SUPPORTS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

A Toolkit for Teaching Assistants in the School of Criminology
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Supports for Teaching Assistants – A Toolkit

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ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

TAs are an essential component of many lecture-based courses offered at Simon Fraser University (SFU). They play an important role in the facilitation of tutorials, the delivery of lessons, the application of rubrics, and in providing students with feedback. The purpose of this toolkit is to equip graduate student – and, where applicable, undergraduate student – TAs with the tools and strategies needed to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. TAs should be aware that they are not expected to implement and execute everything in this toolkit perfectly, nor should they try to do so. It is intended to be a resource TAs can use at the outset of the term and turn to when questions inevitably arise over the course of the semester.

Developed in consultation with graduate student TAs and faculty in the School of Criminology, this publication represents a component of a larger product designed to provide support and instruction to TAs to ultimately facilitate student learning in SFU classes. The full project comprised a survey on TA experiences and needs, an environmental scan of literature on TA guidance and reviewing existing toolkits at SFU and other Canadian institutions, a toolkit for faculty, and this toolkit for TAs. The full report, detailing the survey findings, the process by which we consulted with graduate student TAs and faculty, and our recommendations, is available HERE. The faculty toolkit, the other key component of this project, is available HERE.

The TA toolkit is divided into three sections and outlines tools and strategies to support TAs in fulfilling their roles. Part One provides guidance, tools, and strategies to address some of the common issues and challenges TAs experience in their work. It covers the following topics in depth:

- Strengthening your teaching and facilitation skills.
- Fostering inclusivity and civility in learning environments.
- Responding to student disclosures.
- How to create and use grading rubrics.
- How to provide constructive feedback of undergraduate student assignments.
- How to manage your time and organize effectively.
- How to use SFU online systems.
- SFU’s School of Criminology’s Partners in Crime program.
- The TA Evaluation Process.

Part Two highlights additional resources TAs may wish to consult throughout the semester, including graduate student, instructor, and undergraduate student resources available at SFU, as well as employment-related resources and external TA support literature. Part Three provides multiple types of rubrics and a Tips for Your First Tutorial cheat sheet.

This toolkit draws on the best practices already employed by TAs and other instructors, as well as those identified in the literature and across the institution. We hope it serves to better position our TAs and facilitate positive learning experiences for both undergraduate and graduate students.
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Glossary

**APA**

American Psychological Association (APA) style formatting is commonly used by instructors within the School of Criminology. It regulates the style and format for academic papers.

**CPUTL**

The Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning (CPUTL) at SFU is a semester-long, Senate-approved, non-credit certificate for those interested in teaching at a post-secondary institution.

**ISW**

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) is “an internationally recognized forum for faculty members, staff and graduate students in instructional roles who wish to strengthen their teaching skills.”

**FIPPA**

The BC Freedom of Information and Protection and Privacy Act (FIPPA) protects files uploaded to SFU’s vault storage system.

**LMS**

Canvas, which is commonly used by SFU instructors, is the institutional learning management system (LMS).

**SVSPO**

The Sexual Violence Support and Prevention Office (SVSPO) provides support and resources that can assist with sexual violence and misconduct disclosures.

**My SSP**

My Student Support Program (SSP) offers free, confidential 24/7/365 mental health support for all SFU graduate and undergraduate students.

**TA**

Teaching Assistants (TAs) at SFU “supplement or provide further support and education to students beyond regular lectures and presentations.”

**TLC**
SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) works to support faculty and staff in “developing and delivering effective and engaging student learning experiences.”

**TM**

Tutor Markers (TMs) are “the primary point of contact for distance education courses (Centre for Online and Distance Learning courses).”

**TSSU**

The Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU) represents the Teaching Assistants, Tutor Markers, Sessional Instructors, and English Language and Culture/Interpretation and Translation Instructors at SFU.

**TUG**

The Time Use Guideline (TUG) form at SFU “is a form that outlines the expected breakdown of hours for a TA/TM appointment.”
This first section provides guidance, tools, and strategies to address some of the common issues and challenges TAs experience in their work. It is intended to be a resource TAs can refer to when questions inevitably arise over the course of the semester. We invite TAs to provide us with feedback on the toolkit, including identifying gaps in the toolkit that they feel require inclusion.

At SFU, both TAs and tutor markers (TMs) offer support in various courses. There are several important distinctions between the role of TA and TM. According to the TSSU, TAs “do a variety of tasks, from marking assignments to running tutorials and labs.” TMs, on the other hand, “are the primary point of contact for distance education courses (CODE courses).” TAs are often responsible for facilitating tutorials, and in many instances, must attend lectures as well. TMs interact with students via email and/or Canvas, while TAs hold office hours, interact with students in class and in tutorial, in addition to corresponding via email and/or Canvas. While some of the information in this guide may be relevant to TMs, the toolkit was created to assist TAs in their role and as such, includes a great deal of TA-specific information. Employment-related links, which may be useful to TAs, can be found in Part Two.

**Strengthening your teaching and facilitation skills**

SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre offers information, tools, and professional development opportunities to strengthen your teaching practice. Click here to find a list of their events, workshops, and programs. Resources that might be of particular interest to you include:

- **Voice and presentation skills** that are designed to “help you communicate effectively, connect with your audience, and reduce vocal strain.”

- **Learning technology and educational media** that are designed “to help you develop your expertise in creating and using learning technology and educational media.”

We have included a handout, *Tips for your First Tutorial*, in Appendix F that includes some reminders and ideas for how to prepare for and facilitate your first tutorials of the term. Further, you might be interested in workshops and programs that are designed to enhance your teaching practice. Two programs that might be of particular interest to you:
o **Instructional Skills Workshop**: this workshop is designed to strengthen your instructional skills via “intensive yet practical exercises in learning-centered teaching.”

o **Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning**: this certificate program is “a four-month, 120-hour, Senate-approved non-credit certificate for SFU graduate students … to reflect on your teaching, improve your skills, and develop your practice.”

SFU’s [Student Learning Commons](https://www.sfu.ca/student-learning-commons.html) offers a variety of workshops intended for undergraduate students but that are open for graduate students to attend. Click [here](https://www.sfu.ca/student-learning-commons.html) for a list of upcoming workshops. Workshops that might be of interest to you to assist you with your presentation skills include:

o **Practice-Based Presentation Skills**: this workshop is designed to help you manage anxiety around giving presentations.

o **Giving Effective Presentations**: this workshop is designed to teach you “strategies to make your content stand out, your visuals resonate, and your delivery impress.”

Also, all employees, including TAs, must take the SFU Safety Orientation course, available in [Canvas](https://canvas.sfu.ca/). The course includes topics such as: incident reporting, roles and responsibilities, emergency responses, and workplace bullying and harassment.

### Relevant Additional Resources:

- University of Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Centre, *Teaching Assistant’s Guide to How to Lead a Discussion Group in the Classroom*.

- University of British Columbia University Teaching and Learning’s *An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants (The Teaching Environment)* (pp. 22-24) & *Instructional Strategies* (pp. 30-38)).
Fostering inclusivity in learning environments

FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM

SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC; 2014) defines an inclusive classroom as:

a classroom in which all students and instructors feel safe – physically and emotionally – and welcome to contribute ideas, views, and concerns. In an inclusive classroom, content is selected from a broad range of sources and is presented through a variety of teaching methods. Everyone in the class is responsible for contributing to the inclusive classroom by asking questions, challenging assumptions, and allowing for mistakes to be made. (p. 13)

Each person’s approach to creating and facilitating inclusive classrooms will necessarily reflect individual intersectionality and experiences. The following section outlines general guidelines; however, inclusivity relates to both the TA and the students’ experiences so you may consider additional items that reflect your personal experiences and those of your students. The TLC (2014) provides some strategies you can incorporate to help you create an inclusive classroom (pp. 13-14):

- **Recognize barriers and work to remove them.**
  - Recognize barriers that might keep a student from participating in tutorial; for example, try to use videos – and encourage students presenters to do so – that include Closed Captioning to ensure that students who are hard of hearing can follow along and participate meaningfully. Give consideration to physical barriers that might impede a student’s access to a seat in the tutorial room; for example, if you have students with physical impairments, consider organizing the room in a format that allows students to move safely.
  - Note that SFU’s Centre for Accessible Learning provides the instructor with accommodation request letters, so contact the instructor directly with all of your accommodation-related questions. Recognize the confidentiality of students’ academic accommodations by requesting students meet with you or the instructor during office hours to discuss their accommodations privately and avoiding drawing unnecessary attention to the student’s accommodations during their tutorial.

- **Get to know your students.** Consider the use of icebreakers during the first week of the semester. Further, do your best to learn and use the names of your students. The first tutorial provides a good
opportunity to learn their preferred names and how to say them (do not hesitate to ask the student for clarification in how to pronounce their name, as your question shows respect and it shows you care).

