recognition of a participant’s work towards the development of teaching.”

External Resources

[A Handbook for Teaching Assistants – Queen’s University](#) [.pdf]

by Allyson Hadwin and Susan Wilcox, Instructional Development Centre, Queen’s University, Canada. A 68-page guide to becoming an effective TA, with sections on the roles and responsibilities of the teaching assistant, getting started (including surviving the first class), leading seminars and tutorials, lab teaching, lecturing and presenting, advising and counselling students, and tips on setting and marking assignments, tests and exams. The guide ends with hints on dealing with problems and suggestions for assessing your own performance as a TA.

[Teaching Assistant Guide – McMaster University](#) [.pdf]

A general guide to TA development, offering numerous ideas and strategies “for fostering an inclusive and dynamic teaching environment.”

[University Teaching and Learning: An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants – University of British Columbia](#) [.pdf]

A comprehensive guide to teaching resources at UBC, with several sections providing advice and “practical information and strategies to help novice and experienced teaching assistants assume their instructional roles and responsibilities.”

[International TA Handbook – York University](#) [.pdf]

This handbook is designed for international students who are serving for the first time as teaching assistants at a Canadian university. Though it contains much information directed specifically at teaching assistants at York, it provides some helpful material on the Canadian university system, and standards for grading, academic integrity and English proficiency.

Teaching Assistant Positions in English: TA260, TA130 and TA90

Teaching Assistant positions are governed by the Collective Agreement between Dalhousie University and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3912. A copy of the most recent Collective Agreement is available [at the CUPE 3912 website](#).

NOTE: TA positions at Dalhousie are administered by Departments under the auspices of the relevant teaching Faculty, NOT the Faculty of Graduate Studies. TA positions in English and Creative Writing are administered by the Department of English under the auspices of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Under the [CUPE-Dal Collective Agreement](#), TA positions are defined by the number of hours of employment:

- a TA90 is employed to work 90 hours, normally over one term.
- a TA130 is employed to work 130 hours, normally over one term.
- a TA260 is employed to work 260 hours, normally over two terms.

The Collective Agreement recognizes several other possible TA positions (e.g., TA45 or “marker” position), though the above three are the most commonly available positions in English and Creative Writing.

TA130 and TA260 positions are typically assigned to Writing Requirement courses at the 1000-level, with TA130s assigned to one-term courses and TA260s assigned to the full-year section of ENGL1000 – see below for descriptions of these Writing Requirement courses.

TA90s are typically assigned to non-Writing Requirement courses at the 2000- and 3000-levels with enrolments over 60.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teaching Assistants (TA90/TA130/TA260)

The Dal-CUPE Collective Agreement is the authority on Teaching Assistant working conditions. In addition to what is outlined in the Agreement, the Department of English has devised the following guidelines to ensure that teaching assistants perform similar duties:

- 1) Most TA90 positions in English and Creative Writing require the TA to be responsible for evaluating the work of between 30 and 60 students. There are, however, some TA90 positions in English at the 2000 level that require a TA to lead a tutorial; a TA assigned to one of these positions is normally responsible for evaluating the work of up to 30 students. Unless the course instructor and the assigned TA agree otherwise, a TA90 is expected to grade and offer feedback on all essays and in-class assignments, and engaging, within reason, with students in person, online, or by email to discuss their work. Hours permitting, a TA90 may be invited to prepare and deliver one or two course lectures per term.
- 2) TA130 or TA260 positions are normally assigned to 1000-level Writing Requirement courses with regular scheduled tutorials. Each TA assigned to a course with regular tutorials will be responsible for leading one assigned tutorial. Unless the course instructor and the assigned TA agree otherwise, a TA in a course that meets three times a week (on a MWF schedule) will lead up to twelve weekly 50-minute meetings of the tutorial per term, while a TA in a course that meets twice a week (on a TR schedule) will lead up to eight 80-minute meetings of the tutorials per term.

- 3) Each TA130 or TA260 assigned to a class with regular scheduled tutorials is responsible for evaluating the work and performance of one tutorial group of no more than 30 students, grading and offering feedback on all essays and in-class assignments for the assigned tutorial, and engaging, within reason, with the tutorial's students in person, online, or by email to discuss their work. Hours permitting, a TA130 or TA260 may be invited to prepare and deliver one or two course lectures per term.
- 4) In some cases, TA130 positions may be assigned to a 1000-level Writing Requirement courses in which it is not feasible to hold regular scheduled tutorials (e.g., because the course meets one evening a week). In these cases, each TA is responsible for evaluating the work and performance of no more than 30 students per term, grading and offering feedback on all essays and in-class assignments, and engaging, within reason, with the tutorial's students in person, online, or by email to discuss their work. In addition, each TA130 in a course without regular tutorials is expected to assist in leading the class as a whole during most of its regular meetings. Determined in consultation with the instructor, class leadership might entail giving occasional scheduled lectures, leading discussion groups, or presenting in-class essay workshops.
- 5) Unless the course instructor and the assigned TA agree otherwise, TAs are required to attend all lectures for the courses to which they are assigned.
- 6) Should a TA be unable to attend a class or tutorial, the TA should notify the course instructor *and* the Department of English office as soon as possible.
- 7) TAs are not required to grade midterm or final exams. At the request of the instructor and by mutual agreement, however, they may do so as long as an equal number of hours are reduced in the time TAs spend grading in-class assignments and essays and the total number of weeks worked does not exceed thirteen.
- 8) Once students' written work is submitted, TAs should return graded assignments to the course instructor or, at the instructor's discretion, directly to students within 10 business days. Instructors are responsible for reviewing all of the first assignments after TAs have marked them, checking a representative selection of subsequent assignments, and reviewing the list of grades assigned to all of the assignments.
- 9) TAs are required to keep detailed records of the grades in their tutorials and to make them available to the course instructor on request. An instructor may also ask the TAs to post grades on the course's Brightspace site, though it is the instructor's responsibility to train and authorize TAs in the proper use of this site.
- 10) TAs are required to keep detailed attendance records and to evaluate, if necessary, students' tutorial participation; TAs should follow the FASS Guidelines for Grading Participation, as appended below (item "F"), and must be prepared to justify participation grades to both the instructor and the tutorial students.
- 11) Instructors cannot require TAs to hold regular office hours, though TAs are expected to make themselves accessible, within reason, to students outside of class time, whether online, in person, or by email.

