

SYLLABUS¹
PSYCH 3AG3: PSYCHOLOGY OF AGING
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour
McMaster University
Winter, 2019

Class Time & Location:

Mondays, 9:30 - 11:20
DSB AB102

Tutorial Time & Locations:

Fridays, 3:30 - 4:20
Locations TBA

Instructor:

Dr. Mitchell LaPointe
Email: lapoimrp@mcmaster.ca
Office: PC 148

Teaching Assistants:

Raha Hassan: hassar@mcmaster.ca
Hasan Siddiqui: siddih6@mcmaster.ca
Victoria Foglia: fogliav@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION. This course is designed to give you a taste of the psychological research and theory on normal (healthy) aging. We will begin the course with a discussion of how stereotypes about the aging process affect aging populations. We will then focus on how aging impacts intelligence, information processing, and personality—three variables associated with strong, negative aging-related stereotypes. We will end with a discussion of factors associated with successful aging, including the roles of social relationships, emotion regulation, and physical fitness.

Note: This syllabus has two parts. **Part I** includes a description of the academic aspects of this course (basic course requirements, readings, and important dates); **Part II** (beginning on page 9) includes a description of the various administrative aspects of this course (email, website, recording, and absence policies).

PART I: COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READINGS. You will find a list of required readings beginning on page 5 of this syllabus. These readings are meant to supplement lectures and to stimulate class discussion (through their use in discussions run by you). You should complete all assigned readings *prior* to attending lecture and *prior* to attending your tutorial group. This will ensure that you get the most out of the lectures and discussions.

The easiest way to find your readings is to use *Google Scholar*. Go to *Scholar's* homepage. At the top of the page, you will find a link to “Settings”. Select that. This will take you to a page with a menu along its left-hand side: select “Library links”. Type McMaster University into the textbox. Now that you’ve done this, articles available at Mac will have the tag “get it @ Mac” next to them; sometimes articles are available in the public domain—these links will also be visible. Sometimes, *Scholar* fails you. When that happens, it’s time to go to the McMaster Library, and find the *PsychInfo* database, and search for the article there. *PsychInfo* almost never fails you.

Please think of *all* the information provided on the course website (Avenue to Learn; *A2L*) as *required* reading. Everything posted on *A2L* is fair game for tests, including the syllabus, the course FAQ (which gives tips on how to perform optimally on tests), and a handful of articles I have posted on note-taking and studying.

Please Note: This syllabus—including scheduling, topic order, topics themselves, and evaluation strategy—is subject to change if circumstances warrant (e.g., TA loss, “snow days”).

EVALUATION. Your final mark will be based on your performance in discussion groups (@ 35%), and on two tests (one midterm @ 30% and one cumulative final exam @ 35%).

DISCUSSION GROUPS. These groups are designed to give you a chance to direct your own learning, and will be held on Fridays from 3:30 - 4:20. There are three assessment elements involved in the discussion groups:

I. Assignments. (Value: 15%). At least 6 times this term, you will submit, to *A2L*'s "assignments" folder, a document containing at least one thoughtful discussion comment or question relevant to that week's discussion group readings.

You can submit anywhere between 6 and 9 assignments (this is entirely up to you). We will use your best six submissions towards your final grade (with missed submissions and late submissions counting as a 0).

You cannot submit assignments on days when you are the presenter, so choose your dates wisely.

Here are all ten possible assignment dates (with assignments due to *A2L* by midnight the night before):

January	February	March	April
18	1	1	5
25	8	15	
	15	22	
		29	

The primary goals of these assignments are:

1. to help you engage with the readings
2. to support presenters' attempts to lead a discussion about their articles
3. to help your TA get a sense of the extent to which you have thought about and understood the readings.

The questions/comments you present in your assignments can take many forms, but should always add something new to the picture (i.e., not just a rehashing of whats in the readings). Here are a few examples:

1. You might want to comment on methodology. For example, you might wonder whether a different manipulation (IV) or measure (DV) might change things, or whether a different participant pool would react in the same way as did the participant pool used by the authors.
2. You might have spotted flaws in an article. For example, you might believe that the authors' conclusions are not warranted because they did not control for some important variable.
3. You might think that an article's methodology or theoretical stance was particularly unique or clever, and you can comment on why you think the authors are ingenious
4. You might want to tie an article in to some current or historical event (e.g., news, history, politics, etc.).
5. You might have noted a tie between an article and some popular culture product (e.g., a movie, TV show, song, novel, etc.).
6. You might have noticed that an article has contradicted something from another assigned reading, or from lecture.
7. You might have a clarification question—though you should strive not to ask these too often, because they tend not to move discussion forward very much.

