

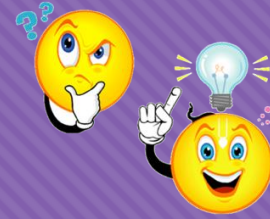
# Tips for Adjusting to Canadian Academic Culture

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# Opening Questions



- What's your name?
- Which courses are you taking this semester?
- How many of you are in the following categories (returning to studying after many years out of school, new to Canada/BC, recent high school graduate)?

# What is culture?

The word “culture” refers to the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society.



# Culture Shock

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFxKs-K70B8>

Culture shock is 'a feeling of confusion, doubt, or nervousness caused by being in a place (such as a foreign country) that is very different from what you are used to' (Merriam-Webster)



# Breakout Room Activity



Discuss the following questions with your partner:

1. What do you like most about your own culture?
2. Have you ever experienced culture shock? If so, can you give some examples?

# Symptoms of Culture Shock

- Culture shock is a normal reaction to a new and unknown environment.

<b>Homesickness</b>	<b>Irritability</b>
<b>Unexplained crying or feeling out of control</b>	<b>Suffering from body pains and aches</b>
<b>Changes in appetite/sleep</b>	<b>Boredom</b>
<b>Idealizing your own culture</b>	<b>Hostility and Stereotyping</b>

- May last 3 to 6 months

# Tips for Coping With Culture Shock

- **Give yourself time to adapt**
- Decorate your room with objects that remind you of home
- Stay in touch with family and friends from back home
- Talk to other students who can give you advice based on their own experiences.
- Take up a hobby that will help you learn more about Canada.
- Volunteer. It will help you get involved in the community
- Try to keep up with activities that help you relieve stress (e.g. exercise, writing in a journal etc.)



# Counselling Services



- If you experience any of these symptoms and this new transition seems overwhelming and is interfering with your studies or personal life, you can get help.
- Douglas College counsellors provide one-to-one support to students.
- You can book a video or phone appointment with them here:  
<https://www.douglascollege.ca/student-services/student-support/counselling/contact-us-counselling>



# What is “academic culture”?

- When we talk about **Canadian academic culture**, we refer to the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are shared and accepted by the people who work or study in Canadian post secondary institutions.
- When you first attended a Canadian college/university, did you find anything that was shocking to you compared to what you were used to ?

# Coping with A New Educational System

- Aspects of the Canadian academic culture might differ from the academic culture in your home country
- To succeed in Canadian post-secondary institutions, you need to **understand the new academic environment** and **adjust to its demands**

# Critical Thinking

Canadian classrooms value critical thinking. Learning is not simply memorizing information.

It is important to understand what the instructor and the assigned authors think but you also need to develop your own viewpoints by doing the following:

- Complete assignments
- Listen carefully to your instructor and classmates
- Raise your own questions and voice your own ideas

# Class Participation

Your participation shows your instructor that you are listening and thinking critically about the material

- Ask specific questions about concepts that you don't understand
- Try not to ask trivial questions or talk so much that it uses up planned lecture time or prevents other students from contributing
- Make use of your instructor's office hours to ask questions about the course, to get feedback on your work, etc.

# Classroom Discussion

- Most Canadians are sensitive to interruptions and are generally not comfortable with more than one person talking at the same time
- Generally, it is considered acceptable to join a conversation when there is a pause in the discussion
- Participate in class discussions (don't be afraid to make mistakes when you speak)
- It is not disrespectful to differ from faculty or classmates (be thoughtful and courteous)

# Class Preparation

- Read the course outline to understand the expectations of the course
- Come prepared for lectures, tutorials and labs by completing your required readings and any assigned pre-work beforehand
- Review your notes from the previous lecture
- Review the PowerPoint slides for your upcoming lecture

# During Class

- Take effective notes.
- Try to figure out what is important information. Look for principles, vital facts, main ideas, and things you think will show up on exams.

# Assignments

- Turn in assignments on time
- Hand in a difficult assignment even if it may not be your best work (it's better than not doing anything at all)
- Ask for an extension when needed



# English Language Tutors – Language Help

- If you find classroom participation challenging and you'd like to improve your speaking/listening skills, book an appointment with us English Language Tutors
- We work with you on a one-to-one basis
- We can also help you improve your reading comprehension skills and writing skills
- Make sure to bring a draft of your assignment to the appointment along with the assignment instructions

# Academic Integrity

Have you completed the “Academic Integrity” module on Blackboard?

# Academic Dishonesty

What is academic dishonesty?