- 12)** TAs are expected to use their Dalhousie email address when communicating with students via email, as per the University's email policy, appended below (item "I").
- 13)** Instructors should inform TAs as early as possible of the topics to be covered by the formal assignments they will be required to mark, and, if practicable, invite suggestions about them. At the instructor's discretion, TAs may or may not be required to devise in-class tutorial assignments.
- 14)** The course instructor shall at the earliest convenience provide the TA with a class list for the TA's tutorial or for the entire course (should it have no tutorials). The instructor should provide the TA an updated list following the end of the add/drop period, normally the first two weeks of classes.
- 15)** Instructors must inform TAs, clearly and in advance, of the marking conventions and procedures they are to follow, in particular with respect to the details of any grading rubrics or schemes that will be used, the weight given to each assignment in determining a student's final mark, the standard students must demonstrate for proficiency in written English, and the criteria by which specific assignments are to be evaluated. All instructors and TAs are expected to follow the university's Grading Scale, appended below (item "E"), for interpreting grades and converting percentage to letter grades.
- 16)** TAs must immediately report any suspected act of plagiarism to the course instructor, who will then assume all responsibility for further action. The FASS syllabus statement on Academic Integrity is appended below (item "H").
- 17)** The course instructor must direct students who have expressed dissatisfaction with a grade given on an in-class or formal assignment to the TA who marked it; the instructor will intervene only if the TA and student cannot come to a mutually satisfactory agreement. Should an intervention be necessary, the instructor should consult with the TA before changing or upholding a final grade.
- 18)** Students who have not completed assignments can be given a final grade with those assignments being considered failures. If a student presents appropriate documentation of illness or other extenuating circumstance, the TA should bring this evidence to the course instructor, who will then determine whether the students ought to be given a grade of INC or ILL.
- 19)** Should a student request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the human rights legislation, the TA should redirect the request to the course instructor. The University syllabus statement on Accommodation is appended below (item "G").
- 20)** For upper-level classes, instructors should provide to the Coordinator of Teaching Assistants the specifics of expertise, experience, and specialization expected of their TAs. The Coordinator will then endeavor to create compatible pairings between instructors and TAs wherever possible.
- 21)** New TAs are required to attend TA Orientation Workshop(s) run by the Coordinator of Teaching Assistants and normally held during the first week of classes in September. The workshops address TA roles and responsibilities, instructor/TA relations, attendance, marking, plagiarism, dealing with student matters, and class preparation.

- 22)** New TAs must provide, no later than the first week of September, relevant employment-related information to the Department of English, including their Social Insurance Number, direct deposit and account information, a blank or void cheque, and signed authorization to use this information for employment-related purposes.
- 23)** Each TA and the relevant course instructor must meet to complete a Teaching Assistant Duties Form outlining which duties the TA is expected to perform and how many hours per term will be spent fulfilling each of these duties – a copy of the form is included in the Appendix (item “A”). They must complete the form, and submit the completed form to the Department of English, within the first two weeks of classes. Completion of the form is a formal requirement of the Dal-CUPE Collective Agreement, and any disputes arising from the contents of the form should be addressed through the official grievance procedure. Among the possible duties for which hours must be indicated on the form are the TA’s participation at the Orientation Workshop(s) for new TAs and the two review meetings with the instructor (see item 25 below).
- 24)** TAs are encouraged to maintain a record of the actual hours they have spent fulfilling each of their duties, using the Teaching Assistant Duties form as a template for their record. During their review meetings with the course instructor (see item 25 below), the TA should inform the course instructor of any significant divergence between the stipulated hours for these duties on the original completed Duties form and the actual hours the TA has spent fulfilling those duties.
- 25)** As per CUPE requirements, the course instructor must provide feedback to TAs on their performance, and may attend their tutorials to assess their performance, at any time during the term. An instructor of a course with multiple TAs may also convene meetings of the TAs as a group so that they might share experiences and strategies with one another and the instructor. However, all instructors of courses with one or more TAs are normally expected to arrange two review meetings with the TAs to discuss performance issues, with the first meeting to be held soon after the midpoint of the term and the second after the submission of final grades. Each TA is encouraged to complete a relevant questionnaire prior to these meetings – the midterm and the final questionnaire are reproduced in the Appendix (items “C” and “D”). At these meetings, the TA ought to be given the opportunity to raise concerns about the course and its tutorials, to discuss students’ progress, and to offer comments on the lectures, readings and assignments. At their final meeting, the course instructor is expected to discuss the students’ evaluations of the TA’s performance (see item 26 below). At this meeting, TAs may ask the course instructor for a formal letter of reference for possible inclusion in the TA’s teaching dossier.

