MCLL

McGill
Community
for Lifelong
Learning

Moderators'
Handbook 2021

McGill | School of Continuing Studies | École d'éducation permanente

Table *of Contents*

Introduction

Welcome to the group of moderators of the *McGill Community for Lifelong Learning*. You are essential to the very existence of *MCLL* and the continued development of excellence for which we are well known. And above all enjoy yourself!

Please note: until further notice all meetings and all mcll staff will be meeting online, not in the mcll premises.

Zoom *Broadcasting of Study Groups & Lectures*

For the foreseeable future, all MCLL study groups and lectures will be broadcast via Zoom. Every moderator and lecturer will be assigned an MCLL volunteer Zoom host who will take care of the technical aspects related to videoconferencing.

Two weeks prior to your first study group or your lecture, you will be contacted by your Zoom host who will ask you about the content of your study group or lecture. The host will make sure that you are able to share your content – a slide show, videos or music – with your participants.

One week prior to the first session, the host will contact all the participants and make sure that they are able to join Zoom meetings. The day before each scheduled session, the host will email to the moderator/lecturer and the participants the link to the Zoom meeting.

At the start of a new study group, the Zoom host will explain the basics of Zoom meetings. Once the moderator/lecturer is ready to begin, the host will mute all the participants so that no one is bothered by ringing phones, barking dogs, crying babies and the like.

If a study group involves presentations by participants, the host will contact those people that will be giving presentations to ensure that they know how to share, for example, a PowerPoint slide show.

Curriculum

The MCLL Difference – Peer learning and active participation are two cornerstones of MCLL's curriculum; these principles differentiate its programs from traditional university courses and classes. Active learning, involving actions such as recall, presentation, discussion, etc., has been shown superior to passive learning (limited to listening or watching) in terms of retention and understanding.

Study Groups –There is a wide range of subject areas: Art/Architecture, Business/Economics, Creative Writing, Computer Studies, Cultural Studies, Current Events, Film/Photography/New Media, History, Literature, Music, Performing Arts, Philosophy, Critical Thought, and Science and technology; other subject areas can be added. While most study groups run for 10 weeks, some have a shorter duration, typically 5 weeks, depending on the moderator's proposal. Thirty to fifty study groups are offered in each of the fall, winter and spring terms.

Study Group Styles – The study group style indicates the type of participation expected

- **Discussion Group:** Participants look at works of art, read books or magazine articles, watch movies or videos, listen to music, or write journals. The moderator then facilitates discussion among the participants.
- **Participant Presentation Group:** With the guidance of the group moderator, the participants are expected to choose themes and make presentations.
- **Moderator/Participant Presentation Group:** Participants are encouraged to choose themes and make presentations, although presentations are not mandatory.
- **Moderator Presentation Group:** The group moderator makes the presentations and facilitates the discussion that follows the presentation.

Lectures – Lectures are offered in an even wider range of subject areas; audio-visual materials are often used. Thirty to forty lectures are offered over the 10-week duration of the fall, winter and spring terms. In the summertime, approximately thirty lectures are presented on Wednesdays only, they are called "Wonderful Wednesdays".

Workshops - Workshops can be stand-alone events or part of a series. Approximately 20-25 workshops are held annually. They can be on a range of subjects, academic or not, and tend to deal with practical issues.

Tech Savvy Workshops – These workshops are offered in a range of computer-related subject areas. They are held on the 2nd floor or in a lab on the 12th floor. The Active Learning Classroom can also be used (#1265), subject to availability. Most workshops are conducted in partnership with the **School of Continuing Studies**' Intensive English Language and Culture program (IELC), where one-on-one assistance on the use of a wide range of hardware and software is provided at the student-led "Brainy Bars". Tech Savvy workshops are sometimes presented on Fridays at 10:00-12:00 or 13:00-15:00, although some Brainy Bar sessions are held on other days and at other times. ''Brainy Bar Plus'' offers the possibility for partnerships over several weeks with a specific technically competent volunteer student. MCLL members also lead some workshops, in a field of their technical competence/interest.

Outings – In the summer MCLL members sometimes coordinate outings to various locations in and around the City of Montreal.