Formatting and handing in your assignments. Please follow these guidelines exactly.

1. Use 12 point font, single or double spaced (your preference)
2. Aim to produce somewhere between 200 and 300 words. Think of 200 words as a loose lower limit (meaning 150 words once or twice won't kill you), and 300 words as a *strict* upper limit.
3. Include a word count, along with your name, at the top of your document.
4. Hand in your submission as a Word document, and upload it to the appropriate "Assignments" folder on *A2L* (under the "Assessments" tab).
5. Your document should be named as follows: "YourLastName DiscX". So, for Discussion 2, I'd hand in "LaPointe Disc2".
6. Hand the document in over *A2L*² by 11:59 PM on the night before each of the 10 dates listed above (e.g., for the discussion group to be held on Friday, January 25, you would hand in your document by Thursday, January 24 by 11:59 PM).

Grading: Your TA will assess your assignments based on the extent to which they show thought and engagement with the readings and with class materials. Does the assignment make it clear that you've given the readings (and class materials) some thought? Or does it seem likely that you started reading the paper 10 minutes before the submission deadline? Students who consistently submit thoughtful, engaged questions and comments will tend to do very well in this aspect of the course. Each submission will be marked on a 3 point scale, where 1 = acceptable, 2 = good, 3 = excellent. Note, you will earn a zero (0) for unacceptable (little-to-no thought or coherence) and late submissions. (MSAFs will not be accepted for this component of the course³).

2. Participation. (Value 5%). Your participation mark will reflect your discussion inputs on days when you are *not* presenting an article. This participation can take on any number of forms: bringing up something you wrote in your assignment, commenting on others' inputs, answering others' questions, and/or generating new questions as you listen to the presentation (for more information on how this aspect of your participation will be evaluated, see "participation rubric", under "course documents" on *A2L*).

3. Article Presentation. (Value 15%). Each of you will present and discuss one reading this term. You may choose to do more than one article presentation, if you would like: in that case, the better of your two presentations will be used in calculating your presentation grade; additionally, your best 5 comments will be used in calculating your *assignments* grade (instead of best 6).

Presentation dates will be assigned randomly, by your TA, with 2-3 students presenting each week. However, you are free to switch dates with another student, if you assigned date is horrible for you. If you make a switch, please let your TA know about the switch immediately!

Although your presentation date will have been selected by your TA, you can select which article you wish to present. Please email your TA *at least* one week before your presentation date to indicate your preference (two or more weeks is better); article choice will be done on a first-come, first-served basis (i.e., if you request an article that someone else has already requested, then you are out of luck, and must choose a different article).

Each presenter will have about 10 minutes to present their article and answer clarification questions (you should therefore time your presentation to be about 8 minutes long). The last 20 or so minutes of tutorial will be dedicated to a general discussion, meant to tie the articles together into a coherent story. The article presenters can choose to meet up before their presentations to discuss how they'd like to approach the general discussion, but this is not necessary (the choice is yours).

²Please note that the originality checker will be turned on in the assignments box—be sure to follow McMaster's Academic Integrity guidelines in producing these documents. You can find a blurb on these guidelines in Part II of the syllabus

³There are 9 opportunities to hand these in, and only the best 6 are used, and so you would have to MSAF 4 of these in order to get an accommodation!

I recommend that you prepare *Powerpoint* slides for your presentation. These should contain very little text (don't read your slides!), but are useful in keeping your presentation structured and easy to follow.

The presentations must do the following:

1. Summarize the main arguments and findings (where relevant) of the article.
2. Tie the article to class materials (when possible).
3. Tie the article to a current events (news) story. The news story you choose can come from any news source (e.g., newspaper, magazine/e-zine), but if you're stuck the *New York Times* often publishes articles on aging-related research and phenomena.

In other words, you will be telling us how your article can help us gain insight into some aspect of the psychology of aging, by incorporating the article with lectures and with the real world.