- 26)** All students in courses with TAs will be given the opportunity to evaluate their respective TA's performance by completing a copy of the Department of English Teaching Assistant Evaluation form, as appended below (item "B"). These forms are to be completed by students in class during the final two weeks of classes. At the instructor's discretion, students in courses with regular scheduled tutorials may be invited to complete the forms in class during a meeting of the relevant tutorial. The tutorial's TA must provide the students with sufficient time to complete the form. Neither the TA nor the instructor can be present in the classroom; if the form is being completed at the tutorial, the TA must solicit beforehand a student volunteer from the tutorial group to return the completed forms to the Department of English office. The instructor will make the completed forms available for review by the relevant TA after the submission of final course grades, and is expected to discuss the students' evaluations with the TA at their final review meeting.
- 27)** If the course instructor believes that a TA has failed to act in accordance with the above responsibilities or the instructor's expressed directives, the instructor may ask the Chair of the Department of English, in consultation with the Advisory Committee and the Coordinator of Teaching Assistants, to review the TA's performance. In accordance with Article 13 of Dal-CUPE Collective Agreement, the Chair will review the TA's performance to determine if there is just cause for disciplinary action. If, upon review, the Chair has determined that disciplinary action is warranted, the Chair may either place the TA on probation (in which case the TA is permitted to continue in his or her current assignment provided that the TA performs to the instructor's satisfaction), transfer the TA to another teaching assistant assignment (provided that such an assignment is available), or terminate the TA's current assignment without transferring the TA to another assignment. A Chair's ruling to terminate a TA's assignment will supersede any promise of a TA position that a graduate student may have received as part of any initial letter of offer of admission to the graduate program in English.
- 28)** If TAs have questions or concerns about any of the above guidelines, they should first contact the Coordinator of Teaching Assistants.

Suggested Distribution of Hours for TA Duties

Article 17(c) of the Dal-CUPE Collective Agreement stipulates that "Normally no more than the equivalent of fourteen (14) hours should be allocated by the Supervisor to any single week in a semester of thirteen (13) weeks unless the course activities require this, in which case the hours in excess of fourteen (14) shall be noted in the outline or in any mutually agreed upon revision."

Working within this stipulated maximum for a TA's hours of work per week, the Department of English has in practice followed a few rules of thumb when distributing these hours among particular TA duties:

- A three-credit-hour course in English at Dal normally meets three hours each week over a teaching term of twelve weeks, which is then followed by one week of examination and grading. Accordingly, three hours a week (or 36 hours in total) is usually allocated to in-class duties, whether attending lectures or leading tutorials.
- On average, it takes twice as long to prepare a tutorial as to lead it, whereas it takes as long to prepare for attending a lecture as to attend it. Accordingly, in a three-credit-hour course that meets

three times a week (i.e., two lectures and one tutorial), the prepping required to attend the lectures should take the same amount of time (two hours a week, or 24 hours in total) as the prepping required to lead the tutorials.

- On average, it takes twenty minutes to mark and grade an undergraduate essay. Accordingly, in a three-credit-hour 1000-level course, in which each TA is responsible for no more than thirty students, it should take the TA thirty hours to mark the three major assignments normally required in Writing Requirement courses. Additional time for marking ought to be set aside to allow TAs to hold quizzes or other in-class assignments at their tutorials.
- If instructors want their TAs to serve as exam invigilators, they must specifically set aside two or three hours for this duty.
- Though TAs are not required to hold regular office hours, they are expected to make themselves available to students, via email, online discussion or in person at meetings of up to thirty minutes each. Accordingly, at least six hours, or an average of thirty minutes per week, ought to be allocated for this duty.
- Time should be set aside for the Orientation Workshop(s) and the TA's two review meetings with the instructor.

Following these rules of thumb, a TA130 in a three-credit-hour Writing Requirement course that meets three times a week should expect to work the following number of hours for each duty (as identified on the TA Duties form):

Preparation: 48 hours

In-class duties (attending class, leading tutorials): 36 hours

Office duties (Orientation Workshops, review meetings with instructor, meetings with students): 10 hours

Marking, Grading, Invigilating: 36 hours

TOTAL: 130 hours

TA Assignments in English and Creative Writing

TA260 and TA130 assignments in English are available in Writing Requirement courses at the 1000 level. From time to time, TA90 opportunities are available at the 2000- and 3000-level. TA90 positions in Creative Writing are available at the 2000-level. Assignments are determined by the Coordinator of Teaching Assistants.

NOTE: TA assignments depend on sufficient enrollment, and fluctuating numbers mean that assignments are usually not finalized until the first week of each term.

Most new graduate students in English are assigned as TA260s to ENGL1000, which is taught in a very large section (300-360 students), with lectures presented on Wednesdays and Fridays at 1235-1325 in the Potter Auditorium (Rowe 1028), and tutorials led by TAs on Mondays or Tuesdays. No graduate seminars are scheduled at the same time as the ENGL1000 lectures.

1000-Level English Courses

English courses at the 1000-level allow students to experience the variety and excitement of thinking in the verbal arts, and to develop techniques for analyzing and writing about texts. The format of each section of a 1000-level English course typically combines lectures with weekly tutorial meetings.

Any 6-credit-hour course, or any two 3-credit-hour courses in English at the 1000 level with a number ending in -0, will fulfill the College of Arts and Sciences requirement for a Writing Course. The College's guidelines on Writing Requirement courses are appended below (item "J"). Any 6-credit-hour course, or any two 3-credit-hour courses in English at the 1000 level, will also fulfill the [College of Arts and Sciences Languages and Humanities requirement](#), and may serve as the prerequisite for 2000- and 3000 level courses in English.