Making *a Proposal*

Call for Proposals – A week or two after the start of a term, the Call for Proposals for the following term is sent by e-mail to the entire membership. Two forms are used year-round, one for study groups and the other for lectures, workshops and outings. They are available at all times in the **MCLL** office and on the **MCLL** website. One form is required for each offering. The address for proposal submission is: proposalsmcll.scs@mcgill.ca. or https://www.mcgill.ca/mcll/moderators/making-proposal.

Title and description -The moderator provides the title and the description of the study group or the lecture, workshop or outing. This is placed on the Proposal Form.

Texts may be edited for typos, grammar and style. No changes will go into the program without prior approval of the moderator.

Proposal acceptance – Those who have submitted a proposal will receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 3 workdays; they should let the office know if they do not receive it. mcll.scs@mcgill.ca, https://www.mcgill.ca/mcll or call 1 514 398 8234

The Curriculum Committee considers each proposal and generally gives acceptance; it may suggest changes or, very occasionally, a delay to the next term for administrative reasons – i.e., to achieve a balance in study group offerings.

Proofreading and accuracy are the responsibility of the proposers – Those that have been accepted will receive the final version of the text, along with the proposed scheduling. They should let the office know by the specified deadline if they do not receive them or if changes are needed. https://www.mcgill.ca/mcll or call 1 514 398 8234.

Cancellations – If after the 2nd week the enrolment is under 5 the moderator may choose to cancel the study group. The Curriculum Committee is reluctant to have moderators cancel an event, except for health reasons or other emergencies. Study group moderators are asked to wait until after the first week of the term before cancelling when there are too few applicants since many participants register late or decide to a change study groups in the first week. If the number of participants is less than expected, the moderator has the option of shortening the duration of the study group or asking the participants for a greater commitment. Cancellations result in disappointed participants and are therefore to be avoided as much as possible.

Making *a Proposal*

Role of the liaison – Moderators, lecturers, workshop leaders and outing coordinators are matched with assigned Curriculum Committee members who act as liaisons. Although the liaison will usually get in touch with the moderator, a moderator may write to mcll.scs@mcgill.ca or call 1 514 398 8234 to find out the name and coordinates of his or her liaison.

The role of the Liaison is a support role, to be exercised according to need. At one end of the spectrum, the liaison merely follows up on the Call for Proposals; at the other end, he or she may help in choosing a title, working on the description of the study group, developing content, finding a co-moderator, using the classroom equipment, coping with difficult participants, relaying complaints to the Curriculum Committee or assisting in any other way.

Being an MCLL *Moderator*

Who Can Be a Moderator - Members usually moderate study groups based on their areas of personal expertise or interest. Their primary role is to animate and facilitate the Study Group. Prior to making a study group proposal, moderators should feel free to discuss the idea with their liaison or another member of the Curriculum Committee – i.e., scope and content of the proposed study group, learning objectives, methods of involving participants, their background in the subject, etc. It is recommended that new members attend a few study groups before moderating on their own. The moderator must be a member in good standing, as well as having attended a study group in the previous year. Moderators must register for their own study group.

Who Can Be a Lecturer, Workshop Leader or Outing Coordinator - While it is not necessary to be a member in order to be a lecturer, workshop coordinator of outing coordinator most of these roles are filled by members.

People who are introduced by a member (McGill lecturers, authors, artists or other parties) may offer their services or be invited to do so. The MCLL member then fills out the Proposal Form and enters the word "guest" on the form, in lieu of the McGill ID. The event should meet MCLL's customary level of quality.

Moderators and their guests are not paid and they are not allowed to promote their companies, or any sales or services.

Role and Responsibilities of The Moderator – In study groups, the moderator acts as chair of the group with responsibility for ensuring a positive and productive outcome of each session. The moderator largely determines the subject, objectives and scope of the study group. During a session the moderator helps the group remain on topic and clarifies areas of confusion. A moderator is responsible for scheduling presentations, proposing time limitations, making sure that the presentations deal with issues of substance and soliciting a variety of points of view in a climate of mutual respect. The moderator should always allow for some group participation even in Moderator Presentation study groups if it only to allow some time for questions and discussion.

