Course Outline Template and Guide: 2022-2023 academic year

# Introduction and purpose

A course outline is intended to provide your students with an overall plan that will enable them to function efficiently and effectively in a course. Course outlines must be provided to students during the first week of classes according to the [McGill Charter of Students’ Rights](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/charter_of_student_rights_last_approved_october_262017.pdf) (Chapter One, Article 21 – amended by McGill Senate 25 October 2017). A recommended practice is to post your course outline in myCourses.

This Course Outline Template and Guide includes a checklist of required items and a template with instructions for creating or revising your course outline.

Please note:

* Text in square brackets offers information to consider when writing your course outline.
* Phrasing for required policy statements on language of submission and academic integrity must be included verbatim.
* Sample phrasing for “additional statements” is included in the final section. These statements are optional; the sample phrasing can be used as is or modified in your course outline.

# Faculty- and/or school-specific instructions

Some Faculties and Schools offer their own course outline templates. Check with your Chair or Director to ensure that you are following requirements specific to your Faculty and/or School.

# Course outline checklist: Required items

Course title

Course pre-requisites

Instructor name(s) and email(s)

Office location and office hours

Required course materials

Optional course materials (where applicable)

A description of the topics to be addressed in the course

A description of the means of evaluation to be used in the course, including: the number, nature, and forms of assessment; the weight of each assessment; and whether text-matching software will be used.

Policy statements: language of submission; academic integrity

The Course Outline Template and Guide is revised regularly. If you have questions about preparing your course outline or wish to learn more about TLS’ other services, we invite you to [request a consultation](https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/contact/consultations).

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# Course outline: Course title / # / section

(as it appears in the [eCalendar](https://mcgill.ca/study/))

## General information

Term and year:

Course pre-requisite(s):

Course co-requisite(s):

Course schedule (class day(s) and time):

Number of credits:

## Instructor information (repeat as necessary for multiple instructors and/or adapt for TAs, too)

Name and title:

E-mail:

Office location / office hours:

Communication plan:

[How and when students can contact you; your availability for on- campus and/or virtual meetings (using which software); other forms of communication (where appropriate); your anticipated response time; how often students should check their email and myCourses for course updates]

## Course overview

[Enter the course description as it appears in the [eCalendar](http://www.mcgill.ca/study).]

## Learning outcomes

[State the [learning outcomes](https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/course-curriculum-design/writing-effective-learning-outcomes)—clear statements of the knowledge, skills, and values you expect students to have acquired by the end of the course (e.g., “By the end of this course, you will be able to synthesize information from ...” or “make predictions” or “solve problems”). Learning outcomes can be presented as a numbered or bulleted list for reading ease.]

## Instructional methods

[Check with your Faculty or School if you wish to teach part of your course online and/or replace scheduled class time with out of class activities. Academic units may have approval processes or restrictions concerning shifts from in person to online activities.

Briefly describe how you will teach the course. Include:

* instructional strategies (e.g., clinical activities, group projects, labs, lectures, seminars);
* software and hardware students will need to access to participate;
* where learning activities and assessments will take place (in person/online);
* which activities and assessments will be synchronous (students participate at the same time);
* which activities and assessments will be asynchronous (students participate at the time of their choosing); and
* what students should do if they anticipate that they cannot take part in certain course components.

The [guideline](https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2022-2023/university_regulations_and_resources/undergraduate/gi_credit_system) for planning learning activities is that one credit equals about 45 hours of student work. (Thus, a three credit course equals about 135 hours of student work.) Those hours should include all contact time (e.g., lecture, laboratory, tutorial, and conference time) for a course, as well as the time students spend doing assignments, preparing for class, and reviewing material for a course.

Indicate which learning technologies you will use (e.g., MS Teams, myCourses, Polling @ McGill, Zoom). Direct students to relevant instructions or tutorials, such as McGill’s [Learning Resources](https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/students/learning-resources). Let students know they can download the myCourses [Pulse mobile app](https://mcgill.service-now.com/itportal?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0011379) to stay connected and on track. For polling, see [Sample statements for course outlines](http://www.mcgill.ca/polling).]