# Academic Dishonesty

Presenting or submitting as one's own work the work, research, words, ideas, artistic imagery, arguments, calculations, illustrations or diagrams of another person or persons without explicit or accurate citation or credit; **this includes submission of purchased material as well as material in which the student has permitted someone else (a fellow student, tutor, mentor or teaching assistant, friend, etc.) to contribute unacknowledged.**

Douglas College Academic Integrity Policy <https://www.douglascollege.ca/sites/default/files/docs/finance-dates-and-deadlines/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20w%20Flowchart.pdf>

# Types of academic dishonesty:

## Intentional

- Copying a friend's work
- Buying or borrowing papers
- Cutting and pasting blocks of text from electronic sources without documenting
- Media "borrowing" without documentation



## Unintentional

- Careless paraphrasing
- Poor documentation

# Academic dishonesty: A Serious Offense

- Academic dishonesty can lead to a zero on the assignment, failure of the course or suspension.
- If you are repeat offender, it can lead to your expulsion from the college.
- The consequences are not worth the risks!
- It is only right to give credit to authors whose ideas you use.

# How to Avoid Academic Dishonesty

- Quoting
- Paraphrasing

# Quoting

- What is “quoting”?
- Quotations are the exact words of an author, copied directly from a source, word for word.
- Quotations must be cited! (As per the citation style your instructor has told you to use.)



# Paraphrasing

- What does “paraphrasing” mean?
- Paraphrasing means putting someone else’s words or ideas into your own words.
- Although you are using your own words, the ideas are taken from someone else and must be cited (both in-text and on your Works-Cited/References page at the end).

# Paraphrasing Properly

- Paraphrasing is not simply rearranging or rewording an original passage.
- You have to understand what the author is saying and **write the ideas entirely in your own words**
- Give the author credit when you quote or paraphrase.

*According to (the name of the author)...*

# Don't patch together quotations to speak for you.

*Kimmel (1990) pointed out that, "Socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, intelligence, gender, and race tend to operate in complex . . . ways to limit the range of occupations open to an individual" (p. 293). He explained that "educational background, contacts with a particular occupation through one's ethnic or religious groups and family members, and discrimination operate for or against an individual's movement into an occupation" (p. 293). He concluded that "the boundaries thus created are often unfair to particular groups of people (notably African Americans, Hispanics, and the poor)" (p. 294).*

Kimmel (1990) pointed out that a person's career options are often influenced in complex and unfair ways by diversity issues, such as gender, race, wealth, and access to influence networks.

# Paraphrasing Techniques

Combine the following techniques:

- Best Technique (first read and then cover the original – write the meaning without looking at the original)
- Keep only main ideas; delete everything else
- Change words (different words, same meaning)
- Change the sequence of ideas, or sentence structure

# Writing Tutors

**Book an appointment with a writing tutor** to help you check if you followed the assignment instructions, your thesis statement is clear and your essay is well-organized.

- First, discuss places in your paper where you are not sure you followed the academic writing conventions you are expected to.
- Then, ask the tutor to read over your work and point out any other areas of improvement.

# Quiz: Canadian Academic Culture

1. Although in some courses, you will need to memorize course terminology, memorization is not the most important skill in order for you to be successful in your courses. Which skill do your instructors encourage you to develop?
2. Is interrupting someone considered rude in Canada?
3. If you need to ask questions to your instructor outside the classroom, you can make use of their \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is considered a serious offense and can lead to a student's expulsion.
5. How to avoid the aforementioned offense? 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

# Quiz: Douglas College Services

1. If you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, which Douglas College service can help you?
2. If you need feedback on the language errors in your writing, who can help?
3. If you don't know how to write a strong thesis statement, who can help?
4. If you need citation related help, who can you go to?
5. If you want to improve your speaking skills, who can help?

# Reflection Activity

We have discussed some features of the Canadian academic culture. Compare them to your home country's academic culture.

- What are the differences and similarities?
- What about the Canadian system might be particularly challenging for you?



# Douglas College Services

- Tutoring Appointments with English Language Tutors (help with language/grammar issues):  
<https://douglas.mywconline.com/>
- Tutoring Appointments with Writing Tutors (help with writing related issues):  
<https://douglas.mywconline.com/>
- DC Counselling Services (Individual appointments with a counsellor):  
<https://www.douglascollege.ca/student-services/student-support/counselling/contact-us-counselling>
- Ask A Librarian (help with questions related to citations):  
<https://library.douglascollege.ca/ask-librarian>

# Useful Resources

- DC Academic Integrity Policy  
<https://www.douglascollege.ca/sites/default/files/docs/finance-dates-and-deadlines/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20w%20Flowchart.pdf>
- Handout on the Three-Part Essay Structure  
<https://guides.douglascollege.ca/writingassignments/essay>
- Handout on How to Avoid Plagiarism  
<https://guides.douglascollege.ca/writingwithsources/plagiarism>
- Handout on Taking Notes [https://guides.douglascollege.ca/ld.php?content\\_id=35092262](https://guides.douglascollege.ca/ld.php?content_id=35092262)
- Paraphrasing <https://guides.douglascollege.ca/writingwithsources/paraphrasing>
- Summarizing <https://guides.douglascollege.ca/writingwithsources/writingsummaries>

**THANK YOU 😊**  
**HAVE A GREAT SEMESTER!**