Being an MCLL *Moderator*

Some Key Tips for Successful Moderating

- Focus attention on key issues, do not meander off topic.

- Contact participants by email a week or more in advance of the first session to elaborate on the description in the Calendar and distribute a suggested list of topics. Successful moderators often communicate regularly with members by email throughout the study group.

- Assist participants in defining a topic, searching for resources, suggesting readings or reference materials and preparing their presentations.

- It is a good idea to have a backup plan, such as having a presentation on hand in case a person scheduled to make a presentation is unexpectedly absent.

- Encourage group discussion, and encourage reticent members while ensuring that no one dominates the discussion or behaves rudely toward other participants. It is important to discourage private conversations.

- Treat all participants with equal respect. Promote participant presentations. Participant presentation is a key element of MCLL's Peer Learning philosophy. The moderator can use a variety of tools, to promote participant presentations such as:

  1. Encouraging the use of PowerPoint presentations

  2. Choosing a YouTube clip or video for discussion

  3. Sending out questions to participants beforehand to be discussed in class

Training – A new moderator can learn much by having a mentor, teaming up as co-moderator with an experienced moderator or sitting in on a highly successful study group after obtaining permission from the moderator. Moderators' Workshops are held before the start of each term; this provides an opportunity to interact with other moderators, and get a report from the latest survey results in order to hear what members like or dislike.

SPEAKING TIPS for moderators and participants are provided in Appendix 4.

Being an MCLL *Moderator*

Enriching a Study Group – Using audio-visual aids, having guest speakers and organizing field trips can add greatly to a study group. Moderators should also urge members to use the university's libraries and attend public lectures, museum exhibitions, film showings, concerts and other events likely to enrich the study group topic.

Study Group Lists –The office sends study group moderators a group list/attendance sheet for the first study group meeting. Moderators should take attendance, verify the validity of e-mail addresses and telephone numbers, and write down the names and coordinates of the people present who are not on the list. A revised list will be issued on the following week; it can be distributed to the group, provided the participants agree. Participants are expected to let the moderator know if they plan to be absent. Any discrepancy noted at the first meeting, or any later addition or withdrawal, should be reported to the office at 1 514 398 8234 or mcll.scs@mcgill.ca.

First Meeting of Study Group

- It is strongly recommended that study group moderators take a few minutes to welcome the participants, introduce themselves and ask the participants to do the same. This establishes a sense of community. Having name tags for the participants also works well in facilitating communication among members and with the moderator.

- Moderators are encouraged to give members new to MCLL a special welcome and do their best to facilitate their integration into the group.

- It is important to explain the concept of peer learning and how it will be applied, and to stress that participants are as responsible as the moderator for the success of the study group.

- The next step is to outline the content of the study group. If presentations are required, participants can sign up from a suggested list or propose their own. The moderator then works out a schedule.

- At the first meeting the moderator may give out name tags, when study groups are resumed again at the MCLL premises, explain how to use the McGill library and contact the McGill librarian, and talk about the availability of the computer lab, describe the 'bring a friend program', and most importantly explain the security measures and emergency evacuation procedures posted in each classroom. Another important point, during the first meeting, is to explain that for study groups which fall on holidays such as Thanksgiving, there will be a make-up class at the end of term.

Being an MCLL *Moderator*

At the conclusion of the study group, the moderator/host should hand in, or send in, the attendance sheet received at the beginning of term. In Zoom study groups the moderator or host may collect attendance information to be sent the office at the end of term.

Identifying Future Moderators – Moderators are encouraged to identify study group participants who show moderating potential. Such members should be encouraged to identify themselves to the Curriculum Committee. Moderators may encourage those who make outstanding presentations to consider the idea of presenting the material in a lecture during the Friday or Wednesday lectures.

Practical *Information*

Facilities – During normal times, MCLL has the exclusive use of facilities located on the 2nd floor at 688 Sherbrooke St. West. Thanks to its affiliation with the **SCS [McGill School of Continuing Studies]** it also has access (subject to availability) to a large lecture room on the 10th floor, as well as computer labs on the 12th floor. There is a kitchen and a lounge for the use of members; the lounge has a small library, a computer and a telephone (dial 9; outgoing local calls only); the premises are entirely connected to the Internet. There is also a large collection of CDs and DVDs of classical music and Operas donated to MCLL by the estate of Rory O'Sullivan. The materials are available through the MCLL office.