Some pointers for generating discussion: At the end of your presentation, you will be expected to get a discussion going. You should come prepared with a question or two to get things rolling. Note, questions like "What do you guys think?" and "Does anyone want to share their opinion?" are rarely useful for generating discussions. Try to be specific. For example, ask your peers whether they are aware of (other) current or historical events (or music, film, television, literature) relevant to your presentation—we all come into this course with different knowledge, interests, and backgrounds, and this could generate truly interesting discussions. Or, if some theory or experiment was discussed in lecture *after* you put together your presentation, and you think it relevant to your presentation, ask your peers to comment on it. If you don't get any responses during your discussion period, try rephrasing the question. Don't rush to give the answer yourself—if often takes people some time to formulate their responses. It may feel like an eternity when you're waiting for someone to respond, but be patient.

What you must hand in: Please hand in the script for your presentation (in whatever form it exists, whether fully scripted or bullets) on *ADL*⁴, under "Groups", and then "Assignments", by noon the day of your presentation (i.e., that Friday by 12:00 PM). The script should include links to any news article(s) you used.

Grading: Your presentation grade will be based on

1. How well you summarized your article.
 - a. Did you pick out relevant ideas and findings [good] or just summarize the whole article [bad]?
 - b. Did you present your information clearly and accurately?
2. How well you tied the article to class materials.
3. How well you tied the article to current events.
4. Your presentation style (including slides).
5. How well you answered questions

I have prepared a separate document with more information on presentation format and grading, available under "course documents" on *A2L*. Please make yourself familiar with that document.

Tests. Tests will consist mainly of written answer items (definitions, explanations, fill in the blanks), but may also include some multiple choice. They will assess your knowledge of details (key terms, definitions, data/results of studies and experiments), but will focus primarily on your conceptual understanding of, and ability to apply research and theories presented in the course. Rote memorization of the material will be not enough for most students to get more than a D or C in the course. Check out our *A2L* website for a FAQ with more details on what you can do to optimize your performance on tests.

⁴Ditto footnote 2 regarding originality checker and academic integrity

IMPORTANT DATES

Tests.

Midterm: Monday, March 4 in class.

Final Exam: To be scheduled by the Registrar.

Tutorial Group Meetings. The “presentations” column, below, indicates group meetings dates and also contains notes on which articles are to be used for each meeting. For example, Discussion 1 covers two topics (*Important Concepts* and *Research Methods*), and has 7 assigned articles, but only 4 of those articles are to be used for presentations.

TOPICS AND READINGS

A note on the readings. Keep an eye on *A2L* for any changes to the readings.

A note on dates. The “date” column is *theoretical*: I am not sure how long things will take, and may be off by a week or more at various points. I will keep you updated on our progress in class. Regardless of my accuracy re. lecture dates, the presentation dates are solid.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	PRESENTATIONS
Jan 7	Introductory Stuff	All course documents on <i>A2L</i> (under “content”), plus the FAQ (under “resources”). I have made the decision to assign these in the hope that, having read them, you will benefit from them. These are testable, just like all other readings in this course	
Week of Jan 14	Important Concepts in the Psychology of Aging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Baltes, P.B. (1987). Theoretical propositions of life-span developmental psychology: On the dynamics between growth and decline. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 23, 611-626. Baltes, P.B. (1997). On the incomplete architecture of human ontogeny: Selection, optimization, and compensation as foundation of developmental theory. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 52, 366-380. Isaacowitz, D.M. (2018). Planning for the future of psychological research on aging. <i>The Journals of Gerontology: Series B</i>, 73, 361-362. Chasteen, A.L., & Cary, L.A. (2015). Age stereotypes and age stigma: Connections to research on subjective aging. <i>Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics</i>, 35, 99-119. North, M.S., & Fiske, S.T. (2015). Modern attitudes toward older adults in the aging world: A cross-cultural meta-analysis. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 141, 993-1021. 	<p><u>Discussion 1:</u> Jan 25</p> <p>Presenters can use any of Readings 4 or 5 from <i>Concepts</i>, and Readings 2 or 3 from <i>Methods</i>.</p>