- **Set up classroom guidelines in collaboration with your students.** See the section below, *Fostering Inclusivity in the Classroom*, for additional guidance.

- **Be aware of religious holidays.** Remind your students that they must contact the course instructor by the end of the second week of classes to request course accommodations due to religious holidays. SFU’s Student Services Interfaith Centre provides a religious calendar.

- **Explain grading criteria and allow students to express any concerns they might have.** Review the rubrics you have been given by the instructor and/or those you have created on your own and communicate your expectations to the students. Give students the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any misunderstandings and offer to raise concerns with the instructor; however, students do need to know that grading criteria is an instructor issue.

- **During discussions, strive for variety in your cultural reference points or ask for examples from your students to maintain diversity.**

  - An excerpt from the Griffith Institute of Higher Education *Good Practice Resource Booklet on Designing Culturally Inclusive Learning and Teaching Environments* provides additional feedback in this area:

    - Start off the semester by saying you want to learn more about cultural differences to show your students that culture “is valued and respected in the classroom.” (p. 1)

    - Ask open-ended questions that solicit diverse opinions and perspectives: “would anyone like to share a different opinion or perspective?” (p. 2)

    - Moderate discussions to ensure everyone has a turn to both contribute their opinions and perspectives and be active listeners though respect/offer a ‘pass’ wherever applicable.

- **Give students opportunities to provide you with anonymous and constructive feedback about the structure of the tutorials.** Respond to the students’ feedback and communicate whether you will be making changes based on their feedback.
SFU’s Health and Counselling provides additional suggestions for promoting inclusivity in the classroom, including:

- Learning more about the intercultural awareness resources that are available from SFU and sharing these resources with your students.
- Communicating using inclusive language and gender neutral pronouns.
- Encouraging your students to attend your or the instructor’s office hours to speak with you about accessibility issues they are experiencing in the classroom.

Relevant Additional Resources:

- SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre, *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU (The Inclusive Classroom)* (pp. 13-14)
- SFU’s Health and Counselling, *Inclusivity*.
- Ryerson University’s Learning and Teaching Office, *The Diverse and Inclusive Classroom*.
- University of Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Centre’s (2010) *Teaching Assistant’s Guide to Icebreakers*.
- Qmunity’s *Gender Neutral language poster*
- Status of Women Canada: *Gender-Based Analysis Plus Online Course*

FOSTERING CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC; 2014) describes civility in the classroom as requiring “students and instructors respond to sensitive subject matter with sensitivity and compassion and refrain from disruptive behaviour” (p. 14). The TLC (2014) provides some strategies you can incorporate to help promote civility in the classroom (pp. 14-15), which are focused on prevention, as the TLC argues “often prevention is the best strategy for avoiding disruptive behaviour” (p. 14):

- Ask the students to identify their expectations of you, their Teaching Assistant. Be open to what they suggest; often, their suggestions are quite reasonable and when they are not, you can use their suggestion as a ‘teachable moment’ to explain why you cannot meet their expectation in that area. Transparency in teaching decisions contributes to a positive classroom culture.
o Have a group discussion to set out clear expectations and ground rules. Discuss and outline your expectations as they pertain to attendance, respectful participation, deadlines, formality, feedback, and the use of technology in the classroom. Be clear in explaining your expectations. Make sure you involve the students and have them share their expectations of one another in the classroom. This is particularly important for establishing their expectations for appropriate classroom behavior, including dialogue on controversial topics. Consider providing students with an additional opportunity to anonymously write down their feedback and submit it at the end of tutorial.

- Fabian and Rossiter (2016; see Appendix E) provide additional guidance for how to develop classroom engagement guidelines to promote safety in the classroom with your students. Suggestions for guidelines include:
  
  o Be respectful, non-judgmental, open-minded, inclusive, empathetic.
  
  o Be mindful of body language, tone, language (e.g., stigmatizing/decolonizing).
  
  o Be cautious about assumptions/stereotypes – never assume a student does or does not have first-hand experience with the subject matter.
  
  o Maintain confidentiality of others. (pp. 2)

- As you are completing the course readings for each week, note controversial materials and try to think of ways in which you will deal with the sensitive content within the tutorial setting should a difficult moment arise.

  - Fabian and Rossiter (2016; See Appendix E) provide suggestions for how to prepare for students’ responses to difficult material (p. 2):
    
    o Provide ‘trigger warnings’ before exposing students to potentially traumatizing material. Provide detailed information about upcoming readings, films, discussions, etc. that will occur in tutorial.
    
    o Give students permission to keep themselves safe (e.g., leave the room, close their eyes, miss class or an activity).
While you can do your best to prevent conflict in the classroom by creating clear expectations, including expectations about respectful participation, **conflict sometimes arises in the tutorial setting**. Ask your course instructor at the start of the term whether they have any guidelines for you to follow in dealing with sensitive content and insensitive comments that students make during these discussions.

- Lee Warren (2007) of Harvard University’s Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning wrote about *Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom* and explained “knowing strategies for turning difficult encounters into learning opportunities enables us to address important, but hot, topics – religion, politics, race, class, gender – in our classroom discussions” (p. 1). Warren (2007) provides examples of strategies instructors can use to help students think about, and work through, hot moments (see pp. 2-3 for additional explanation):
  
  - As noted in the previous section, establish ground rules for discussion and emphasize the importance of being open to multiple perspectives and encourage students to engage in respectful and responsible dialogue.
  
  - Frame an inappropriate comment made by a student in a different way by “saying something like: ‘Many people think this way. Why do they hold such views? What are their reasons?’ and then, ‘Why do those who disagree hold other views?’” (p. 3)
  
  - Encourage students to learn each other’s perspectives by having them ask questions of each other and later argue for a different position than their own.
  
  - Use the hot moment as a topic for a short written reflection to be completed during tutorial. This might require having the students take the position they disagree with.
  
  - In some circumstances it might be appropriate to speak to students who were most involved in the hot moment on their own to “help them to learn something substantive from the experience – about themselves, about others, about possible solutions, about the topic as a whole, and about how to voice their thoughts so that they can be heard, even by those who disagree” (p. 3).
  
  - Be mindful of how the students respond to the hot moment and acknowledge that it is okay for students to leave class if they need to. Ask the students to email you or drop by your or the course instructor’s office hours if you can be of additional assistance.
  
  - Warren (2007) explains that *not* addressing hot moments can negatively affect your ability to foster inclusivity and civility in the
classroom. Your silence in response to inappropriate comments; for example, racist, sexist, and culturally insensitive comments, can be taken as your informal support of those beliefs.
Relevant Additional Resources:

- SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre, *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU* (*The Inclusive Classroom* (pp. 13-14))
- SFU’s Health and Counselling, *Inclusivity*.
- Ryerson University’s Learning and Teaching Office, *The Diverse and Inclusive Classroom*.
- University of Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Centre’s (2010) *Teaching Assistant’s Guide to Icebreakers*.
- Qmunity’s *Gender Neutral language poster*
- Status of Women Canada: *Gender-Based Analysis Plus Online Course*
- SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre, *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU* (*Civility in the Classroom* (pp. 14-15)).

Responding to student disclosures

TAs often have more direct contact with undergraduate students than do those instructing courses. As a result, TAs often develop closer relationships with students, which can lead students to trust their TAs with personal information about their circumstances, experiences, and/or their struggles. The following section outlines some ways in which TAs can respond to some of the more difficult situations that may arise over the course of the term.

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND MISCONDUCT DISCLOSURES**

You should consider exploring the supports and resources provided by SFU’s *Sexual Violence and Support Prevention Office (SVSPO)* at the start of the semester so you feel more confident in how you would respond to a disclosure, should someone choose to share their experience with you.

- The section of the SVSPO website, *Support Survivors*, is designed to “help you understand how to provide a supportive response.”
• The section of the SVSPO website, Resources for Students, lists the types of ongoing support they provide for campus community members who are impacted by sexual violence.
  o The section of the SVSPO website, Student Investigations, outlines the process that is initiated when a student has “decided to file a report of sexual violence with SFU through policy GP-44, and the Respondent … is a student.”
  o The section of the SVSPO website, Faculty and Staff Investigations, outlines the process that is initiated when a student has “decided to file a report of sexual violence with SFU through policy GP-44, and the Respondent … is faculty or staff.”

• The section of the SVSPO website, Resources for Staff and Faculty, lists the types of ongoing support they provide for campus community members who are impacted by sexual violence.

• The section of the SVSPO website, Reporting Options, documents the steps involved in the reporting process.

MENTAL HEALTH DISCLOSURES

You should consider exploring the supports and resources provided by SFU’s Health and Counselling at the start of the semester so you feel more confident in how you would respond to a student’s disclosure that they are having a difficult time, or should you experience challenges yourself. Please note: if you refer a student to Health and Counselling, they should be made aware that there may be a waitlist. In addition to the resources provided by Health and Counselling, you may wish to consult the SFU Graduate Student Handbook as it includes some useful information related to your role.

  o Note: the course instructor is the only person who can grant any type of extension or excused absence, so you must direct students who have requested an extension or excused absence to the course instructor.