Students are free to take additional English courses at the 1000-level beyond those they may need to fulfill these requirements.

Three "Introduction" courses (ENGL1000.06 Introduction to Literature, ENGL1010 Introduction to Prose and Fiction, and ENGL1020 Introduction to Poetry and Drama) provide overviews of the major forms and genres of literary expression. ENGL1000.06 covers the same genres as the pair of ENGL1010 and ENGL1020, and therefore it cannot be taken along with either of those courses. Each section of these three courses has a different instructor and a different selection of literary texts.

ENGL1040 Reading Popular Culture and ENGL1050 Pulp Fiction differ from the "Introduction" courses in their subject matter and critical approach. ENGL1100 prepares students to write analytic and research papers; its focus is on the principles and practice of composition and not on the analysis of works of literature.

For more information on 1000-level requirements for English courses, see the Department's policies on "Introductory English Course Content." A draft revision of these policies is appended below (item "K").

Note that courses at the 1000 level with numbers ending in 1, such as ENGL1041 and ENGL1011, do not fulfill the Writing Requirement, and they do not serve as prerequisites for English courses at the 2000- and 3000-level. They are offered for those interested in the subject matter and who require elective credit only. They are typically taught as subsections of a Writing Requirement course; they are taught by the same instructor, usually in the same room at the same time (for example ENGL1041 is taught with ENGL1040), but with less emphasis on writing instruction. TAs are not normally assigned to these non-WR courses.

ENGL1000.06 Introduction to Literature

This course has three broad but connected objectives: to introduce students to the advanced study of literature in English, to improve their ability to communicate well-informed opinions about what they read,

and to enhance their love of reading. Students in the course explore works of poetry, prose, drama, and fiction that illustrate the power of language to surprise, move, persuade, and entertain. Students are encouraged to discuss the important social, moral, and political questions these works raise, and to analyze the literary and rhetorical strategies their authors use to express ideas powerfully. The selection of literary texts will vary from year to year; please consult the course's current list of texts on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website.

ENGL1010.03 Introduction to Prose and Fiction

This course, in combination with ENGL 1020, provides instruction in much the same material and critical approach that are taught in ENGL1000. All three courses have similar objectives: to introduce students to the advanced study of literature in English, to improve their ability to communicate well-informed opinions about what they read, and to enhance their love of reading. ENGL1010 focuses on non-fictional prose (such as essays and memoirs) and fiction (such as short stories and novels). Both recent and early examples of these genres are examined. The selection of literary texts will vary from section to section; please consult each section's list of texts on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website. A non-Writing Requirement version of the course, ENGL1011, is offered from time to time.

ENGL1020.03 Introduction to Poetry and Drama

This course, in combination with ENGL 1010, provides instruction in much the same material and critical approach that are taught in ENGL1000. All three courses have similar objectives: to introduce students to the advanced study of literature in English, to improve their ability to communicate well-informed opinions about what they read, and to enhance their love of reading. ENGL1020 focuses on varieties of plays and poems. Both recent and early examples of these genres are examined. The selection of literary texts will vary from section to section; please consult each section's list of texts on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website.

A non-Writing Requirement version of the course, ENGL1021, is offered from time to time.

ENGL1040.03 Reading Popular Culture

This course introduces students to the serious study of popular culture. Its objectives are broadly similar to those of introductory courses on literature, in that students in ENGL1040 learn to improve their skills in critical thinking, scholarly argumentation, and written communication. The course's particular focus, however, is on providing students with the methods and knowledge necessary for analyzing forms of cultural expression in diverse creative media, including film, television, literature, video games, electronic texts, jokes, advertising, graffiti, cartoons, song lyrics and consumer goods. The selection of cultural works will vary from section to section; please consult each section's list of texts on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website.

A non-Writing Requirement version of the course, ENGL1041, is offered from time to time.

ENGL1050.03 Pulp Fiction

This course introduces students to the serious study of popular fiction. Its objectives are broadly similar to those of introductory courses on literature, in that students in ENGL1050 learn to improve their skills in critical thinking, scholarly argumentation, and written communication. The course's particular focus, however, is on providing students with the methods and knowledge necessary for analyzing forms of "pulp" genres such as romance, thrillers, crime, the Western, sci-fi, fantasy, horror, sports literature, and comic books. The selection of works will vary from section to section; please consult each section's list of texts on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website.

A non-Writing Requirement version of the course, ENGL1051, is offered from time to time.

ENGL1100.03 Writing for University

This course provides students with formal instruction in the rhetoric and composition of academic writing. Its principal objective is to prepare students to write analytic and research papers in a range of disciplines. Students learn strategies for facilitating all stages of the writing process, are introduced to the grammatical and rhetorical principles that will help them to write effectively, and are expected to complete a variety of assignments to hone their writing skills from outline to revision. The assignments and required readings will vary from section to section; please consult the description for each section on the [Courses and Seminars](#) section of the Department of English website.

Upper-Level English and Creative Writing Courses

Budget permitting, TA90 positions may be available in 2000- and 3000-level courses in English and Creative Writing. A TA90 position is normally assigned to a non-Writing Requirement course with more than 60 students enrolled; should enrolment exceed 120, a second TA90 position may be assigned to the course. Courses at the 2000-level in English and Creative Writing, as well as ENGL3000/3001/3002, have maximum enrolment capacities of between 75 and 150, though the actual of enrolment in these courses varies considerably from course to course and from year to year.