Week of Jan 21	Research Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schaie, K.W. (1965). A general model for the study of developmental problems. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 64, 92-170. 2. Knauper, B., Carriere, K., Chamandy, M., Xu, Z., Schwarz, N., & Rosen, N.O. (2016). How aging affects self-reports. <i>European Journal of Ageing</i>, 13, 1-9. 3. Luong, G., Charles, S.T., Rook, K.S., Reynolds, C.A., & Gatz, M. (2015). Age differences and longitudinal change in the effects of data collection mode on self-reports of psychosocial functioning. <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 30, 106-119. 	
Week of Jan 28	Stereotypes and Aging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Levy, B.R., & Leifheit-Limson, A. (2009). The Stereotype-Matching Effect: Greater influence on functioning when age stereotypes correspond to outcomes. <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 24, 230-233. 2. Hughes, M.L., Geraci, L., & De Forrest, R.L. (2013). Aging 5 years in 5 minutes: The effects of taking a memory test on older adults' subjective age. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 24, 2481-2488. 3. Barber, S.J., & Lee, S.R. (2015). Stereotype threat lowers older adults' self-reported hearing abilities. <i>Gerontology</i>, 62, 81-85. 4. Levy, B.R., Ferrucci, L., Zonderman, A.B., Slade, M.D., Troncoso, J., & Resnick, S.M. (2016). A culture-brain link: Negative age stereotypes predict Alzheimer's disease biomarkers. <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 31, 82-89. 	<p><u>Discussion 2:</u> Feb 1</p> <p>Presenters can use any of these 4 articles.</p>
	COGNITION	<p><u>Overviews (not for use as presentation/comments readings):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Salthouse, T.A. (1996). Constraints on theories of cognitive aging. <i>Psychonomic Bulletin & Review</i>, 3, 287-299. 2. Salthouse, T.A. (2004). What and when of cognitive aging. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 13, 140-144. 3. Stine-Morrow, E.A. (2007). The Dumbledore hypothesis of cognitive aging. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 16, 295-299. 	

<p>Week of Feb 4</p>	<p>Cognition 1: Intelligence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dickinson, M.D., & Hiscock, M. (2010). Age-related IQ decline is reduced markedly after adjustment for the Flynn Effect. <i>Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology</i>, 32, 865-870. 2. Bowles, R.P., & Salthouse, T.A. (2008). Vocabulary test format and differential relations to age. <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 23, 366-376. 3. Hall, P.A., Dubin, J.A., Crossley, M., Holmqvist, M.E., & D'Arcy, C. (2009). Does executive function explain the IQ-mortality association? Evidence from the Canadian study on health and aging. <i>Psychosomatic Medicine</i>, 71, 196-204. 	<p><u>Discussion 3:</u> Feb 8</p> <p>Presenters can use any of these 3 articles.</p>
<p>Week of Feb 11</p>	<p>Cognition 2: Information Processing</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Craik, F.I. (1994). Memory changes in normal aging. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 3, 155-158. 2. Craik, F.I. (2008). Memory changes in normal and pathological aging. <i>Canadian Journal of Psychiatry</i>, 53, 343-345. 3. Salthouse, T.A., & Pink, J.E. (2008). Why is working memory related to fluid intelligence? <i>Psychonomic Bulletin & Review</i>, 15, 364-371. 4. Jacoby, L.L., & Rhodes, M.G. (2006). False remembering in the aged. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 15, 49-53. 5. Danckert, S.L., & Craik, F.I. (2013). Does aging affect recall more than recognition memory? <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 28, 902-909. 	<p><u>Discussion 4:</u> Feb 15</p> <p>Presenters can use any of these 5 articles.</p>
<p>Week of Feb 25</p>	<p>Cognition 3: Individual Differences</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baltes, P.B., & Lindenberger, U. (1997). Emergence of a powerful connection between sensory and cognitive functions across the adult life span: A new window to the study of cognitive aging? <i>Psychology and Aging</i>, 12, 12-21. 2. Wingfield, A., Tun, P.A., & McCoy, S.L. (2005). Hearing loss in older adulthood: what it is and how it interacts with cognitive performance. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 14, 144-148. 3. Churchill, J.D., Galvez, R., Colcombe, S., Swain, R.A., Kramer, A.F., Greenough, W.T. (2002). Exercise, experience and the aging brain. <i>Neurobiology of Aging</i>, 23, 941-955. 4. Colcombe, S.J., Erickson, K.I., Scalf, P.E., Kim, J.S., Prakash, R., McAuley, E., ... & Kramer, A.F. (2006). Aerobic exercise training increases brain volume in aging humans. <i>The Journal of Gerontology, Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences</i>, 61, 1166-1170. 	<p><u>Discussion 5:</u> March 1</p> <p>One presenter should present Article 1 or 2, and the other should present Article 3 or 4.</p>

