

## FAQ - Advising in the Department of English

# INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### KEY TERMS:

**Program: Major, Minor, Honours, or Joint Honours**

**Option: (a.k.a. “Stream”)** = for ENGL, Cultural Studies, Drama and Theatre, or Literature

**Elective:** course counted toward a student’s degree, but not toward one of the student’s programs.

**Complementary course:** course counted toward a student’s program, but not as one of the designated required courses (e.g. ENGL 275: Introduction to Cultural Studies for the CS major and minor)

**Audit sheet:** worksheet used for taking inventory of required and complementary courses student has already taken and has yet to take to complete a program in English. These audit sheets are available in PDF on our departmental website, under “Advising Information.”

**Permit override:** permission granted (through the instructor) for a student to register for a course if prevented on Minerva by the course cap or other factors

**Course-change period: (a.k.a. “Drop/add”):** window of approximately two weeks at the beginning of the regular academic term wherein students can drop or register for courses without fee.

### Fulfilling Program requirements

#### 1. Department of English courses:

##### a. Complementary courses (in Department)

The Departmental Complementary Course lists for each stream vary annually, as they are indexed to the changing annual offerings of the Department of English. You can check the current year’s complementary course listings on the Department webpage here:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/english/undergrad/2015-16-complementary-courses>.

##### b. 200-level courses (not required courses)

- i) *In-program students* (that is, students who have declared a major, minor, honours or joint honours program in ENGL), especially majors and honours students, are encouraged to take 300- and 400-level courses rather than 200-level courses to fulfill their complementary credit requirements. (In cases where there are equivalent courses at 200- and 300-levels, such as ENGL 215 and ENGL 315, in-program students will not be permitted to count the 200-level course toward their program.) *Honours students* especially should be taking the most challenging coursework, not 200-levels.

**NB: Exception: when the student took such a course before declaring an English major / minor.**

- ii) ENGL 200 and ENGL 201 — the “non-Departmental” surveys of English literature, intended for students who are not in ENGL programs—may not be substituted for ENGL 202 and ENGL 203, the Departmental Surveys of English Literature, the latter of which are required courses for the major and minor in the Literature Option. Any exceptions to this should be brought to the DUS for adjudication. **NB: In addition, the university does not permit students to receive credit for both 200 and 202 (i.e. non-Departmental Survey 1 and Departmental Survey 1), nor for both 201 and 203 (non-Departmental Survey 2 and Departmental Survey 2).**

- a. Department of English courses taken more than once by the same student  
Courses in creative writing; practical courses in theatre arts (acting, stage scenery and lighting, costume design, etc.); and “topics courses” (e.g., Special Topics in Cultural Studies; Major Figure; Studies in Drama) *may be taken more than once for credit* under the same course number provided that the content has changed between the first time the student took the course and the second. Annually changing content is the norm for these kinds of courses.

**2. Courses taken at McGill but outside of the Department of English:**

**NB: no single course may count toward more than one program (e.g., the Philosophy course in “Aesthetics” may not count toward one’s Drama and Theatre program and one’s program in Philosophy).**

- a. *Literature*: There is no provision for *Literature majors or minors* for counting extra-departmental courses toward their English programmes. Any substitutions are at the sole discretion of the advisor. (For instance, the Italian Department course in Dante may sometimes count toward the “Backgrounds to English Literature” requirement.)
- b. *Drama and Theatre and Cultural Studies*:
  - i) *Majors* i) Majors may take 6 credits outside of the Department, and with prior approval of a departmental advisor, up to 9 credits under special circumstances. Signed permission to count extra-departmental courses toward any ENGL program must be secured in advance of taking the course from a departmental advisor.
  - ii) *Minors* may take 3 credits outside the Department of English. Here again, students must obtain signed permission for their advisor in advance in order to count those credits toward their minor program.
- c. *Honours - all streams*: a maximum of 9 credits may be from another department with the signed permission of the advisor in advance of taking the course.

Listings of Complementary Courses offered *in Other Departments* also vary annually. Please see the list under the “Undergraduate” tab à “2015-16 Complementary Courses” à “Complementary Courses in Other Departments.”

**3. Courses taken outside of McGill:**

- a. General regulations:
  - i) Please consider the “one third rule”: a maximum of 1/3 of total program credits may be taken outside of McGill, as *transfer or exchange credits* from another accredited institution or as *study-away credits*.
  - ii) Study-away and online courses *may not* be taken in the student’s *graduating semester* of study at McGill.
  - iii) According to Faculty of Arts policy, *online courses may not be counted toward a student’s program*. Faculty of Arts policy permits a maximum of two online courses to be counted toward a student’s degree, as electives. Any requests for exceptions to this policy must be directed through the DUS to the Associate Dean.

### Whom to contact

#### a. DUS cases:

- i) Students seeking exemptions from *any required course* on the basis of transfer or exchange credits must see the Director of Undergraduate Studies for evaluation of equivalencies.
- ii) Students with AP, IB, or CEGEP credits in English may sometimes be exempted from one or both of the Departmental Survey of English Literature courses. Students seeking such exemptions must see the DUS with a syllabus, including reading list and assignments, for the course for which they seek credit.

#### b. Advisor cases:

- i) Students seeking to fulfill *complementary courses with transfer or exchange credits* (i.e. through courses taken outside of McGill) should see their program Advisor (in CS, D&T, or Lit) for evaluation of equivalency, assessed on the basis of the syllabus for the external course. If the course is approved, the Advisor will sign and date the line on the student's audit sheet where the substitution is being granted.
- ii) Please note that the student may already have received approval through the Minerva system of an equivalency for the course in question. Approvals granted through the Minerva system (through the Arts OASIS Course Equivalency form) only approve the courses as counting toward the student's *degree*, but not program. There still needs to be a second, separate stage of approval at the departmental level: i.e. students must still consult departmental advisors to decide whether or not a course taken outside of McGill may be counted toward the student's *program*.

For further information on obtaining credit for courses taken elsewhere, please visit:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/english/undergrad/advising>

## **4. Course Marks**

- a) All courses that are part of a specific program of study must be passed with a mark of C or better. Courses that have marks lower than a C may not be counted toward a student's ENGL program.
- b) Courses taken under the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (pass/fail) option may not count toward a student's program. These courses are electives only.