At the instructor's discretion, regular scheduled tutorials may be held for the following courses:

- ENGL2001 British Literature to 1800
- ENGL2002 British Literature after 1800
- ENGL2003 American Literature
- ENGL2004 Canadian Literature
- ENGL2005 World Literature
- ENGL2006 Cultural Studies
- ENGL2215 Young Shakespeare
- ENGL2217 Shakespeare at the Globe
- ENGL3000 Close Reading

A TA90 assigned to an upper-level course with regular scheduled tutorials is responsible for evaluating the work and performance of one tutorial group of no more than 30 students.

The Role of the Tutorial Leader

Tutorials are discussion groups. A TA assigned to lead a tutorial in English does not present lectures to the students but rather works to foster discussion with and among the students. The TA may provide advice to students on preparing assignments or improving their writing skills; in courses at the 1000-level, TAs may be asked to devote several tutorial meetings to helping students learn the conventions of university-level writing. But the principal aim of the TA is to encourage the students to talk about the material and approach that is being studied in the lectures and to ensure that this discussion is facilitating the objectives of the course.

Students at tutorials may not always be eager to engage in discussion or to volunteer responses. In addition to asking prepared questions, TAs should feel free to try out different ways of eliciting comments, including

asking each student the same question, breaking the class into smaller groups or pairs, arranging debates, or having the students brainstorm on a topic and then report on the results to the class.

Department of English Undergraduate Prizes

TAs in relevant courses are encouraged to inform the course instructor of possible nominees for the following undergraduate prizes:

Barbara Bennett-Chittick Prize, awarded to an outstanding first-year student enrolled in introductory English at Dalhousie

Avie Bennett Prize, awarded for the best essay on Canadian Literature submitted from an undergraduate class at Dalhousie

Kim Rilda LeBlanc Memorial Award in Healing and the Arts, awarded to “outstanding initiatives between the arts and the health sciences”; open to undergraduate and graduate students in FASS, Medicine, and Health Professions; for a project, thesis, or research essay that combines work in the humanities or the arts with work in medicine or health care

Dalhousie University President’s Graduate Student Teaching Award

Graduate student instructors, including in the critical role of teaching assistants, make an indispensable contribution to university education: teaching in the classroom, leading seminars and tutorials, demonstrating in the laboratory, coaching, providing feedback on student work, and supporting students’ success in numerous ways.

The Dalhousie President’s Graduate Student Teaching Awards are open to all qualified graduate student instructors (currently registered Master’s and Ph.D. candidates), including previous nominees (but not previous recipients). Up to three awards will be presented annually. An award shall normally be given once to any single recipient over the course of his/her career at Dalhousie.

Criteria

Both nominators and evaluators should consider the following list of criteria. Please note that these two areas of criteria are weighted equally. Recognizing that graduate student instructors play different roles and work in disciplines with different demands, nominees should:

- 1) Provide exceptional student learning experiences that are reflected through effective teaching practices, demonstrated in the following ways:
 - having a comprehensive knowledge of subject
 - being consistently prepared for class/TA duties
 - showing enthusiasm for the subject and encourage student interest and participation
 - setting high standards and motivate students to attain them
 - communicating effectively
 - using technology appropriately for online, blended, and face-to-face contexts

- being available to students outside class hours, whether in-person or online
 - providing constructive feedback on student work
 - working in a collegial manner with students, faculty supervisors and other teaching assistants
- 2) Demonstrate a commitment to their own professional development in teaching by:
- participating in, and/or contributing to, workshops, conferences, and seminars on teaching or other concerns of graduate student teachers
 - developing solutions to graduate student teaching dilemmas (e.g., time management, classroom interaction, motivating students)
 - incorporating new teaching and learning approaches, where appropriate
 - developing teaching materials, where possible

Value of Award

\$500 to each recipient

A nomination package must include

- Letter of nomination
- The nominee's abbreviated CV (max. three pages)
- The nominee's teaching dossier, including a teaching philosophy statement and summary of student ratings of instruction (where possible) (max. 5 pages)
- Two letters of support from current and/or former students
- Two letters of support from colleagues or supervisors
- Current Dalhousie academic transcript

Additional supporting materials (e.g., course or lab descriptions, descriptions of teaching innovations, publications or presentations on teaching, written comments from student ratings of instructions where possible, additional letters of support, etc.) (max. 5 pages)

Submission of Nomination

Packages must be submitted electronically on or before the annual **January 31** deadline. The complete nomination package is to be submitted electronically in a single PDF through the following location:
http://www.dal.ca/dept/clt/awards_grants/Awards/award-submissions.html

All nominations will be notified via email within a few days of receiving the package.

Selection Committee

- Faculty Senator (elected by Senate Learning and Teaching Committee), who shall chair the committee
- Executive Director, Centre for Learning and Teaching (or designate)
- Dean or Associate Dean Academic, appointed annually
- Faculty Representatives, appointed annually (from the pool of previous winners, where possible)
- Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students Representative, appointed annually

University Facilities and Resources

Classroom Location & Campus Maps: You can find out the classroom for your tutorial on the [Academic Timetable](#) and you can find where your classroom is located on Dal's [online campus maps](#).

Building Access: The front doors to the McCain building are open every day 07:00 to 22:00. Offices and classes are accessible Monday through Friday, 07:00 to 22:00. On weekends the main foyer is open but doors to the office/class hallways remain locked. You will be given a key to the Department perimeter. After hours you will require an access card available from the Dean's Office in order to enter the building or locked hallways.