• If you find yourself in an emergency or crisis situation, call 911 immediately. If possible, call 911 from a campus phone so that Campus Security will be notified of the call location.

• Consider asking your course instructor to allocate hours in your TUG to attend the SOS and SIS Combined Workshop, Supporting Students with Distress and Thoughts of Suicide workshop offered by SFU Health and Counselling. This 3-hour workshop “will give participants the tools and know-how to recognize when students are in distress, when they are stepping over boundaries, or when students may be experiencing mental health issues.”

• Responding to students in distress: A response guide for faculty and staff
See *Observe and check-in* “for some examples of behaviours you may observe, and questions you might ask.”

See *Reflect and refer* for you to “consider the student’s responses, and the appropriate referral.”

- Undergraduate and graduate students can book counselling appointments with doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health nurses, and clinical counsellors at [SFU Health and Counselling](#). Students who are experiencing an emergency can be seen on the same day at Burnaby and Vancouver campuses.

- Indigenous students can connect confidentially and for free with an Indigenous Clinical Counsellor whose role is “to help Indigenous students meet the challenges of achieving their academic and personal potential.” For additional information, see: [Indigenous Counselling Services](#).

- International students can connect with a Transition Case Manager who can assist international students with “managing school stress, finding housing, understanding documents, or understanding Canadian services.” For additional information, see: [Support for International Students](#).

- SFU provides students with access to the My Student Support Program (*My SSP*), which offers free, confidential 24/7/365 mental health support for all SFU graduate and undergraduate students.

  - Students can access *My SSP* in two ways:
    - Students can download the app (download on the [App Store](#) or get it on [Google Play](#))
    - Students can call 1.844.451.9700 within North America and 001.416.380.6578 outside of North America

  - You can help students access *My SSP* in two ways:
    - For information on how to “help students connect with *My SSP* for the first time,” see the information presented under the heading, *Assisted Referral*.
    - With the student’s permission, you can also request someone from *My SSP* call the student directly. See the information presented under the heading, *Outreach Request*.

  - Do you need advice on how to support students? *My SSP* provides consultative services to faculty, staff, and student leaders. You can access these consultative services in two ways:
- Call 1.844.451.9700 to book a consultation.
- Download the My SSP app and chat with an advisor. Be sure to state that you are seeking support with a student-related issue.

- Please note: students who wish to seek legal advice in any situation may be able to avail themselves of free legal services through the Law Students Legal Advice Program, the Access Pro Bono Program, or the SFSS/GSS Legal Clinic. More information is available here.

Relevant Additional Resources:

- The Crisis Centre of BC offers free services and can be reached in the following ways:
  - 24/7/365 by calling 1.604.872.3311 or 1.800.784.2433
  - Online chat from noon to 1am.
    - Adults: www.crisiscentrechat.ca and youth: www.youthinbc.com

- The Health Link BC website is a useful resource for TAs and for students. The website includes a number of featured resources on topics including depression, anxiety, and suicide.
  - The website also includes a learning center which puts all mental health related information in one place so that those visiting the website can easily find the information they need.
  - You can also call 8-1-1 to speak with a health service navigator 24/7.

- The Vancouver Coastal Health website has helpful information regarding accessing mental health services. They have information on acute and short-term treatment services, children and youth mental health services, community mental health services, mental health outpatient services, mental health tertiary services, online mental health and substance use services, and substance use services.

- The eMentalHealth.ca website provides information about mental health services, help, and support in your community. You are able to access contact information about organizations and services, information sheets, screening tools, and external links for specific communities.

- The Canadian Mental Health Association website offers tips on improving mental health, information on mental illness and alcohol and other drugs, and contact information for those experiencing a crisis or emergency.
**How to create and use grading rubrics**

As noted in SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre’s *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU*: by using a rubric you will have an easier time explaining to students why they received the mark they did, as you can clearly show them parts of the assignment they had trouble with or did well on. Further, using a rubric will help ensure that you [– and in classes with multiples TAs, your fellow TAs –] marked consistently [and fairly] (p. 25).

Ask the course instructor for rubrics to grade the various course evaluation components. Further, ask them if they are willing to review the first few assignments you grade using their rubrics. This will help you work through any difficulties you experience in applying the rubric. If you are working with other TAs, you can also help each other in this regard.

If the instructor does not provide you with rubrics, ask them if it is okay to create your own and ask them if they are willing to provide you with feedback on the ones you create. If you are working with other TAs in the course, create the rubrics in collaboration with each other to strengthen the design of the rubric you create and to share the workload involved in creating the rubric.

There are examples of rubrics in the Appendices that you can tailor to the assignment you are grading. There are examples of each of the following:

- **Appendix A**: Presentation Rubrics
- **Appendix B**: Tutorial Participation Rubrics
- **Appendix C**: Group Work Rubric
- **Appendix D**: Written Assignment Rubrics

Consider providing the students with a copy of the rubric – with or without numerical values – that outlines the various components they will be assessed on, as this will serve to minimize their anxiety and allow them to ask for clarification on the assignment.

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**Relevant Additional Resources:**

- Western University’s Centre for Teaching and Learning [Grading with Rubrics](#).
  - This website provides information on designing rubrics and provides links to sample rubrics as well.
- McMaster University Centre for Leadership in Learning [Teaching Assistant Guide](#), Appendix B: Sample Materials ([Sample Rubric for Marking Essays](#) pp. 61-62) & ([Sample Rubric for Marking Presentations](#) pp. 63-64).

### How to provide constructive feedback of undergraduate student assignments

Constructive feedback is feedback that is:

- **Honest but kind and helpful.** Keep in mind that you are grading undergraduate student work. Their writing is not going to be as strong as your own.
- **Consistent.** This is particularly important in courses with multiple TAs.
- **Fair.** Students should be graded the same.
- **Transparent.** Students should understand where they earned and lost points.
- **Prompt.** Ask the course instructor to identify their expectations of you.
- **Specific.** Identify examples of the weakness/strength you are critiquing/praising.
- **Succinct.** Identify the most important areas to comment upon, as too many comments and suggestions can be overwhelming.
- **Connected to the rubric/grading criteria.** Provide comments that address the criteria outlined in the rubric.
- **(In many instances) Formative.** Give students specific examples of how they can improve their work. Ask your course instructor if you should be providing [formative versus summative feedback](#) on the different course evaluation components. For example, you might provide more formative feedback for short written assignments than you will on examinations, which might focus more on summative feedback.
• Columbia University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Teaching Center provides additional suggestions for *How to Provide Constructive Feedback – That Won't Exasperate Your Students* (p. 2):
  
  • **Couch comments in “I” terms.** E.g., “I got lost here.” Or, “I’m confused – did you mean to say …?”

  • **Structure your comments as questions or suggestions, rather than as criticisms.**

  • **Use questions to identify errors.** You might, for example, ask students for more information, or ask whether this is what they meant to say.

### Relevant Additional Resources:

- McMaster University Centre for Leadership in Learning *Teaching Assistant Guide*, Appendix B: Sample Materials (*Characteristics of Constructive Feedback* (p. 59) & *Guidelines for Essay Scoring: Increasing Objectivity* (p. 60)).

- University of British Columbia University Teaching and Learning’s *An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants* (*Marking/Grading* (pp. 16-17)).


### How to manage your time and organize effectively

You will undoubtedly experience demands on your time throughout the course of the semester when you have your own academic deadlines and/or your undergraduate students have coursework due that you are responsible for grading. Do your best to address your emotional wellness throughout the semester, including during the busy times when you feel most stressed. Strategies to enhance your emotional wellness include “learning how to manage a busy schedule,” which in combination with organization, is the focus of this section of the toolkit.

**TIME MANAGEMENT: GENERAL**

It is important for you to allocate your time carefully to ensure you are managing your studies, TA responsibilities, and any other personal/professional obligations while making space for your own well-being.

- SFU’s [Student Learning Commons](https://www.sfu.ca/studentlearning/) offers a variety of workshops intended for undergraduate students but that are open for graduate students to attend. Click [here](https://www.sfu.ca/studentlearning/).
for a list of upcoming workshops. Workshops that might be of interest to you to assist you with your time management skills include:

- **Concentration Strategies**: this workshop will provide students with “valuable tools and strategies to stay more focused when studying and to deal with internal and external distractions.”

- **Managing Procrastination**: this workshop will provide students with “strategies for getting started on a task they are avoiding, strategies for breaking down tasks into manageable parts, strategies for managing their negative thoughts around tasks, strategies for dealing with distractions, and the importance of self-forgiveness.”