## Expectations for student participation

[Be explicit about your expectations for students’ participation in your course, including:

* what constitutes participation;
* what the guidelines for participation are in discussions (during class and/or in myCourses); and
* what appropriate class conduct is (e.g., respectful interactions and communications).

## Class recordings

[You are encouraged to record your classes when possible for review and accommodation purposes. Class recordings do not replace a student’s or instructor’s presence in a class; rather, they provide complementary pedagogical support for student learning. myCourses is the McGill-supported platform for hosting recorded content. It provides access only to those students registered in the course.

Recording is possible both in classrooms with the [Lecture Recording System (LRS)](https://deptkb.mcgill.ca/display/TLK/Enable+the+Lecture+Recording+System+%28Classroom+Capture%29+in+myCourses) and in [classrooms without the LRS](https://deptkb.mcgill.ca/display/TLK/Record+In-person+Activities+in+Rooms+without+the+Lecture+Recording+System). Indicate to students whether you will record any course components. Depending on the recording method, you may be able to pause the recording during student discussions if you are concerned recording will inhibit participation. Students who are uncomfortable being recorded can choose not to engage aloud during the recording. You may wish to include a [copyright statement](#Copyright) and/or an [intellectual property statement](#IntellectualProperty).]

## Required course materials

[Provide specific information about required readings, including title, author(s), edition number and availability (from where they can be purchased or borrowed). Indicating how each reading relates to a particular topic in the course can help students organize their learning. Including the costs of textbooks and other materials helps students plan their budgets.

The McGill Library provides online access to course materials via its [Course Readings](https://mcgill.ca/library/find/courses/course-reserves) service and can link to online materials, including e-books and journal articles. Your [Liaison Librarian](http://www.mcgill.ca/library/contact/askus/liaison) can support you in accessing online materials in the Library collection, purchasing online versions of your print course materials where possible, and trouble-shooting issues with online Library resources. Consult the Library’s [Services for Teaching](https://www.mcgill.ca/library/services/teaching) for more information.

## Optional course materials

[List any optional materials, such as recommended readings.]

## Course content

* [Include a description of the topics to be addressed in the course.
* Potentially include a [concept map or visual representation](https://www.visual-literacy.org/periodic_table/periodic_table.html) to make the sequence of the course explicit (e.g., an historical approach with topics arranged chronologically; a progression from simple to more complex procedures or concepts; a series of theoretical principles followed by applications).
* If appropriate, explain what the course is not about or what topics will not be addressed.]

### Class/module organizer

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Date | Description | Course materials | Assignments due |
| 1 |  | e.g., topic, content, activity | e.g., recording #2, myCourses content module #3, reading #4 | e.g., exam, group project, paper, quiz |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  | [Press Tab here to add rows.] |

[Indicate variations in schedules (e.g., due to holidays). Consult [key academic dates](https://www.mcgill.ca/importantdates/key-dates) and [holy days](https://www.mcgill.ca/importantdates/holy-days-0) when planning.

Ensure that you and your students have a [shared understanding of university-scheduled reading breaks.](https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/files/tls/fall-break.pdf) A discussion of expectations will allow students to plan their time and manage workload.​]

## Evaluation

[Evaluation provides feedback to students on their learning and allows you to assign a fair grade at the end of a course. When planning the means of evaluation, please be mindful of students’ workloads and your own. A [course workload estimator](https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/) can be useful since one consideration when planning the weight of an assessment (assignment or exam) is the length of time available to complete it. Providing explicit information about what the assignments and grading procedures are, and how you will give feedback, can have numerous benefits. These include: clarifying expectations, allaying student anxiety, and supporting students in [pacing their work](https://sass.queensu.ca/resources/online/assignment-planner), gauging their progress, and achieving learning outcomes.

It is recommended to have a range of assessment methods over the term and give students some choice in terms of topic, task, or task weight. These strategies allow students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways and take greater ownership of their learning. Consult the [University Student Assessment Policy](https://mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/2016-04_student_assessment_policy.pdf) to ensure compliance and the [Assessment Strategies](https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/instructors/assessment) web page for inspiration when planning assignments and exams.]