Emergency Services: For emergencies on campus contact security at extension 4109 from any landline-telephone on campus. This includes coin-free operation from any of the clearly identified pay telephones on University campuses. Private lines in University residence must dial 902-494-4109. Security services will contact 911 and ensure first responders have the best information on how to reach the location on campus where they are needed. Dalhousie University offers the DAL ALERT subscription service that notifies subscribers of any urgent notices regarding the campuses. This includes university closures and campus emergencies. You can subscribe with your phone [here](#).

Weather-Related Closures: Dalhousie occasionally closes in extreme weather. While infrequent, there may be a snowstorm or power outage that affects campus activity. Closures are announced via [DAL ALERT](#), on the [opening page of the Dalhousie website](#) and through local news media.

AV Equipment and Support: Most classrooms on campus are equipped with overhead digital projectors. Check with Mary Beth to confirm your classroom has the equipment you require. If you would like to test the equipment or require a tutorial on how to use it contact the AV Staff for the appropriate building: phone 2981 for the McCain building, 3893 for the Rowe or Mona Campbell building, or 6471 for the Hicks building.

Writing Centre: Located in the Killam Library, the Writing Centre is a free service for students who want to improve their writing skills. They are not a proofreading or editing service – their goal is to teach students to write independently. Students must make an appointment to access this service. The Writing Centre also offers some ESL workshops.

English as a Second Language: Dalhousie's College of Continuing Education, located in the Mona Campbell Building, offers English as a Second Language instruction. Students who need to upgrade their language skills for admission to Dalhousie should consider the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. Students who are already Dalhousie students but are looking for a short course to improve their language skills should consider taking one or more workshops that are available.

Centre for Learning & Teaching: Located in the Killam Library, the CLT offers assistance with curriculum development, e-learning, and student engagement initiatives. The Centre runs a Teaching Assistant Enhancement Program – see the description above.

Departmental Resources

Desk Copies: Most publishers allow faculty to order desk copies of texts that will be used for courses. A course instructor is normally expected to order desk copies for the course's TA.

Photocopying: A four-digit code number is used for department-related and teaching-related copies. A separate code number is required for personal copies. Please ask Mary Beth for code numbers. Personal copies are billed at 10 cents each. Students may copy class material on the Department photocopier (often left by faculty in the lounge area) for 10 cents per page. Cash only.

Scanning: The photocopier also acts as a scanner. Faculty and students can scan documents and email them at no charge.

Video Collection: Faculty and graduate students are welcome to sign out titles from our video collection for class or personal viewing. If you want a video made available to undergraduate students or if you would like a title purchased for class viewing let Mary Beth know the details.

Meeting Room: McCain Room 2186 (located directly above the Department office), also known as "the fishbowl", can be booked by Department members for meetings or make-up exams. It can be booked by TAs for individual appointments with students; bookings are limited to 30 minutes per student. In the event of high demand, two TAs will be permitted to make overlapping bookings, provided that each meets with only one student at a time. The room schedule can be accessed by logging into Google calendar using the email address englwww@dal.ca. Ask Mary Beth for the password.

University Holidays, Public Holidays, Study Days

September, first Monday – Labour Day (university closed)

October, second Monday – Thanksgiving Day (university closed)

November 11 – Remembrance Day (university closed)

November, second week – Fall Study Break (no classes; university open except for Remembrance Day)

December 24 (noon) through January 1 – Christmas and New Year's (university closed)

February, first Friday – Munro Day (university closed)

February, third Monday – Heritage Day (university closed)

February, third week – Winter Study Break (no classes; university open except for Heritage Day)

March or April – Good Friday (university closed)

May, third Monday – Victoria Day (university closed)

July 1 – Canada Day (university closed)

August, first Monday – Natal Day (university closed)

Appendix:

Dalhousie University Documents

A) Teaching Assistant Duties Form

Each TA and the instructor for a course must complete this form prior to the course's commencement. Completion of the form is a formal requirement of the Dal-CUPE Collective Agreement, and any disputes arising from the contents of the form should be addressed through the official grievance procedure.

Teaching Assistant Duties Form
Article 17.1- Dalhousie/CUPE 3912 Collective Agreement

Employee Name:		Course:
Supervisor Name:		Department Contact for Administrative
Term(s) (circle one):	choose term(s)	Year:
Total Hours (circle one):	choose hours	

Duties	Details	Hours
Preparation:		
In-class duties (lectures, tutorials, seminars, lab work, field trips, etc.) <i>Select, as applicable:</i> [] Attending class, [] leading tutorials, [] presenting lectures		
Office duties (office hours if required, meetings with supervisor, etc.) <i>Select, as applicable:</i> [] Review meetings with instructor, [] meetings with students		
Marking, Grading, Invigilating <i>Select, as applicable:</i> [] Marking, [] invigilating		
Other (specify) <i>Select, as applicable:</i> [] TA Orientation Workshop, [] extra tutorials (as necessary)		
TOTAL HOURS (must equal Total Hours circled above):		

Note weeks that require more than 14 hours (Article 17.1c).