- **Time Management for Busy Students**: this workshop will help students “learn how to prioritize between their activities, as well as learning strategies to help them live by their priorities. These strategies include planning ahead, learning to say no, and learning to focus.”

- The Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU) is the union representing TAs, sessional instructors, and English Language & Culture/Interpretation and Translation Instructors at SFU. On their [website](#), you can find important information, including information about your contract. Here, you can ‘get to know’ your contract and learn about Time Use Guidelines (TUGs) for TAs. See [Part Two](#) for employment related resources.

- **TUG forms** “outline the expected breakdown of hours for a TA/TM appointment. The amount of hours on the TUG must not exceed the amount of hours available for the appointment.”

- This form is a good tool to ensure you and the course instructor are in agreement about your roles and responsibilities.

- You and your instructor should complete one of these forms together within the first week of the semester.

- You should **keep track of the hours** you spend completing all of your course-related tasks, as this information is necessary for you to determine if you are going to exceed the hours allocated to you in your TUG. You can track your hours in a variety of ways; for example, by:
  - Writing your hours in the TSSU logbook or other notebook;
  - Creating and filling in an Excel spreadsheet; or,
  - Using an app downloaded from the Internet (e.g., Toggl)
TIME MANAGEMENT: GRADING

The Teaching and Learning Centre’s *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU* (pp. 24-25) provides strategies for grading quickly and fairly:

- **Use a rubric.** A rubric breaks down the different components of the assignment and details what percentage of the overall grade each component is worth. Distribute the rubric to your students before the assignment is due so they know your expectations. Work through the rubric as you grade, and total the points to determine the overall grade (consider creating an Excel spreadsheet with columns for each section of the rubric and using the formula function so that Excel calculates the final score for you).

  - Additionally, direct them to examples of ‘model papers.’ SFU’s Student Learning Commons hosts a writing contest and publishes examples of undergraduate student writing across various disciplines on their online database. You can also ask the instructor for sample model papers.

- **Use a timer and set a limit on how long you will spend on each task.** As a TA you work a specific number of hours a term, as defined in your TUG. If you use a timer, you can ensure that you give each student as much time as you can, while adhering to your hours. If the timer goes off and you have not reached the end of the assignment, you might want to stop writing detailed feedback and work as quickly as you can to reach the end of the assignment and assign a grade. **Note:** avoid rewriting student work, as this will save you time. You are not copy-editing their papers.

- **Group assignments or questions and grade one topic at the same time.** Grouping and grading essays and questions by topic will save you time and promote consistency in your grading.

- **Provide class feedback when you notice students are making a common mistake.** When you identify a common mistake, stop commenting on individual papers/questions and simply write, “I will discuss this problem with the class.” Use the next tutorial to describe the error in general terms, without identifying any specific student and provide detailed feedback on how the students can improve in that area.

- **Practice.** Many course instructors require their TAs to hand in a sample of their marking so that they can ensure consistency in the way the TAs mark. This is normal practice and will help you feel more confident that you have graded fairly when you hand back assignments.
The University of British Columbia University Teaching and Learning’s *An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants* provides additional strategies to save time while grading (p. 79):

- **Limit comments.** Focus on the areas you want to see improvement.

- **When possible, align the scale to the value of the task.** If the assignment is worth 10%, grade it on a scale of 1-10.

- **Be specific.** Provide feedback that allow students to improve their work.

### Relevant Additional Resources:

- University of Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Centre, *Teaching Assistant’s Guide to Managing Time as a TA*

- University of British Columbia University Teaching and Learning’s *An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants* *(How to avoid burnout) (pp. 80-81)*

- The province of *British Columbia’s Employment Standards* includes important information regarding payment, compensation, and work conditions.

### TRACKING WEEKLY TUTORIAL PARTICIPATION

Ask your course instructor if they have a preference for how and where you track weekly tutorial participation. Most instructors will advise you to keep track of student participation each week rather than leaving the grading until the end of the term, as it is possible you will have forgotten how well people contributed in the earlier weeks of the semester.

Ideas for implementation:

- Ask your instructor if they have a rubric and a process they want you to use to grade tutorial participation and attendance. If they do, review the rubric carefully and ask for clarification. Document weekly participation using the process the instructor has requested you follow.

- If the instructor does not provide you with a rubric or process for grading tutorial participation, use *Appendix B* to create your own rubric, and consider using a record-keeping approach similar to the option described below:

  - Input the course roster into an Excel spreadsheet and open multiple pages (one for each tutorial section).

  - Print copies of the tutorial-specific student lists to cover the entire semester’s worth of tutorials.
• Have your students create ‘name tags’ that must be on display during every tutorial.

• Bring a copy of the roster to each tutorial and use a check-mark to note attendance at tutorial and consider adding check marks next to their name every time they speak.

• At the conclusion of the tutorial, use the rubric (the instructor’s or yours) to assign a participation score for the day for each student and write their score next to their name.

• As soon as possible, input their participation score for the week into the Excel spreadsheet.

• At the end of the semester, tally their weekly scores and divide that score by the total number of points possible to get their percentage for participation and attendance. If need be, ask the course instructor for a formula to calculate this value.

**Relevant Additional Resources:**

- Carnegie Mellon University. Eberly Center: Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation. [Creating and using rubrics](#).
  - This website provides two examples of class participation /contributions rubrics.


**PROFESSIONAL EMAIL RESPONSES**

If the course instructor has not provided you with guidelines about email communication, you should consider asking them for clarification about their email return timeline expectations for both TA-student and TA-instructor communication and the types of circumstances when they want to be CC’d on TA-student emails (some might request that you CC them on every email you send to your students). Further, seek clarification on the kinds of questions that you can reply to via email (some instructors might ask you to limit your responses to ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions, or restrict your use of email to scheduling in-person appointments). Recognize that anything you write to a student is considered public record.

Please be advised that SFU policy prohibits you from replying to student emails that have been sent from any account except for their SFU email account. Further, you are not to reply to emails sent by family members/friends of your students.
Once you are aware of the course instructor’s expectations of you, communicate these guidelines to your students. Address the following questions in the first tutorial and remind the students of your guidelines throughout the semester: How long will you take to reply to their emails? Will you reply every day of the week? What restrictions do you have regarding the types of questions students can ask via email?

Encourage your students to communicate with you in a professional manner and be sure to follow the same guidelines in return. Examples of professional communication include: a subject heading (some instructors prefer the subject heading include the course name and number (i.e., CRIM ###)), a salutation, full sentences, and a closing that includes the student’s name, and for undergraduate students, their student number.

### Relevant Additional Resources:

- SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre, *A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU* (Emails (pp. 20-21))

### Use of SFU online systems

#### SFU vault

SFU vault is a cloud storage service for students, faculty, and staff who have an active SFU computing ID. Ask your course instructor if they have any preferences for how you should store course-related files. Consider using the SFU vault as files “uploaded into the system will be protected under the BC Freedom of Information and Protection and Privacy Act (FIPPA).” Other benefits of using the SFU vault include that it is free, it can be accessed and synced across your devices (e.g., laptops, computers, and smartphones), it allows for file sharing between users, and it is supported by IT Services.

- Click here to [install] the SFU vault.
- Help pages are located on the [SFU vault homepage].

#### SFU Canvas

SFU Canvas is SFU’s institutional learning management system (LMS). It is an open source platform that facilitates participation, learning opportunities, and integration with social media and new technologies. Instructors may use Canvas to share important administrative materials including the course syllabus and assignment information. They may also include assigned or supplemental readings. If an instructor chooses, students can access and view their grades on Canvas. The LMS includes a messaging platform which enables students, TAs, and instructors to send messages to each other.
Ask your course instructor if they will be using SFU Canvas to communicate information about the course and/or to receive assignments from the students. The course instructor will need to grant you access to the course site by adding you as a “TA.” Clarify their expectations of you to communicate and grade within Canvas.

- If you encounter any difficulties using Canvas, ask the course instructor for assistance, review the Instructor Guide, and/or contact LearnTech at the Teaching and Learning Centre.

**go.sfu.ca/SIS**

The student centre within go.sfu.ca allows students to manage and view information about their student record. Students are able to enroll in classes, pay their tuition and fees, view grades, check academic progress, apply for graduation, access transcripts, release student information, update personal information, and more.

**my.sfu.ca**

This website provides an overview of information including one’s roles within the institution, their SFU ID number, and their library barcode. It also provides links to staff resources including pension projection, professional development expenses, pay statements, and travel and expenses.

**myinfo.sfu.ca**

At myinfo.sfu.ca, employees are able to access information and a variety of resources related to their employment (e.g., information regarding personal details, benefits, and payroll). This is a useful website to visit should you wish to view your T4 and T4A slips or review your benefits.

- For information about using myINFO, including a list of frequently asked questions, visit this website.
- To request support from the myINFO team, email: its-help@sfu.ca.