<p>Week of March 11</p>	<p>Personality</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jackson, J.J., Hill, P.L., Payne, B.R., Roberts, B.W., & Stine-Morrow, E.A. (2012). Can an old dog learn (and want to experience) new tricks? Cognitive training increases openness to experience in older adults. <i>Psychology and Aging, 27</i>, 286-292. 2. Ber, A.I., & Johansson, B. (2014). Personality change in the oldest-old: Is it a matter of compromised health and functioning? <i>Journal of Personality, 82</i>, 25-31. 3. Wethington, E. (2000). Expecting stress: Americans and the "midlife crisis". <i>Motivation and Emotion, 24</i>, 85-103. 4. Letzring, T.D., Edmonds, G.W., & Hampson, S.E. (2014). Personality change at mid-life is associated with changes in self-rated health: Evidence from the Hawaii personality and health cohort. <i>Personality and Individual Differences, 58</i>, 60-64. 	<p><u>Discussion 6:</u> March 15</p> <p>One presenter should present Article 1 or 2, and the other presenter should present Article 3 or 4.</p>
<p>Week of March 18</p>	<p>Social Networks and Close Relationships</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peters, A., & Liefbroer, A.C. (1997). Beyond marital status: Partner history and well-being in old age. <i>Journal of Marriage and the Family, 59</i>, 687-699. 2. Vanassche, S., Swicegood, G., & Matthijs, K. (2013). Marriage and children as a key to happiness? Cross-national differences in the effects of marital status and children on well-being. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies, 14</i>, 501-524. 3. Waldinger, R.J., & Schulz, M.S. (2016). The long reach of nurturing family environments: Links with midlife emotion-regulatory styles and late-life security in intimate relationships. <i>Psychological Science, 27</i>, 1443-1450. 	<p><u>Discussion 7:</u> March 22</p> <p>Presenters can use any of these 3 articles</p>
<p>Week of March 25</p>	<p>Successful Aging</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cartensen, L.L., Isaacowitz, D.M., & Charles, S.T. (1999). Taking time seriously: A theory of socioemotional selectivity. <i>American Psychologist, 54</i>, 165-181. 2. Gregory, T., Nettelbeck, T., & Wilson, C. (2010). Openness to experience, intelligence, and successful ageing. <i>Personality and Individual Differences, 48</i>, 895-899. 3. Mammarella, N., Di Domenico, A., Palumbo, R., & Fairfield, B. (2016). When green is positive and red is negative: Aging and the influence of color on emotional memories. <i>Psychology and Aging, 31</i>, 914. 4. Dogra, S., & Stathokostas, L. (2012). Sedentary behavior and physical activity are independent predictors of successful aging in middle-aged and older adults. <i>Journal of Aging Research.</i> 	<p><u>Discussion 8:</u> March 29</p> <p>Present Article 1 or 2.</p> <p><u>Discussion 9:</u> April 5</p> <p>Present Article 3 or 4.</p>

PART II: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Email Policy: Emails must originate from a valid McMaster account, and be sent to the teaching staff's McMaster accounts. Please *never send an email from the Avenue system*: I don't check my Avenue mail, and your TAs do not either.

Email sent from third-party providers will be ignored. McMaster University has this policy for *two important reasons*: (1) to ensure that we know with whom we are communicating; and (2) to teach the professional use of email. Note that emails to your professors are professional communications. They should (1) include correct spelling and punctuation, (2) have an *informative subject line*, and (3) be brief. If you want to write an email and you're also angry, do everyone a favour: take a deep breath, go on with your day, and send an email hours or days later (whatever it takes), when you are no longer angry.

Website Policy: You are expected to check our course website on *Avenue to Learn* regularly for announcements, updates, discussion board postings, and other valuable information. It is *your responsibility* to keep up with the information provided on this site.

Use of the website's **discussion boards** to ask content-related questions is strongly encouraged, first, because asking these questions in a public forum gives all students access to their answers, and second, because your peers might decide to attempt answers themselves, which is an excellent form of studying and knowledge checking.

Please see the top of each discussion board for directions on how to use the board. Posts that ignore these directions will be deleted. The professor reserves the right to *ban* students from the course website if they use the board inappropriately (e.g., posting inappropriate comments).

Finally, students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this courses, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Policy regarding the Recording of Lectures: If you feel that recording lectures will help you perform optimally in the course, then feel free to do so. You are especially encouraged to record lectures if you find my pacing a bit fast. HOWEVER: Consider the lectures **copyrighted material**: you **cannot post recordings anywhere online**, including on our Avenue website.