Classrooms – The four classrooms on the 2nd floor can accommodate between 16 and 24 participants when set-up discussion style and up to 30 people when set-up theatre style. Room 225 is the "music room"; rooms 241 and 245 have SMART Boards; room 243 has a ceramic board that can be connected to a laptop, tablet, smartphone, document reader or e-reader; room 245 has a webcam. Room 1041 on the 10th floor can accommodate about 50 people, while the computer labs and the Active Learning Classroom on the 12th floor can accommodate about 12; those rooms are subject to availability.

Equipment – For a moderator interested in using information technology for outlines, presentations, screening of videos, listening to music, etc., state-of-the-art equipment is available in all the classrooms. To avoid a common frustration, study group moderators and lecturers are encouraged to identify and get assistance from a participant who is familiar with the equipment. Members of the office staff can provide instructions; it is best to make an appointment. Information and assistance are also available from McGill's information technology services that can be reached by telephone at 514 398-3398, or by email mcll.scs@mcgill.ca, and in person at the ICS Walk-in Service in Room 285, near the MCLL Office. A valid member's card is required when requesting assistance.

During pandemic times when the building is closed trained hosts are available to run the Zoom meetings.

Office – During normal times the office is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Thursday. Address: 688 Sherbrooke St. West, Suite 229, Montreal H3A 3R1. During pandemic times the office staff can be reached by telephone: 514 398-8234. Fax: 514 398-2757. E-mail address: mcll.scs@mcgill.ca/mcll. Website: www.mcgill.ca/mcll. Facebook page: www.facebook.com/mcll.joy.

The office is staffed by volunteer members who can probably answer most questions; please be patient and supportive.

Practical *Information*

Photocopying for Moderators – MCLL has an arrangement with Copie Express, located at 920 Sherbrooke Street West. They have a list of current moderators and lecturers. There is an allowance of $25 for moderators and $15 for lecturers, workshop leaders and outing coordinators. Should photocopying costs exceed the allowance, a moderator can apply for an increased budget from MCLL or collect the extra costs from study group participants. However, moderators are encouraged to reduce photocopying costs by distributing material by email as far as possible. MCLL will not reimburse photocopies made anywhere else. Small quantities can be made on the photocopying machine outside the office.

Photocopying for Study Group Participants – Members have to pay their own photocopying costs; there are photocopying machines throughout the McGill campus, including MCLL, the SCS building and McGill Libraries. A non-rechargeable card ($5 and $10) can be bought at the McGill bookstore and libraries. Due to copyright regulations, it is preferable that moderators ask participants to find the articles themselves in the library.

Code *of Conduct*

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to establish a set of core principles to guide and enhance the conduct of all members of MCLL.

MCLL is committed to providing all of its members with a welcoming environment conducive to peer group learning. It is committed to maintaining an environment in which each person is valued and respected and has an opportunity for personal learning and development. MCLL values integrity, mutual respect, trust, open communication, cooperation and teamwork.

Respect of McGill Policies and Procedures

It is the responsibility of the moderator to support the peer learning spirit of MCLL and to respect McGill policies and procedures.

In the event that a study group proposal requires elements that fall outside of existing MCLL norms, please advise the curriculum committee of such elements on submitting the proposal form. These may include elements of the administrative or practical planning of the functioning of the study group, such as joint projects with other institutions, etc.

This will ensure enough lead-time to enable MCLL and SCS to go through the steps that will support your proposal and to provide participants with all the relevant information about your study group in the program.

Role and Responsibilities of The Study Group Members – Members are expected to act with civility and avoid any disturbance such as eating lunch, checking for messages, going online and most importantly, interrupting the moderator or participants or dominating the discussion.

The office staff creates a waiting list when applications exceed class capacity. Participants should notify the moderator in advance if they will miss a study group meeting. If they expect to miss several (for example on account of vacation), they should contact the office in advance to be placed on a waiting list to give priority to other participants wiling to attend the majority of the meetings.