**SFU’s School of Criminology’s Partners in Crime program**

SFU’s School of Criminology has a program called Partners in Crime. The program partners incoming graduate students with existing graduate students. Existing graduate students offer assistance, guidance, and support to incoming graduate students and reach out before the fall semester begins. Incoming graduate students are able to ask questions related to all aspects of the graduate student experience, including the TA role.
TA Evaluation

TAs are evaluated by both the course instructor and their students. At the beginning of the term, the course instructor is required to provide the TA with a copy of the department’s evaluation document. At the end of the term, the course instructor will fill out the document and provide the TA with an opportunity to respond to any constructive comments made by the course instructor. The evaluation form is then submitted to the department and retained as a part of the TA’s employment record.

Students have an opportunity in the final two weeks of the term to provide their TAs with feedback as well. This departmental form is designed to give TAs some basic feedback on their instructional, evaluation, and facilitative performance throughout the term. The department will retain a copy of each evaluation form; TAs will receive their completed evaluations in the first few weeks of the subsequent term.

- Instruct your students prior to handing out the evaluations about the purpose of the feedback form and its value to you. Inform the students that these forms can have an impact on your future performance and even your career, as TAs can keep records of the feedback as a part of their teaching portfolios for subsequent employment opportunities.

- You may wish to give your students some idea of what constructive feedback looks like, whether they have comments on any specific issue that you have been working to improve, or whether they appreciated a particular teaching exercise or other method that you tried out with the class. You may also wish to remind students that feedback regarding physical aspects you cannot change (e.g., your voice, your general physical appearance, etc.) are not helpful.

- Be prepared when you first read through the student comments. While most TAs receive generally positive and constructive feedback, the fact that these feedback forms are anonymous can result in blunt, irrelevant, inappropriate, or even cruel comments. There is also considerable research that demonstrates that gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, age, and other factors affect student evaluations of their TAs and instructors alike. Touch base with your peers or a faculty mentor if you would like to discuss your feedback in more detail.

Relevant Additional Resources:

- See the TSSU website for general and specific instructions on what to do if you disagree with your course instructor’s feedback.

- SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre website includes information on teaching dossiers. It is important for TAs planning for a teaching career to consider putting one together.
TA SUPPORT LITERATURE


SFU RESOURCES FOR TAS

1. “A Guide for Teaching Assistants at SFU” is an excellent resource for new and repeat TAs at SFU.

2. The SFU Teaching and Learning Centre includes information and resources useful for TAs at SFU.

3. The TA/TM Day: The Teaching Orientation Program is a one day orientation at SFU that helps prepare incoming TAs and TMs for their role.

4. The Instructional Skills Workshop is a multi-day workshop offered at SFU and other institutions that aimed at developing teaching and instructional skills.

5. The Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning is a semester-long course that covers a range of topics related to teaching at a university level.

6. The SFU Health and Counselling website is an excellent resource for both TAs and students.

7. The SFU Student Learning Commons provides students with help in academic writing, learning and studying strategies.

8. SFU Women’s Centre offers services to students of all genders including crisis referrals and peer support, access to a feminist library, free safer sex and menstrual supplies, food support and more.

9. SFU Out on Campus offers services including a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ students and their allies, a comprehensive LGBTQ+ library, peer support and crisis referrals, free safe sex resources, and more.
The Government of BC’s Employment Standards website provides useful information about wages, holidays, taking time off, hours of work, and more. The website also offers information about making a complaint and contacting the Employment Standards Branch.

SFU’s Human Rights Office website discusses SFU’s human rights policy and the policy board. It notes that the human rights policy covers issues including “discrimination, harassment based on a prohibited ground of discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment.” The website also includes useful information on initiating a complaint at SFU, guidelines and protocol including disability accommodation, religious accommodation and investigation protocol.

SFU’s Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU) website includes a great deal of information regarding the collective agreement, getting TA/TM/Sessional work, labour and employment rights, TA FAQs, intellectual property rights, benefits and wages, bargaining, and events. The website also gives access to various forms (i.e. TUG form) and logbooks that are relevant to the TA role.

SFU’s Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website offers information about job postings for TAs, TMs, and Sessional Instructors. It includes information about the dates positions are posted and close, when successful applicants will receive their written offers, and more.

SFU’s Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website provides information regarding career services offered at the school. Further it gives information on professional development, including resources, events, workshops, and seminars.

SFU’s Career and Work website provides a great deal of information about various forms of employment. The website provides information about career exploration tools, and offers links to the following resources:

- Career Cruising: “Information on occupations and possible career paths, along with videos and interviews of people currently working in those fields.”
- Worxica: “Get a real-world snapshot of the industry demand in careers you’re pursuing and identify future employers.”
- Roadtrip Nation: “An interactive online tool where you can select your unique combination of interests and discover related real-world careers.”
- Work BC: “A Government of BC resource where you can explore the qualifications, earnings and projected demand of over 500 careers.”
o **Choices Explorer:** “A comprehensive source of occupational and educational information and job postings.”

o **My World Abroad:** “Explore opportunities to work abroad, as well as endless resources to prepare you for an international career.”

o **Venture Connection:** “Receive valuable training, mentorship and networking opportunities while exploring the world of entrepreneurship.”

- SFU’s Career and Work website gives information on job posting websites. It provides details about SFU specific job postings through [MyExperience](#) and [MyInvolvement](#). It gives information about general job postings including [Work BC](#), and [Indeed.ca](#), government job postings including, [Public Service Commission](#) and [Civic Jobs](#), and not for profit postings, including [Work in Nonprofits](#), and [Impactpool](#).

- The [Canadian Association for Graduate Studies](#) has produced a professional skills development document for graduate students. This document offers information on the principles for developing professional skills in the university context, identifying professional skills areas, and the criteria for selecting professional skills areas for national inventory.

- [SFU’s Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website provides information regarding employment, including about teaching, research, co-op, work-study, and volunteering.
SFU RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTORS

1. The **SFU Health and Counselling** website is an excellent resource for both TAs and students.

2. The **SFU Student Learning Commons** provides students with help in academic writing, learning and studying strategies.

3. **SFU Women’s Centre** offers services to students of all genders including crisis referrals and peer support, access to a feminist library, free safer sex and menstrual supplies, food support and more.

4. **SFU Out on Campus** offers services including a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ students and their allies, a comprehensive LGBTQ+ library, peer support and crisis referrals, free safe sex resources, and more.

5. The **SFU Teaching and Learning Centre** includes information and resources useful for instructors at SFU.

6. **SFU Guide for Instructors** outlines a variety of important information including an overview of teaching and learning at SFU, details about preparing for and teaching a class, working with TAs, interacting with students, professional development, and the maintenance of a work/life balance.
TEACHING-RELATED WORKSHOPS AT SFU

1. **TA/TM Day: The Teaching Orientation Program** is a one day orientation at SFU that helps prepare incoming TAs and TMs for their role.

2. The **Instructional Skills Workshop** is a multi-day workshop offered at SFU and other institutions that is aimed at developing teaching and instructional skills.

3. The **Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning** is a semester-long course that covers a range of topics related to teaching at the university level.

4. Upcoming SFU Workshops are often listed [here](#) and cover a variety of topics.
SFU RESOURCES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

1. **SFU International Student Advising and Programs** provides resources, including instructional guides and video resources related to working on and off campus, medical insurance, immigration, and non-immigration topics.

2. The **SFU Student Learning Commons** provides students with help in academic writing, learning, and studying strategies.

3. The **Navigating Your Undergraduate Studies** page has plans to help students decide which courses to take and when to take them, along with resources that will help them succeed.

4. **Criminology Program Completion Check Sheets** provide a helpful checklist for each Criminology program to help track progress.

5. **SFU Academic Advising** has academic advisors that can help students with questions they might have about their academic career.

6. The **SFU Health and Counselling** website is an excellent resource for both TAs and students.

7. **SFU Women’s Centre** offers services to students of all genders including crisis referrals and peer support, access to a feminist library, free safer sex and menstrual supplies, food support and more.

8. **SFU Out on Campus** offers services including a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ students and their allies, a comprehensive LGBTQ+ library, peer support and crisis referrals, free safe sex resources, and more.
APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF PRESENTATION RUBRICS

Example #1: Tutorial presentation rubric
Source: Originally created by Sheri Fabian & adapted by Danielle Murdoch

The categories for the presentation will be graded on a scale of 1-5. Half-marks can be assigned by circling two numerical values (e.g., by circling 4 and 5 you are assigning a 4.5):

1 = Poor  |   2 = Needs Improvement  |   3 = Satisfactory  |   4 = Good  |   5 = Excellent

Content and Clarity
- How well did the students teach their classmates the information?
- Was the presentation easy to understand?

Relevance to the Course
- How well have the students incorporated the course and required outside resources?
- Have the students demonstrated their understanding of the course readings and lectures by incorporating references to the course material?