Cell Phones & Classroom Etiquette:

First, please be punctual. Late arrivals and early departures are very disruptive.

Second, I love my cell phone as much as you love yours, but please keep your phone *in your bag* during classes and presentations. Using your phone during class is distracting, and disruptive both to the speaker and to the students around you. Note that I do understand that special circumstances may arise. In those cases, please make arrangements with me at the beginning of class.

Third, laptops may be used during class. However, do not use anything other than note-taking programs (e.g., Word) during class. Using anything but note-taking with laptops is known to have a negative impact on learning; taking notes by hand is a better form of learning support, which you might benefit from (particularly if you can't help but check *Facebook* during class).

You will find empirical articles, under "learning support" in the "Content" section of *Avenue to Learn* that go into what I've said here in more detail. It is your responsibility to read and understand these articles.

Test-Taking Policy. Electronics must stay in your bag, turned off. If a phone rings or vibrates during a test, you will be penalized **5%** off your *final grade in the course*. The only things allowed on your desk and/or outside of your bag during testing sessions are pens, pencils, erasers, something to eat or drink if needed, tissues if needed, and your student ID.

Missed Tests: Report your absence to McMaster and to Dr. LaPointe **within 2 days of the missed test**. Failure to comply with the **two-days rule** could result in your earning a mark of zero on the missed test. Make-up tests are usually held during class time, on a day and location TBA.

In order to receive any sort of accommodation (e.g., makeup test), I must receive an official university email indicating that you've complied with university regulations, as well as your personal email requesting accommodation. I need not see medical notes or other documentation: the university will see those things, and pass on their confirmation of receipt to me.

How to report an absence to McMaster: In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, student should *carefully* review and follow the regulations outlined in the undergraduate calendar, "*Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work*". Any deviation from these regulations will result in a mark of "0" for the missed work. Note that you cannot simply "MSAF" the midterm in this course: the midterm is worth more than the maximum allowed for simple MSAFs without supporting documentation; any absence will require a visit to your Associate Dean's office before it can be accommodated.

How to report an absence to Dr. LaPointe: Send an email to Dr. LaPointe that does the following: (i) *briefly* explains why you've been forced to miss the test (less detail is best!); (ii) requests relief for the missed work, and (iii) indicates whether you have submitted documentation to the university, and if not, when that will be happening. The content of your email will be kept confidential.

What if you miss the make-up test? If you miss the make-up test, then you must document the absence (for the day of the official make-up, which will be announced on the *Avenue* website); once you have done that, you will be given a 70% final exam. Think carefully before missing a make-up test!

Missed Friday Discussion Group. It is best never to miss these, particularly if you're presenting. We will deal with absences on a case by case basis. You must notify your TA *immediately* if you must miss your presentation. If you do not get in touch with us within 24 hours of the missed Friday, then we will not accommodate your absence.

SAS Students. Please discuss your accommodations with Dr. LaPointe *early in the term* (the earlier the better), particularly if your accommodations are relevant to your participation in the Friday discussions aspect of this course.

Final Grade Calculations. Your final grade will be converted to a letter grade, according to the following scheme:

<u>Percentage (Grade)</u> 90-100 (A+)	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u> 77-79 (B+)	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u> 67-69 (C+)	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u> 57-59 (D+)
85-89 (A)	73-76 (B)	63-66 (C)	53-56 (D)
80-84 (A-)	70-72 (B-)	60-62 (C-)	50-52 (D-)
			0-49 (F)

Note: The instructor reserve the right to adjust final marks up or down, depending on overall performance in the course. Students *who do not pass the cumulative final*, or whose final exam mark is their *lowest mark* in the course, will *not* have their mark adjusted up under any circumstances.

Also Note: Your final mark is your final mark, unless a marking or mathematical error has been made. Special favours to one student are unfair to the multitude of students who neither ask for nor get those same favours. Therefore, if you are concerned about your final mark, it is your responsibility to visit with me or with one of your TA's, well in the advance of the final exam, for study help.

Academic Integrity. You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, for example, a grade of zero (0) on an assignment, loss of course credit with a notation on the transcript (“grade F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is *your* responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on academic dishonesty, please refer to McMaster’s Academic Integrity Policy, at [**http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity**](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).