Friends are welcome to attend occasional meetings provided the moderator is informed in advance.

Code *of Conduct*

Process for Resolving Issues – A zero-tolerance policy will be enforced for verbal abuse and any other forms of harassment, as defined by McGill's official policy.

If a member, or members of the group, is concerned that an individual is causing disruption, the matter should be brought to the moderator's attention.

If such a situation arises, moderators and participants should attempt to resolve the issue and calm things down.

If the issue is not resolved participants and moderators may bring the problem to the chair of the Curriculum Committee. Should the problem still remain an incident report will be filed.

Should there be an unsatisfactory conclusion after discussion with the individual, a member of the Executive and/or the moderator may inform the individual that he or she may no longer participate in that study group. Should the individual wish to file a grievance, it will be handled according to McGill's rules and practices.

Appendix 1: *Key dates for 2021*

Seasonal Calendars – **MCLL** operates on the same calendar as McGill University academic terms, i.e. Fall, Winter and Spring. Seasonal calendars are published and posted online at least two weeks before the start of each registration period.

Study groups are offered Monday to Thursday at 9:30-11:30, 11:45-13:45, 14:00-16:00 and, on occasion, 16:00-17:55. All are held on the 2nd floor, in rooms 225, 241, 243 and 245.

Zoom study groups are held from 9:30 – 11:30, 12:00-2:00, and 2:30-4:30 from Monday to Thursday.

Most lectures are presented on Fridays at 10:00-12:00 or 13:00-15:00; Saturday lectures are also offered at times, depending on the lecturer's choice. Lectures are usually held on the 2nd floor, although room 1041 is used for larger groups when available.

Spring term, 2021 – The spring term begins on Monday, April 12 and ends on Thursday, June 17. May 24 is a statutory holidays; study group sessions postponed because of statutory holidays will be rescheduled. Registration begins on March 30.

Summer term, 2021 – The summer term begins on Wednesday, July 7 and ends on Wednesday, August 25. Lectures and outings are offered. Registration begins on June 21.

Fall term, 2021 – The fall term begins on Monday, September 13 and ends on Thursday, November 18. October 11 is a statutory holiday; study group sessions postponed because of statutory holidays will be rescheduled.

Winter term, 2022 – The winter term begins on Monday, January 10 and ends on Thursday, March 17. Registration begins on December 6, 2021.

Spring term, 2022 – The spring term begins on Monday, April 11 and ends on Thursday, June 16. April 15 and 18 and May 23 are statutory holidays; study group sessions postponed because of statutory holidays will be rescheduled. Registration begins on March 21.

Summer term, 2022 – The summer term begins on Wednesday, July 6 and ends on Wednesday, August 24. Lectures and outings are offered. Registration begins on June 20.

Appendix 2: *Curriculum Committee*

What it is – This is a subcommittee of Council, responsible for developing seasonal programs based on proposals submitted by members. Curriculum Committee members are matched with moderators, lecturers, workshop leaders and outing coordinators, to act as liaisons.

Role of the liaison – This is a support role, to be exercised according to need. At one end of the spectrum, the liaison simply follows up on the Call for Proposals; at the other end, a liaison may help in finding a title for the study group, developing content, finding a co-moderator, using the classroom equipment, coping with difficult participants, relaying complaints to the Curriculum Committee or assisting in any other way. Although the liaison will usually get in touch with the moderator, a moderator may write to mcll.scs@mcgill.ca to learn the name and coordinates of his/her liaison.

Curriculum Committee Members – 2020-2021

Sandra Baines, Martin Coles, Tony Frayne, Paula Friedlander, Louise Fullerton,

Roger Humphrey, Denise Lord, Catherine Main-Oster, Nina Maksymiw, Sheila Mason,

Katherine Moore, Juliet Wait, Brian Webber.

Appendix 3: *Use of Feedback Forms*

A short survey of study groups is sent to participants online in the 8th week of term. Moderators should encourage participants to fill out the survey so as to get feedback on what participants find satisfactory and what they find less so. The surveys are completely anonymous and are sent by the office staff directly to each moderator.