Presentation Format & Delivery
- How well is the material presented?
- Consider the overall tone, pace, volume, and clarity.
- Did the student show up prepared to present? Correct technology? Copies of their presentations in multiple locations? Compatible technology?

Use of visual aids
- This is an evaluation of the student’s PowerPoint presentation – did the students edit their slides?

Creativity
- How is the material coordinated and packaged?
Facilitation of Discussion
- Did the students create and ask 2-3 open-ended, critical, engaging questions?
  - Note: open-ended questions cannot be answered with a simple yes/no.
- Did the students prompt their classmates for further explanation?

Timing
- Did the students meet the required length: presentation (XX minutes) and discussion period (XX minutes)?

Summary
- Did the student provide their TA with a copy of their PowerPoint presentation?
- Did the students include a separate piece of paper (typed, double-spaced), including:
  - Top left corner of the page: their name + on the line below, the title and author of the chapter.
  - 3-4 sentence summary of the presentation.
  - Their 2-3 discussion questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT NAMES:</th>
<th>DATE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOPIC:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Poor | 2 = Needs Improvement | 3 = Satisfactory | 4 = Good | 5 = Excellent
---|---|---|---|---|---|
Content & clarity | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Relevance to the course | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Presentation format & delivery | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Use of visual aids | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Creativity | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Facilitation of discussion | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Timing | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Summary | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Total | /40 points |

/Total out of 10

Comments:
Example #2: Group presentation rubric
Source: Hilary Todd

Name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Presentation Topic: ____________________________

PRESENTATION STYLE /4:

- Speaking ability
- Engaging the audience
- Presentation layout/design
  - Easy to read
  - Minimal text
  - Creative use of visuals
- Group organization
- Preparation

CJS PROBLEM ANALYSIS /7:

- Demonstrated understanding of the selected topic/contemporary problem
  - Evidence of research and course knowledge
- Provided a concise, but comprehensive explanation of their problem
- Identified and explained specific policy action plan
- Description and evaluation of policy
- Link to course themes and critical thought demonstrated

ADHERENCE TO CRITERIA /4:

- Presented in allotted time (no longer than 15 minutes, no shorter than 12)
- Followed structure – Intro, Background, Discussion, Conclusion (or some version of this)
- Selected a policy
- Used an appropriate visual aid

TOTAL SCORE: ____________________________
Example #3: Tutorial presentation rubric
Source: Tamara O’Doherty

Tutorial Assignment Evaluation Criteria

Please note that late assignments will have 10% per day deducted from the grade. Also, you should familiarize yourself with SFU’s policy regarding academic honesty and take the interactive tutorial, *Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism*, available through the library and linked through Canvas.

**Presentation (15%)**
15 minute presentation (including class discussion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance</td>
<td>Demonstrated understanding of the main content of the case(s), legal issue(s) and answer to the question.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion</td>
<td>Quality of class discussion questions and facilitation of discussion.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Presentation</td>
<td>Assessment of the student’s presentation skills, organization, and delivery of the material.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF PARTICIPATION RUBRICS

## Example #1: Participation rubric

Source: Connie Mayer

Professor Connie Mayer  
Albany Law School  
Legal Profession – Spring 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Elements or Criteria</th>
<th>Inadequate (0 point)</th>
<th>Developing but below expectations (1 point)</th>
<th>Accomplished/Meets Expectations (2 points)</th>
<th>Exemplary/Displays Leadership (3 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Engagement and active participation</td>
<td>Student never contributes to class discussion; fails to respond to direct questions</td>
<td>Four contributions to class discussion; seldom volunteers but responds to direct questions</td>
<td>Proactively contributes to class discussion, asking questions and respond to direct questions</td>
<td>Proactively and regularly contributes to class discussion; initiates discussion on issues related to class topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Skills</td>
<td>Does not listen when others talk, interrupts, or makes inappropriate comments</td>
<td>Does not listen carefully and comments are often nonresponsive to discussion</td>
<td>Listens and appropriately responds to the contributions of others</td>
<td>Listens without interrupting and incorporates and expands on the contributions of other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of Contribution to topic under discussion</td>
<td>Contributions are off topic or distract from class discussion</td>
<td>Contributions are sometimes off topic or distracting</td>
<td>Contributions are always relevant</td>
<td>Contributions are relevant and promote deeper analysis of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Student is not adequately prepared; Does not appear to have read the material in advance of class</td>
<td>Student has read the material but not closely or has read only some of the assigned material in advance of class</td>
<td>Student has read and thought about the material in advance of class</td>
<td>Student is consistently well-prepared; Frequently raises questions or comments on material outside the assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example #2: Participation rubric
Source: Liz Elliott

Have students create ‘name cards’ to display to ensure you allocate points correctly.

Grade tutorial participation during or immediately after tutorial; do not leave it until the end of the term. Keep track of attendance and participation in a notebook, using check marks to note attendance and each contribution towards participation. Input the daily participation points into an Excel spreadsheet.

Weekly tutorial participation is worth two points.

2 out of 2 = student actively participates in tutorial discussion in a manner that is respectful of others; demonstrates sound awareness of the content of the week’s readings and can tie this understanding to the group discussions; uses critical thinking skills.

1.5 out of 2 = student respects others; participates in tutorial discussions with an adequate awareness of the week’s readings and attempts to tie this understanding to the tutorial discussion; makes tentative efforts to use critical thinking.

1 out of 2 = student is in attendance but is not engaged with others in the tutorial; occasionally participates in tutorial discussion and demonstrates some awareness of the readings; hesitant attempts to link the reading materials to the tutorial discussion; some evidence of critical thinking.

.5 out of 2 = student attends but does not participate; demonstrates little to no awareness of reading materials; does not deploy critical thinking skills

0 out of 2 = student is absent without reasonable excuse, students engages in disrespectful behaviour towards a peer/the TA, or students is using hand-held devices during tutorial.
Example #3: Participation rubric  
Source: Sheri Fabian

SEMINAR PARTICIPATION SELF-EVALUATION

Name: _______________________________________

Please evaluate your own performance in seminars so far based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I complete all readings in advance of seminar.</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consistently complete my 10 liner in advance of seminar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I raise questions, comments, and issues relating to the readings in seminar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I engage with seminar questions raised by presenters and/or the instructor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am respectful of my colleagues in seminar, the views they express, and their right to speak.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I estimate that my participation grade is currently around (CIRCLE Letter grade):

- **A+** : excellent participation; do all of required readings and 10 liners; attend every session, raise and discuss issues; fully engage with the class
- **A** : Good participation; do most of required readings and 10 liners; attend nearly every session, raise and discuss issues most of the time; engage with the class
- **B+** : Satisfactory participation; do some of required readings and 10 liners; attend most of the sessions, raise and discuss issues most of the time; remain interested but rarely speak
- **D** : Pass grade only. I came, I heard, but I didn’t really participate in the proceedings.

Comments:

Comments from instructor:
APPENDIX C: EXAMPLES OF GROUP WORK RUBRICS

Example #1: Group work peer evaluation rubric
Source: Lara Aknin and available from SFU Health & Counselling, Health Promotion

Peer Evaluation Form for Group Work

Student's name:
Write the name of each of your group members in a separate column. For each person, indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement on the left, using a scale of 1-4 (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree). Total the numbers in each column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Group Member</th>
<th>Group Member</th>
<th>Group Member</th>
<th>Group Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attends group meetings regularly and arrives on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes meaningfully to group discussions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes group assignments on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares work in a quality manner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a cooperative and supportive attitude.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes significantly to the success of the project.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL

Feedback on team dynamics:
1. How effectively did your group work?
2. Were the behaviors of any of your team members particularly valuable or detrimental to the team?
3. What did you learn about working in a group from this project that you will carry into your next group experience?

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Example #2: Group work self and peer evaluation rubric
Source: Hilary Todd

Name:

1. Please list your presentation group letter:

2. Please list your group members below:
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.

3. Please rank your group members’ performance on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). Remember that scores below 5 constitute a failing mark, so please be thoughtful and honest. In the space below, provide the group member’s name, their numerical score, and a brief justification for this score.
   a.
   
   b.
   
   c.
   
   d.