Describe the means of evaluation to be used in the course, including:

* the number, nature, and forms of assessment;
* the weight of each assessment (the value of each assignment and exam expressed as a percentage of the final grade);
* the assessment criteria;
* the consequences of late submissions (i.e., penalties, if any);
* the acceptable circumstances for extensions (if any); and
* whether a form of assessment may be checked with text-matching software.

[The ways in which students’ work will be assessed should be indicated in the course outline and should not change once the course outline has been distributed to students, unless recommended by the University.]

### Exam descriptions

[Explicit exam descriptions (e.g., format, duration, and location) should be included either in the course outline or provided separately in myCourses.]

### Assignment descriptions

[Include explicit assignment descriptions (e.g., length, scope, submission instructions\*) either in the course outline or separately in myCourses. Clearly communicate technology requirements.

\*Electronic assignments should be submitted via myCourses. Include a link to the [FAQs for students using myCourses: Assignments](https://mcgill.service-now.com/itportal?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0011163).]

### Means of evaluation organizer

| Name of assignment or exam | Due date | % of final grade |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## McGill policy statements

[Required course outline statements (in keeping with Senate resolutions)

The following two statements must appear in English. Providing the statements in both English and French is more inclusive.]

* Language of submission

“In accord with McGill University’s [Charter of Students’ Rights](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/charter_of_student_rights_last_approved_october_262017.pdf), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

[The French translation about this right may also be used on your course outline:]

« Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l’étudiant](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/fr_charter_of_students_rights_fr_0.pdf) de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

* Academic integrity

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/code_of_student_conduct_and_disciplinary_procedures.pdf)” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See [McGill’s guide to academic honesty](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).

[The French translation of the Academic Integrity statement may also be used on your course outline:]

« L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon [le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et procédures disciplinaires](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/code_of_student_conduct_and_disciplinary_procedures_f.pdf) » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le [guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill](https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest).)

## Additional statements

[The following statements (listed in alphabetical order) are optional; you are encouraged to include them in your course outline as you feel appropriate. You may adapt the phrasing. Click on the topic to “jump to” the statement.]

[Assessment](#Assessment) | [Basic needs](#BAsicNeeds) | [Charter of Students’ Rights](#CharterStudentRights) | [Content warning](#ContentWarning) | [Copyright](#Copyright) | [EDI statement](#EDIStatement) | [Extraordinary circumstances](#ExtraordinaryCircumstances) | [Inclusive learning environment](#InclusiveLearningEnvironment) | [Intellectual property](#IntellectualProperty) | [Land acknowledgement](#LandAcknowledgement) | [Mercury course evaluations](#MercuryCourseEvaluations) | [Mobile devices](#MobileDevices) | [Preferred pronouns](#PreferredPronouns) | [Recording privacy](#RecordingPrivacy) | [Respect](#Respect) | [Sustainability](#Sustainability) | [Text-matching](#Textmatching) | [Wellness](#Wellness) | [Workload management skills](#WorkloadManagementSkills)

* Assessment: The [University Student Assessment Policy](http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/2016-04_student_assessment_policy.pdf) exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads.
* Basic needs: If you have difficulty affording food or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, and believe that these circumstances may affect your performance in this course, I encourage you to contact the [Dean of Students](mailto:deanofstudents@mcgill.ca), who can connect you with support services. If you feel comfortable doing so, please let me know as well so we can discuss how I can best support your learning.

[adapted from [Goldrick-Rab, 2017](https://saragoldrickrab.medium.com/basic-needs-security-and-the-syllabus-d24cc7afe8c9)]

* Charter of Students’ Rights: Additional policies governing academic issues that affect students can be found in the [McGill Charter of Students’ Rights](https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/charter_of_student_rights_last_approved_october_262017.pdf).
* Content warning: [Students come from a variety of backgrounds with a variety of life experiences. Therefore, in some courses, a content warning may be appropriate to inform students of content that could cause a strong emotional or physiological response. Such a warning can be communicated in the course outline. In addition, it can be provided via myCourses, lecture notes/slides (if applicable), or verbally.]