Comments:
The balance among the various duties will vary from week to week. The numbers above approximate the time spent over the course of the academic year

Employee's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Signature

Date CUPE Collective Agreement:

<http://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/hr/Academic-Staff-Relations/CUPE-3912-Collective-Agreement-2012-2016.pdf>

C) Department of English TA Midterm Questionnaire

1. What TAship do you hold?

- TA 90
- TA 130
- TA 260
- other: _____

2. Do you lead tutorials?

- yes
- no

3. If so, how long are your tutorials?

- 50 minutes
- 80 minutes
- not applicable

4. If you have tutorials, do you lead them weekly?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

5. Approximately how many students are in your tutorial?

6. Do you receive any teaching material or guidelines for the tutorials from the instructor?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

7. Have you been meeting regularly with the instructor to review material to be covered in tutorials?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

8. On average, approximately how many hours a week are you spending preparing for tutorials?

- 0-5 hours
- 5-10 hours
- 10-15 hours
- 15+ hours

9. Have you been attending all lectures?

- yes
- no

10. If no, briefly explain why you have not been attending all lectures.

11. On average, approximately how many hours a week are you spending grading?

- 0-5 hours
- 5-10 hours
- 10-15 hours
- 15+ hours

12. Are there any tasks that are taking more time than anticipated?

13. Is there any support you would like the instructor to provide?

D) Department of English TA Exit Questionnaire

1. What TAship did you hold?

- TA 90
 TA 130
 TA 260
 other: _____

2. Did you lead tutorials?

- yes
 no

3. If so, how many tutorials did you lead?

4. If so, how long were your tutorials?

- 50 minutes
 80 minutes
 not applicable

5. Approximately how many students were in your tutorial?

6. Did you receive any teaching material or guidelines for the tutorials from the instructor?

- yes
 no
 not applicable

7. Did you meet regularly with the instructor to review material to be covered in tutorials?

- yes
 no
 not applicable

8. On average, approximately how many hours a week are you spending preparing for tutorials?

- 0-5 hours
 5-10 hours
 10-15 hours
 15+ hours

9. Have you been attending all lectures?

- yes
- no

10. If no, briefly explain why you have not been attending all lectures.

11. Did you lead any lectures?

- yes
- no

12. If so, how many lectures did you lead?

13. On average, approximately how many hours a week are you spending grading?

- 0-5 hours
- 5-10 hours
- 10-15 hours
- 15+ hours

13. Are there any tasks that took more time than anticipated?

14. Were you given adequate time to complete grading?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

15. Did you grade final exams?

- yes
- no

17. Have you had any concerns with students?

18. Do you have any suggestions to improve the Department of English's TA training?

19. Do you have any comments or concerns about your work experience as a teaching assistant this term?

E) University Grading Scale

The following scale is to be included in all course syllabi. TAs must be prepared to answer any student's questions about the scale.

Grade	Grade Point Value	% Value	Definition	Rubric (from <i>University Calendar</i>)
A+	4.30	90-100	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	4.00	85-89		
A-	3.70	80-84		
B+	3.30	77-79	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
B	3.00	73-76		
B-	2.70	70-72		
C+	2.30	65-69	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems
C	2.00	60-64		
C-	1.70	55-59		
D	1.00	50-54	Marginal Pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills
F	0.00	0-49	Failure	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.
INC	0.00		Incomplete	
W	Neutral and no credit obtained		Withdrew after deadline	
ILL	Neutral and no credit obtained		Compassionate reasons, illness	

F) FASS Guidelines for Assessing Course Participation

1. Course participation should not solely be determined by a student's attendance in class.
2. In addition to traditional forms of participation, faculty members may consider a variety of alternate participation methods.
3. Participation grades should address the quality, and not merely the quantity, of students' input.
4. Especially where a participation grade constitutes a significant portion of the students' final mark, the precise nature of "participation" should be articulated as clearly as possible in the "method of evaluation" section of the course outline.
5. Students should be able to obtain feedback from professors on their participation performance during the term if they request it.
6. Unless participation is an integral aspect of a discipline or program, a course participation grade should not comprise a significant element of a student's final grade.

G) University Syllabus Statement on Accommodation

The following statement is to be included in all course syllabi. TAs must be prepared to answer any student's questions about this statement.

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the human rights legislation. *Any such request must be directed to the course instructor.*

Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should be instructed to make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Students ought to be advised to visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). Students who are interested are asked to contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

Please note that classrooms may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class.

H) FASS Syllabus Statement on Academic Integrity

The following statement is to be included in all course syllabi. TAs must be prepared to answer any student's questions about this statement.

All students in any Dal course are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty as referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the www.academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (*The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999*). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

What does academic integrity mean?

At university we advance knowledge by building on the work of other people. Academic integrity means that we are honest and accurate in creating and communicating all academic products. Acknowledgement of other people's work must be done in a way that does not leave the reader in any doubt as to whose work it is. Academic integrity means trustworthy conduct such as not cheating on examinations and not misrepresenting information. It is the student's responsibility to seek assistance to ensure that these standards are met.

How can you achieve academic integrity?

We must all work together to prevent academic dishonesty because it is unfair to honest students. The following are some ways that you can achieve academic integrity; some may not be applicable in all circumstances.

- Make sure you understand Dalhousie's policies on academic integrity (linked above)
- Do not cheat in examinations or write an exam or test for someone else
- Do not falsify data or lab results
- Be sure not to plagiarize, intentionally or unintentionally, for example...
- Clearly indicate the sources used in your written or oral work. This includes computer codes/ programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images
- Do not use the work of another from the Internet or any other source and submit it as your own
- When you use the ideas of other people (paraphrasing), make sure to acknowledge the source
- Do not submit work that has been completed through collaboration or previously submitted for another assignment without permission from your instructor (These examples should be considered only as a guide and not an exhaustive list.)

Where can you turn for help?

If you are ever unsure about any aspect of your academic work, contact me (or the TA). Other resources include:

- Academic Integrity website <http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/>
Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing
- Writing Centre (http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)
Assistance with learning to write academic documents, reviewing papers for discipline-specific writing standards, organization, argument, transitions, writing styles and citations
- Dalhousie Libraries Workshops (<http://libraries.dal.ca/>)
Online tutorials, citation guides, Assignment Calculator, RefWorks
- Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service (<http://studentservices.dal.ca/services/advocacy.html>)
Assists students with academic appeals and student discipline procedures.
- Senate Office (<http://senate.dal.ca>)
List of Academic Integrity Officers, discipline flowchart, Senate Discipline Committee

What will happen if an allegation of an academic offence is made against you?