4. Please rank your own performance on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). Remember to be honest in your response. Provide a thoughtful justification for this score below.
### Example #3: Group work peer evaluation rubric

**Source:** Unknown

**Name:**

---

#### PEER EVALUATION RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>Extraordinary effort demonstrated; produced additional resources for the group</td>
<td>Competent, but not extraordinary; fully prepared; completed all agreed tasks</td>
<td>Minimal effort; minimal preparation; superficial knowledge of resources</td>
<td>No effort shown; little or no evidence of preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Exceptionally positive and constructive; encouraged other group members</td>
<td>Positive; supportive; mostly constructive and upbeat</td>
<td>Neither encouraging nor discouraging; disinterested in the work of others</td>
<td>Disparaging; negative, withdrawn or belligerent; absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Shared many ideas; encouraged all group members to share their ideas; listened attentively to others</td>
<td>Freely shared ideas; listened to others; considered other people’s ideas</td>
<td>Shared ideas when encouraged; allowed sharing by all group members; listened to others; considered other people’s ideas</td>
<td>Did not share ideas; watched but did not contribute to discussions; did not show consideration for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>Outstanding contribution; above-and-beyond; work was excellent in form and substance; a leader who contributed a lot of effort</td>
<td>Good quality work; few revisions or additions were necessary; a strong group member who worked hard</td>
<td>Poor quality work; substantive errors; much revision and editing was required; a satisfactory group member who did what was required</td>
<td>Poor quality; little, if any, contribution to group goals; let other group members do the work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please evaluate the work of each member of your group, including yourself, using the rubric above.

Be sure to include each group member’s name, circle the appropriate number on the scale for each criterion, and write any additional comments in the space below the scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group Member: ______________</th>
<th>Group Member: ______________</th>
<th>Group Member: ______________</th>
<th>Myself: ______________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
<td>4  3  2  1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please write any additional comments about each group member’s contribution in this space.

Additional comments about the distribution of work in your group, or any problems encountered:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX D: EXAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK RUBRICS

Example #1: Written work rubric
Source: Originally created by Sheri Fabian & adapted by Danielle Murdoch

Use the grading scale as you allocate a score for each category. A C or C+ is ‘satisfactory/average’ quality work whereas B range grades are good and A range grades are excellent. This means you should assign a C or a C+ when someone writes an average introduction, an average conclusion, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>Excellent performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Good performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>Marginal performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Fail. Unsatisfactory performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the grading scale located on the next page to allocate a score for each category in the rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT NAME</th>
<th>5 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do they state their objective (i.e., thesis statement)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the introduction introduce the topic and provide a useful framework for the paper?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• See the grading scale below and allocate a score out of 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration of outside academic sources</th>
<th>20 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Did the student integrate the required number of outside sources?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider allocating X number of points for each required outside source; for example, if the students are required to include 4 outside sources, value each at 5 points. This makes it easy to calculate this score. To illustrate, if they have only included two outside sources, the maximum score they can receive in this section is 10/20.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linked to course themes / lecture content  
- Did the student integrate the course text and reading materials?  
- See the grading scale below and allocate a score out of 10  

Discussion: Student’s Ideas, Commentary, and Inclusion of Critical Analysis  
- Does the student provide a meaningful discussion of their topic or does it read more like an annotated bibliography or a series of disjointed sections?  
- How original is the approach? Is there some evidence of originality and critical thinking?  
- Do they integrate their sources within the discussion by using these materials as evidence to support their arguments?  
- Do they discuss their assumptions / other possible interpretations?  
- See the grading scale below and allocate a score out of 40.  

Conclusion  
- Does the conclusion summarize findings/arguments?  
- When applicable, did they address unanswered Qs, identify policy changes required, offer recommendations?  
- See the grading scale below and allocate a score out of 5.  

Grammar/Style/Organization  
- Have students spell checked and proofread their work?  
- Is the paper structured in a logical way making it easy for you to follow the arguments?  
- See the grading scale below and allocate a score out of 10.  

Referencing/Use of APA  
- You are be very specific in identifying where points will be deducted. For example, you might choose to deduct 2 points for students failing to include an APA title page and 1 point for students not using headings correctly.  
- Alternatively, you might choose to use the grading scale below to calculate their performance on a scale of 1-10.  

Total /100 points
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>40/20</th>
<th>/5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marginal performance</th>
<th>Minimum acceptable work. Below a passing level. Serious flaws in content.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor organization and style. Poor comprehension of the subject and minimal engagement in written tasks and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate use of the literature and course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weaknesses in content, style, and organization. Minimal critical awareness of engagement in the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows fair comprehension of the subject but has some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good performance. Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate use of the literature and course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good use of existing knowledge on the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows some degree of critical thinking and organization in written tasks and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent performance. Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization, and style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example #2: Written work rubric
Source: Tamara O’Doherty

ASSIGNMENT
Provide a legal analysis, outlining the relevant Criminal Code sections, legal principles and case law for each of the following:
- How the court would assess whether the accused should be found NCRMD.
- The appropriate disposition, in the event of a NCRMD finding.

INSTRUCTIONS
Write a 4 page memo (approx. 1500 words) to demonstrate your skill at applying relevant law to the scenario. Students should use the course text, lecture materials, and primary legal sources (legislation and cases); no additional research is required. Students are expected to employ appropriate language, grammar throughout their written work. Students will need to fully reference all cases and statutes cited within text per APA Legal Style (Style guide available in Canvas; also, use your text as an example of stylistic requirements). Students will also find a memo template on Canvas.

EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria of Evaluation</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance (50%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated understanding of the main content of case(s) and relevant legal issue. Students must identify, describe, and apply the relevant sections of the Criminal Code and related jurisprudence. Students should use case law, the text, the legislation and possible class notes (as an additional source). Legal principles must be fully described, with the correct legal tests referenced and applied. Newer or developing law ought to be mentioned (specifically the NCR Reform Act), and students must show an understanding of how the case would proceed through all stages of the process (fitness through to review board).</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>(0-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation &amp; Critique (25%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of the student’s personal interpretation of the law and the answer to the question(s) posed. Here, students need to demonstrate their understanding of whether the application would be likely to succeed and why. Students ought to provide a detailed application, indicating what factors would be considered by the court in determining each legal test. Students’ final determinations of success of NCRMD application should be well-supported by their arguments and address policy grounds.</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Writing (25%)</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of the student’s grammar, style, structure and</td>
<td>Developing but below expectations</td>
<td>(1.25-1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>referencing.</td>
<td>Accomplished/ Meets Expectations</td>
<td>(1.75-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are expected to write in full formal APA style,</td>
<td>Exemplary/Displays leadership</td>
<td>(2.25-2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with APA legal style (guide online) followed. The paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ought to follow the template memo style and stay within close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proximity to the word count (within 100 words). Students will</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be graded on the basis of their ability to support their</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arguments in a coherent fashion, relying on appropriate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evidence wherever possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example #3: Written work rubric
Source: Tamara O’Doherty

**Written response (15%)**
1,500 word formal essay, to be submitted online via Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance</td>
<td>Demonstrated understanding of the main content of case(s) and relevant legal issue.</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation &amp; Critique</td>
<td>Assessment of the student’s personal interpretation of the law and the answer to the question posed.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Writing</td>
<td>Assessment of the student’s grammar, style, structure and referencing.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students should consult the Referencing Guide available on Canvas and the library (Subject Guide: Criminology: Legal Information) for specifics on writing a legal paper.
### Example #4: Written work rubric
Source: Hilary Todd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction (2.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clear introductory points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clear and concise thesis statement and plan of development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Argument (7.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provides three main topics/points substantiating thesis statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Points backed up with the appropriate academic literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion (2.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clearly summarizes key points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Offers thoughtful concluding statements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References (2.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A minimum of 5-7 academic sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Quality and relevant academic sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formatting (2.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Follows APA formatting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style and Grammar (2.5 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proper sentence structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Paper flows smoothly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Few grammatical errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDIX E: RELEVANT ARTICLES

Example #1: Empowering students to create safety in the classroom
When teaching provocative, controversial, or potentially divisive topics, course instructors have a responsibility to empower students to create safety in the classroom and a healthy classroom community that supports student engagement and dialogue.

Why Is Safety Important?

While there is considerable controversy regarding the role of trigger warnings, despite current debates, we must acknowledge the diverse backgrounds our students bring to our classrooms and the potential for discussions of provocative and controversial topics to trigger our students. In light of these possibilities, we argue that our obligation to ensure student safety is paramount: but we also recognize that a safe environment should not be equated with comfort. Rather than shying away from challenging and difficult discussions, as much as is possible, we prepare our students to feel discomfort and emotion, and warn them that they may struggle with difficult materials. Creating a safe classroom environment, in person or online, requires genuine listening and interaction with others, empathy, and respectful discussion that acknowledges differences in life experiences and in opinions. All of these aspects reflect the principles of empowering students and creating learning environments that celebrate diversity, accessibility and inclusivity in the classroom.

How Do We Create Safety?