Appendix 4: *Speaking Tips*

1. Use handouts or visuals to enhance your presentation

- Remember: a picture is worth 1000 words
- Highlight your key points with bullets
- A chart can help clarify a complex issue

2. Prepare your presentation ahead of time

- Put together the presentation early
- Avoid information overload—your audience can only remember 4 or 5 points every 20 minutes, so keep it simple
- Contact your co-presenter (if there is one) to coordinate your presentations and avoid overlap
- Bring handouts for your session
- Practice and time your presentation
- Make sure that your presentation is what is promoted in the conference brochure—think of it as a "contract" with your audience and make sure you deliver what you promised.

3. First impressions last

- Start the session on time
- Arrive early to test the equipment and make certain everything is in order for your presentation and alert conference organizers if it is not
- Briefly introduce yourself and your topic to your audience
- Set forth any "rules" or limitations—a road map for the session
- Stand at the door of your session to greet attendees as they arrive—this can help calm your "jitters" and also give you a sense of your audience

4. Be certain to leave time for questions from your audience

- Be flexible so that you can entertain spontaneous questions and comments from your audience. Many times, they can make your point for you!
- Always look directly at your audience when speaking. Strategically place yourself within each room so that everyone can see you
- Speak slowly, clearly, and loudly and wear the microphone provided
- Repeat all questions and answers that come from the audience. This allows everyone to hear the question

5. Finish on a strong note

- Summarize your key points to reinforce your message
- If your presentation is running long and you haven't covered your major points—don't run on. It is better to quit on time and allow time for questions. Many times you can find a way to make your final points and answer the questions

Appendix 5: *Recommendations from the Participant Surveys in March & June 2019*

Introduction of the Study Group

- Introduce yourself and give a brief account of why you have chosen the particular topic of your study group and what you hope to achieve during the term.
- Ask participants to introduce themselves and prepare name cards.
- Present an outline of the course with topics for each session.
- List reading material, internet sites or recommend videos before the start of the term so that the first meeting and later meetings will be productive.

Peer learning and Discussion

- Allow time each week for discussion. This applies to all study group styles, including Moderator Presentation Groups.
- You could elicit discussion by asking questions prior to or during each meeting.
- In encouraging discussion be sure to make it clear that all points of view are welcome.

Presentations

- Make sure that all participants are encouraged on the first day to plan to make a presentation if this is a Participant Presentation group.
- Make sure that presenters have some help, should they want it, in preparing their presentations: finding research material, showing how their work relates to the main themes of the study group, giving background information on videos, refining the focus of the presentation and, especially, managing PowerPoint presentations so that they do not contain lengthy texts to be read in class. Please inform presenters that they do not need to use the Internet or present videos and are welcome to simply read their presentation.
- Suggest a time limit for presentations, preferably around 20 minutes.
- Presentations can be sent by email to participants after the meeting, if participants agree to share their email addresses, or they can be placed on Google Docs for future reference.
- Presenters welcome emails thanking them for their contribution.

Managing the atmosphere in the class

- Keep a firm hand on the discussion so that digressions are not too long.
- Be firm in limiting interventions of participants who dominate the conversation or address other participants in a rude or belligerent manner. Such behavior is not welcome at MCLL.
- Be sure speakers take turns and do not interrupt or talk all at once.
- Remember that overriding aim of MCLL is to achieve an atmosphere in which all participants feel welcome to express their views, including opposing views, in a secure environment.
- Make use of the Mic for those with hearing difficulties.

Appendix 5: *Recommendations from the Participant Surveys in March & June 2019*

Most frequent terms of praise for moderators

- 'Encourages lively discussion' [this was the most common remark. The most common complaint was the lack of time for discussion]
- 'Deepens discussion with stimulating questions'
- Has good control over discussions. 'Dominators' are kept in check, people take turns speaking and shyer people participate'
- 'Is well prepared' and has made 'a good choice of topics and material'
- 'Gives study questions a week in advance so people are prepared for a good discussion'
- 'Limits the focus of the Study Group so that topics are dealt with in greater depth'
- 'Provides help for people making presentations with reference material and the effective use of PowerPoint so that they are not 'text heavy'.'
- 'Does not read lectures or PowerPoints: gives handouts instead'

MCLL

**McGill Community
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