As your instructor, I am required to report every suspected offence. The full process is outlined in the Faculty Discipline Flow Chart, available at http://senate.dal.ca/Files/AIO_/AcademicDisciplineProcess_Flowchart_updated_July_2011.pdf and includes the following:

- Each Faculty has an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) who receives allegations from instructors
- Based on the evidence provided, the AIO decides if there is evidence to proceed with the allegation and you will be notified of the process
- If the case proceeds, you will receive a PENDING grade until the matter is resolved
- If you are found guilty of an offence, a penalty will be assigned ranging from a warning, to failure of the assignment or failure of the class, to expulsion from the University. Penalties may also include a notation on your transcript that indicates that you have committed an academic offence.

I) University Syllabus Statement on Email Communication

Email is an authorized means of communication for academic and administrative purposes within Dalhousie. The University will assign all students and TAs an official email address. A student's Dal email address will remain in effect while the student remains a student and for one academic term following a student's last registration. This is the only email address that instructors and TAs can use for communication with students regarding all academic and administrative matters. *TAs must likewise use only their Dal email address for communication with students regarding all academic and administrative matters.* Any redirection of email will be at the student's own risk. Each student or TA is expected to check her or his official email address frequently in order to stay current with Dalhousie communications.

This policy is found in the University Regulations portion of the University Calendar, linked [here](#).

J) College of Arts and Science Guidelines for Writing Requirement Courses

1. The language of instruction in any Writing Requirement class must be English.
2. The primary method of assessment in a Writing Requirement course must be the evaluation of students' writing assignments.
3. Form and content should have approximately equal weight.
4. At least 70% of the final grade must be based on the student's written work. Examinations are not to be included in this 70% figure.
5. Writing assignments should be no fewer than three per term.
6. All Writing Requirement courses should include:
 - a. Formal instruction in writing
 - b. Variation in the types of writing assigned
 - c. Opportunities for revision.
7. It must be possible for students to receive individual attention and advice from professors or teaching assistants with respect to improving their writing.
8. No Writing Requirement class may be offered if the ratio of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) to students is greater than 1:30.

K) Introductory English Course Content

1. The Introduction to Literature courses (ENGL1000, 1010, 1011, 1020, 1021) are intended to provide overviews of major literary genres and techniques. Instructors should not teach only their area of specialty nor should they design their section as an historical survey. There should be variety in periods covered and a variety of cultural perspectives presented. Students should be introduced to some basic vocabulary and approaches that literary critics use in discussing literature, and should be able to discuss the relationship between a work's form and its content.
2. ENGL/CRWR1030 Reading and Writing Stories provides an overview of literary genres and techniques (creative non-fiction, prose fiction, and poetry) and instruction and workshoping in the craft of creative writing. Students should be introduced to some basic vocabulary and approaches that literary critics use in discussing literature, should be able to discuss the relationship between a work's form and its content, and should be given ample opportunity to discuss and review each other's creative work.
3. The Introduction to Popular Culture and Pulp Fiction (ENGL1040, 1041, 1050, 1051) should likewise be taught as overviews of genres and forms. There should be variety in periods covered and a variety of cultural perspectives presented. Students should be introduced to some basic vocabulary and approaches that critics use in discussing popular culture or fiction.
4. ENGL1100 Writing for University provides formal instruction in writing, with a particular focus on the composition and rhetoric of academic writing. It should not be taught as a literature course, though sample literary and academic essays can be included for purposes of illustration and discussion.
5. All sections of 1000-level English courses other than ENGL1100 **must require a final examination** in order to ensure that all the readings may be evaluated. The exam also helps to ensure a greater degree of equity across sections. The final examination is **normally worth no more than 20% of the course grade**. The examination is compulsory: students must write it to complete the course.
6. A final examination is recommended for sections of ENGL1100. If a final examination is not scheduled, additional writing assignments, exercises or tests are required (over and above the three essays that are required for Writing Requirement courses).

7. Students' writing must be addressed formally in all Writing Requirement sections of 1000-level English courses (ENGL1000, 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040, 1050 and 1100). Students must be given instruction in the organization of writing (thesis sentences, opening paragraphs, use of evidence, argumentative structure, transitions, handling of quotations) and in the principles of writing grammatically correct sentences (agreement and presence of subject and verb, correct pronoun form, agreement of pronoun with antecedent, punctuation). Students should also be given training in the fair and effective use of secondary sources. Part of this training should include a review of the university policy on Academic Integrity and an introduction to the MLA Style for documenting sources.
8. The non-Writing Requirement sections of 1000-level English courses (1011, 1021, 1041 and 1051) are typically taught as subsections of a Writing Requirement course; they are taught by the same instructor, usually in the same room at the same time (for example ENGL1041 is taught with ENGL1040), but with less emphasis on writing instruction. However, students must be given training in the fair and effective use of secondary sources. Part of this training should include a review of the university policy on Academic Integrity and an introduction to the MLA Style for documenting sources.
9. The Undergraduate Advisor (or, more formally, the Chair of the Undergraduate Committee) serves as the coordinator of 1000-level English courses. As coordinator, the UG Advisor provides advice to instructors, reviews syllabi, and ensures equity across all sections.

Revised October 2016