Include a statement in your course syllabus about the difficult nature of the course content, and support services and resources available to students. Consider including:

- A statement about the specific issues addressed in the course (e.g., inequality, marginalization and discrimination, interpersonal violence, trauma).
- A statement acknowledging the fact that some students will have a personal connection to the course material (e.g., mental illness, sexual violence).
- A statement about your role and limitations as an instructor (e.g., you may be able to help students access support, but may not be a trained counsellor).
- A statement about where students can access support, if needed (e.g., campus-based health and counselling services, 24/7 community-based crisis line, campus SafeWalk program — especially if you are teaching a night course). Provide details such as links to relevant websites, direct phone numbers, hours, and locations.
Develop classroom engagement guidelines for the course with your students early on. These should be developed as a group and revised/revisited as needed. For example:

- Be respectful, non-judgmental, open-minded, inclusive, empathic.
- Be mindful of body language, tone, language (e.g., stigmatizing/decolonizing).
- Be cautious about assumptions/stereotypes – never assume a student does or does not have first-hand experience with the subject matter.
- Maintain confidentiality of others ("What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas!").

How Do We Motivate Students to Engage?

Engage students through readings, films and video, guest speakers, and field trips.

- Be aware of the impact of these tools when the subject matter is sensitive.
- Listen to student feedback, reflect on their value and impact of the learning tools, and reconsider their inclusion if necessary.
- Build in time to debrief and check-in with students in the classroom or online. Debriefing is as important for you as an instructor as it is for your students!
- When showing emotionally difficult films, bring Kleenex to give students permission to have emotional reactions in the classroom, turn the lights out so students have more privacy and feel safer expressing their emotions, develop a way for students to signal to you that they would like support if they leave the classroom, and position yourself near an exit to make this easy for them.

How Do We Prepare For Students’ Responses?

Help students prepare for their own potential emotional reactions to difficult material.

- Provide ‘trigger warnings’ before exposing students to potentially traumatizing material. Provide detailed information about upcoming readings, films, guest speakers, field trips (e.g., website links, what to expect in terms of exposure).
- Give students permission to keep themselves safe (e.g., leave the room, close their eyes, miss class or activity).

Prepare yourself for anticipated and unanticipated students’ responses.

- Accept that you are taking a risk, be prepared for unanticipated responses (including your own emotional reactions) and be attentive to signs of distress.
- Make yourself available to students (e.g., be prepared to stay after class, hold additional office hours).
- Remember you do not need to have all the answers but you should be prepared to listen and refer the student to accessible services that can provide support.

How Do We Support Students’ Processing?

Develop assignments that encourage reflection (e.g., critical reflections, journal assignments, ‘five-liners’).

- Provide options for students who do not feel comfortable with assignments based on difficult material.
Review the literature on the evaluation of critical reflection assignments.
Make sincere comments on critical reflections (e.g., validate experiences shared, acknowledge the trust they have placed in you) and treat these as confidential.

Build time into class for discussion. Not only does dialogue help maintain safety in the classroom, but it also give students an opportunity to process material.

**How Do We Close the Space?**

Invite students to share their reflections in class at the end of the course. Ideally, the classroom is set up in a circle or square so that students face one another. Always give students the right to pass. Ask questions such as:

- What has been your biggest learning, or take-away, from the course?
- What is one thing you plan to do to address this topic (e.g., gender-based violence, stigma/discrimination) in your community (broadly defined)?

Offer students opportunities to reflect and engage on the course as a whole.

- Invite students to reflect on their engagement with, and relationship to, the course content through a participation self-evaluation.
- Thank students for their contributions throughout the course and invite them to connect after the course is complete.

**Additional Resources**


Example #2: Creating a culturally inclusive classroom environment

GIHE Good Practice Resource Booklet – Designing Culturally Inclusive Learning and Teaching Environments - Classroom Strategies

Creating a Culturally Inclusive Classroom Environment

A culturally inclusive classroom is one where students and staff alike recognise, appreciate and capitalise on diversity so as to enrich the overall learning experience. Fostering a culturally inclusive learning environment encourages all individuals – regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or political beliefs – to develop personal contacts and effective intercultural skills. The following pages describe some useful strategies for establishing a classroom environment characterised by cultural inclusivity, mutual respect, and genuine appreciation of diversity.

Figure 2. Recommended strategies to assist with creating a culturally inclusive classroom

Strategies, Tips and Good Practice Examples

Engage in Positive Interactions with Students

- Establish an introduction system or “meet-and-greet” process that enables students and staff to gain information about the cultural backgrounds of others, and the diversity of experience in the classroom (e.g., ice-breaker activities in the first week of semester). For example, consider a “name activity” that encourages students to talk about the origins of their name, how they came to be given it, or what it means. This can help to encourage interaction between students, as well as opening up discussion about diversity.

- It is important to celebrate similarities, as well as discovering differences between students. Refer to the GIHE document “Managing Intercultural Conflict Productively” for suggestions about activities that promote discovery of common interests and shared experiences between students to help build cohesiveness in the group.

- Promote computer and information technologies as an easily accessible method of student-lecturer interaction, particularly electronic bulletin boards, course mailing lists, and other online mediums.

- At the start of each semester, provide students with some information about your teaching style and instructional methods, perhaps on lecture slides or on your own website. Include details of your cultural background and any cross-cultural teaching, learning or research experiences you have had.

- Communicate to your students that you are committed to understanding cultural differences and understanding your own assumptions, values and beliefs associated with diversity. This sends a message to students that culture is valued and respected in the classroom.

- Provide opportunities for your students to interact with you informally. Before and after lectures or tutorials is an ideal time.
APPENDIX F: TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST TUTORIAL

Before tutorial:

- Ask the course instructor to email you a copy of the course roster from go.sfu.ca.
  - Download the course roster, save it as an Excel file, and create separate pages for each tutorial section (e.g., D101, D102) within the single Excel spreadsheet. Print copies of each page to take attendance at the first tutorial. To take attendance, ask students to write their preferred names and student numbers on a name tent/card and write a check mark next to their name on the course roster you printed, or bring a blank page and circulate it as an attendance sheet for students to sign in to tutorial. Consider packing some extra paper and pens for the students to use.

- Go to your tutorial room(s) ahead of time; will you need chalk, white board markers, and/or erasers? Ask for these items from the General Office/Undergraduate Secretary at the School of Criminology general office (Burnaby campus), or from the FASS Program Assistant in SUR5180 (Surrey campus).
  - If you require A/V equipment (e.g., computers, projectors, etc.) you can book ‘all semester requests’ at Burnaby campus (Office locations: AQ and West Mall, so pick the location closest to your tutorial rooms). A/V equipment is built-in at SFU Surrey campus.

- Establish and write down your expectations of the students and identify guidelines you expect them to follow in tutorial, via email, and during your office hours. Consider how you want to present these – electronically in a PPT, verbally, or by writing them on the whiteboard? Prepare materials accordingly.
  - Refer back to the section, “Fostering civility in the classroom” for various items to consider in establishing your expectations and guidelines. Ask the course instructor if they have any items they want you to add to your list.
  - Ask the course instructor for information re. how students can appeal their grades on assignments so you can describe this process in the first tutorial.
  - Consider whether you will allow students to ask questions before or after tutorial. This is very important when you only have 10 minutes between tutorials (or even lecture and tutorial) to switch rooms and/or to meet your own needs.

- Pick two or three icebreakers to complete during the first tutorial. Find ideas here.
The first tutorial:
  o Do your best to use gender-neutral language (e.g., “Good morning, Everyone!” or “Hello, Folks!” and use the terms ‘they,’ ‘them,’ ‘their,’ ‘theirs’, and ‘themselves’).
  
  o Introduce yourself – identify your preferred name and describe your educational background, research interests, and what you are most excited about in the course.
  
  o Have the students introduce themselves – go around the room and have them state their preferred name and identify their year of study, field of study, and what they hope to learn in the course. Alternatively, have the students introduce each other by having them complete icebreaker activity 1 or 2 from this list.
  
  o Facilitate the icebreakers you selected ahead of time (watch the clock to ensure you have time to complete the next tasks on the list).

Establish classroom guidelines – describe your expectations of the students (e.g., being on time for tutorial) and the non-negotiable guidelines (e.g., students are not allowed to ask you questions after tutorial to ensure you have time to meet your own needs) that you expect them to follow (the ones that you created prior to the first tutorial) and give the students the opportunity to share their expectations of each other and of you (e.g., reasonable student expectations include having a TA show up on time and organized for tutorial, and not interrupting a classmate). Other items to discuss:

  ▪ The format (in-person versus virtual), time, and location (if applicable) of your office hours.

  ▪ Should you choose not to allow students to ask questions before or after tutorial, communicate that ‘rule.’ Explain that you are concerned about protecting student privacy and you also have to meet your own needs (e.g., using the bathroom). Students appreciate transparency in why you do what you do in the classroom. Note that many faculty members have a similar policy, so your students should not be surprised by this request.

  ▪ Communicate the process of how students can appeal their grades on individual assignments in the course.

  o Complete any additional tasks the instructor has asked you to complete.

After every tutorial:

  o Make sure to document who attended the tutorial and their level of participation in accordance with the participation rubric. Keep all student information, including class lists, in secure systems (e.g., the SFU vault).