Content warning: Please be aware that some of the content in this course contains language or images that may be difficult for some students. It is included in this course because it directly relates to [list relevant learning outcome].

* Copyright: © Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that copyright infringements can be subject to follow-up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
* EDI statement: [An equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) statement in your course outline can welcome all students and set the tone for the course. This statement is an opportunity to share with students your values, understandings, commitments, and pedagogical actions relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The statement can also describe how students might engage with one another and with the course material. If you wish to include an EDI statement, we encourage you to consult the [EDI Statement TL KB article](https://deptkb.mcgill.ca/display/TLK/Equity%2C+Diversity%2C+and+Inclusion+%28EDI%29+Statement). It offers reflection questions, sample statements, and a template so that you can customize a statement in your voice that is appropriate to your course context.]
* Extraordinary circumstances: [In keeping with McGill’s preparedness planning strategies with respect to potential pandemic or other concerns, the Administration suggests that all course outlines contain the statement:]

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

* Inclusive learning environment: As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or [Student Accessibility and Achievement](https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/).
* Intellectual property: [To protect intellectual property (e.g., lecture recordings and course materials) and the use of your and other individuals’ images in the recordings in myCourses, you can include a statement in your myCourses site or your course outline. You can also remind students of the importance of protecting intellectual property at the beginning of class:]

I ask for everyone’s cooperation in ensuring that this [video] and associated material are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your own purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it by posting it online or giving it or selling it to others who may copy it and make it available. Thank you for your help with this.

* Land acknowledgement: [If you wish to include a land acknowledgement, we encourage you to consult the Indigenous Initiatives [The Land and Peoples](https://www.mcgill.ca/indigenous/land-and-peoples) web page for guidance.]
* Mercury course evaluations: [Mercury course evaluations](http://www.mcgill.ca/mercury/) are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.
* Mobile devices: Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications (MC2) devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the APC. Consult the [Guidelines](http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/Mobile-Computing-Commun-devices-MC2-guidelines-11June2010.pdf) for a range of sample wording that you may use or adapt for your course outline.]
* Preferred pronouns: [[Learn](https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/gender-diversity-and-pronouns/) about gender identity and pronouns. Consult [Equity at McGill’s 2SLGBTQIA+ Initiatives](https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/initiatives-education/2slgbtqia-initiatives) and [Gender and Sexuality](https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/resources/gender-sexuality) websites, [Queer McGill](https://www.queermcgill.org/), and the [Union for Gender Empowerment](https://theuge.org/) for information and resources specific to the McGill context.]

Please [choose among: email/call/meet during office hours/schedule an appointment/indicate on the start-of-course survey] if you would like me to refer to you by a different name than the [name indicated](https://www.mcgill.ca/student-records/personal-information/address) in your student record or to inform me of your preferred pronouns.

* Recording privacy [if you record course components with students:]

I will notify you if part of a class is being recorded. By remaining in classes that are recorded, you agree to the recording, and you understand that your image, voice, and name may be disclosed to classmates. You also understand that recordings will be made available in myCourses to students registered in the course. Please consult me if you have concerns about privacy and we can discuss possible measures that can be taken.

* Respect: The University is committed to maintaining teaching and learning spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in course contexts may be cause for disciplinary action.
* Sustainability: McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use, and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. See the [Office of Sustainability](http://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/).
* Text-matching: [You may avail yourself of software integrated within myCourses that can be used for text-matching (also applies to formula-, equation-, and graph-matching). Consult the [Tools to Support Teaching and Learning](https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/instructors/technologies/tools-support-teaching-and-learning) web page for approved tools. If you intend to use text-matching software, inform students in writing before the end of the add/drop period:]

Work submitted for evaluation as part of this course may be checked with text-matching software within myCourses.

* Wellness: Many students may face mental health challenges that can impact not only their academic success but also their ability to thrive in our campus community. Please reach out for support when you need it; [wellness resources](https://www.mcgill.ca/wellness-hub/) are available on campus, off campus, and online.
* Workload management skills: If you are feeling overwhelmed by your academic work and/or would like to further develop your time and workload management skills, don’t hesitate to seek support from [Student Services](https://www.mcgill.ca/studentservices/).