

## Department Policies for Teaching Assistants

These policies provide Tutors and Markers with information about departmental practices and procedures regarding their duties. *The policies are to be strictly followed*; failure to do so may result in the termination of the contract and loss of departmental financial support, and/or jeopardize the chance of any further employment within the Department.

### COURSE TUTORS

#### The Function of a Course Tutor

Tutors meet with students one hour and 15 minutes per week to guide them in solving problems similar to those encountered on midterms and final examinations.

#### Course Tutor-Course Examiner Interaction

Tutors should contact the course examiner as soon as they are informed of their duties. They should also attend orientation(s) given by the TA Mentors to become familiar with the work expectations and tutorial objectives. During the semester, Tutors:

- should be prepared to be regularly contacted by the course examiner (e.g., at least once a week), to find out any special circumstances related to their next tutorial;
- should be aware of all notices posted on Moodle related to the course;
- should meet with the TA Mentors at mutually agreed-upon times to discuss the functioning of the tutorial;
- are urged to contact the TA Mentors for advice on any matter related to their teaching.

#### Private Tutoring

- It is *strictly forbidden* for Tutors to offer private tutoring to students in any section of the course for which they are tutoring.
- *It is against University regulations* to use its premises for private tutoring (personal employment).

#### Course Tutor Responsibilities

- It is the Tutor's responsibility to ensure they meet the technical requirements to hold their tutorials remotely. Failure to report any technical issues may result in a deduction of pay for tutorials missed, and may result in the termination of the contract.
- Tutors should be prepared to start on time (by logging in early to ensure there are no technical glitches) and to be available up to 10 to 15 minutes after the scheduled tutorial class time to answer individual student questions.
- They should begin the tutorial session promptly at the scheduled time.
- They should arrive prepared to discuss exercises similar to those in the textbook related to the material recently covered in the previous week according to the course outline (unless instructed otherwise from the course examiner), and they should answer questions raised by students as time permits.
- Tutors should give special emphasis to exercises involving the basic ideas of the course and applications of the methods taught in the course, as opposed to exercises involving only routine calculation. It is important to not fall behind – the course outline should be closely followed to maintain consistency across tutorial sections.
- No absences or replacements are permitted during a term unless there is a valid reason. Should one be required, the tutor must inform the course examiner and the Graduate Program Assistant as soon as possible.
- Duties continue until the last tutorial session is given.

## **MATH HELP CENTRE TUTORS**

### **The Role of the Math Help Centre**

The Math Help Centre is a free service offered remotely (via Zoom) to undergraduate students registered in MATH 200-209 and MAST 214 ONLY\*. No appointment is necessary; students can get help if they are having trouble understanding their weekly assignments/readings. A Tutor is expected to guide students through the problems by giving them further explanation and examples to work on.

- Occasionally the Tutor may have a student come in wanting help for a course that is not covered by the Math Help Centre. The Tutor should politely explain that the Centre does not offer tutoring for that course (as mentioned on the posted schedule on the MHC web page), and direct the student to the professor for help and/or hire a private tutor.

### **MHC Tutor-Student Interactions**

Tutoring is a very important activity. It provides additional training that can make the difference for students to be successful in their course, and proceed to higher-level courses and/or give them the credentials to enter programs for which these courses are prerequisites. Tutors must treat students with respect and give them their full attention.

### **Maximum Time per Student**

The Centre helps students solve problems related to their coursework in order to have a better understanding of the material; it is NOT a private tutoring service. If a student misses a class, it is not reasonable to expect the Math Help Centre Tutor to cover the missed material. It is also unreasonable for a student to take up a large amount of the Tutor's time when there are other students waiting.

Each student is allowed a maximum of 15 minutes of Math Help Centre time in any session. If no other students are waiting, it is up to the Tutor to decide how much time to allow, keeping in mind that it is not a private tutoring service.

### **MHC Dates**

The Math Help Centre opens each term on the second or third full week of classes, and closes two or three weeks after classes end. The Graduate Program Assistant will notify the Tutor of the exact dates via e-mail.

### **MHC TA Responsibilities**

- Tutors are assigned time shifts by the Department. It is the Tutor's responsibility to show up promptly for their shifts. Failure to do so may result in a deduction of pay for time missed, and continuous lateness will result in the termination of the contract.
- If a Tutor is unable to work during the time assigned due to a course conflict, he/she must contact the Graduate Program Assistant as soon as they are informed of their assignment.
- Tutors must not schedule travel or personal appointments (i.e. Doctor, Dentist, etc.) close to or during the time they are scheduled to work.

*No absences are permitted during a term unless there is a valid reason.*

- If the reason is medical, the Tutor must inform the Graduate Program Assistant as soon as possible prior to the start of their shift, and ask that a note be added on the MHC web page to announce the cancellation.
- If the absence is of another nature, the Tutor must request and get approval from the Graduate Program Assistant at least one week in advance. The Tutor must arrange for a suitable shift change with another MHC Tutor working on a different shift during the same semester (the MHC Tutor and the GPA must both agree to the change).

### **Creating Zoom MHC Sessions**

- Tutors must create Zoom Sessions for their shifts, and send the meeting ID information to the Graduate Program Assistant for publication on the Department's MHC web page.
- To maintain confidentiality, the 'waiting room' option in Zoom should be used so that students are speaking with the Tutor one-on-one, and in the order in which they logged into the site.

- TA Mentors can be contacted for information on how to create a Zoom session if a Tutor missed the orientation.

### **Conduct**

- Tutors must be available to students logging in for help and be ready to help students at all times.
- Tutors must not leave the Math Help Centre at any time during their shift.
- If there are students in the ‘waiting room’ at the end of their MHC Zoom session, the Tutor should inform each student of the next MHC Zoom session date and time (found on the MHC web page) and ask them to return at that time.

## **MARKERS**

### **Function of a Marker**

Markers correct students’ course assignments. By providing appropriate feedback to the student, the marker helps students excel in their courses.

### **Marker-Instructor Interaction**

Markers must contact the course instructor as soon as they are informed of their duties to know exactly what is expected of them. It is the responsibility of the marker to ensure that the marking is done appropriately and with adequate explanations for students to understand their errors. The course instructor cannot give students the name of the marker; if students have questions about their assignments, they are to speak to the course instructor directly.

### **Private Tutoring**

- It is *strictly forbidden* for markers of a course to offer private tutoring to students in the course they are marking.
- *It is against University regulations* to use its premises for private tutoring (personal employment).

### **Assignment of Duties**

- Duties are assigned to markers during the first or second week of classes; the hours per week per course will be specified on the workload/contract.
- The method of receiving and returning the assignments is to be discussed with the course instructor. Duties continue until the last assignment is corrected and the assignment’s grades have been received by the instructor.
- No absences or replacements are permitted during a term unless there is a valid reason. Should one be required, the marker must inform the course instructor and the Graduate Program Assistant as soon as possible.

**We greatly appreciate your assistance in providing the finest education to our students.**

**Any questions about these policies?**

**Please contact the Graduate Program Assistant at [grad.mathstat@concordia.ca](mailto:grad.mathstat@concordia.ca)**