

# Rules for Online Quizzes/Tests/Exams (QTEs)

- **1) Purpose:** The main purpose of a QTE(s) is to determine if (a) you did your homework, and if so, (b) you did it *diligently*. Ergo, your responses must provide sufficiently detailed information that reflects accomplishment of these two objectives. ←Read this sentence again.
- **2) Homework:** You are not permitted to attempt a test without *diligently* completing the relevant assigned homework **beforehand**. ←Read this sentence again. Diligence in this instance means, at the very minimum (a) doing the assigned homework *on time*; and (b) doing the homework as directed (e.g., DOWNLOADING, and viewing/studying material TWICE without any kind of distractions--texting, gossiping, feeding your pet mouse, and so on, well before the actual test date). **Warning:** Regardless of which race you believe you belong to, please do NOT racialize the epistemology on which this course rests. What does this mean in practice? The view that since this course deals with knowledge by and/or about black people it is not important enough to require *diligence*.
- **3) Preparing for QTEs:** QTEs will cover some or all assigned homework. Note, however, using system *statistical data* from a combination of sources, depending upon the homework, QTEs will lean more toward homework that lazy students will have failed to



do. (I call this the “**Lazy-Student Rule**” for creating QTEs.) Additionally, also note:

(a) Materials instructors produce for a course takes precedence over everything else. Man, you have to be a super-genius not to figure this out by yourself.

(b) Given that you will be taking tests online without any supervision, when studying assigned homework do NOT prioritize information that you can easily look up on the internet (this is the “**Internet Rule**”). QTEs will be constructed to reflect this advice. Why? Think! Moreover, since it is possible to cheat by looking up material on the main plot and characters on the internet, without actually viewing the film, questions will also be designed to really determine if you saw the assigned film in its entirety with *diligence*. ← Read this sentence again. In other words, there are no shortcuts to homework in this course.

(c) Given the nature of AV material (films, documentaries, etc.), in comparison to the printed word, *everything*—more or less—is important in any homework that includes AV materials. What does *everything* mean? It means *everything*: (i) sound, (ii) text (notes, comments, etc.), (iii) visuals, and (iv) plot or theme and characters. If an entire film has been assigned, then it must be seen in its entirety! Trying to pick and choose scenes is not going to work. Additionally, you are required to watch the films TWICE—leaving a couple of days in between. So, be careful about skipping scenes, including front and end material. If necessary, take notes!

(d) How do you take notes on AV material for this course? First, forget that you are watching the film for entertainment. Second, watch the film *twice*. On the second viewing, create and write down “key words” as you go along to help you jog your memory regarding the scenes, storyline of the film, notes, comments, etc. Third, pay attention to how the film is *structured*—including

paying attention to opening and end credits, the film score, and whether it has "chapters" or parts, and whether it has comments, subtitles, an introduction, etc. (By the way, a *shot* is a continuous filming of an action, view, etc., while a *scene*, in general, is a combination of shots that are edited together to create a sequence with a *theme*.)

(e) If the AV material comprises a feature film and it is preceded by written notes and other background material (usually labelled Section One or Prologue), do NOT under any circumstances skip that material!

(f) Warning: Regardless of which race you believe you belong to, please do NOT racialize the epistemology on which this course rests. What does this mean in practice? The attitude that since this course deals with knowledge by and/or about black people it is not important enough to require *diligence*. ← What does this word mean?

- **4) Multiple-choice.** If the QTE is of the multiple-choice type, then be aware that some questions may have more than one correct option. However, your task will be to select the option that provides the most complete information (which would be the MAIN point), relative to the others (subsidiary point).
- **5) Guessing:** You are not permitted to attempt a test, as indicated above, without diligently completing the relevant assigned homework beforehand. Therefore, guessing is not permitted on tests.
- **6) Make-up:** QTEs cannot be made up unless you have a *bona fide* documented excuse. (See also note below.) ← Read this sentence again.
- **7) Scores:** Preliminary scores will be available via Blackboard. However, **final scores** will be posted online via a link on the *class home page* and NOT on Blackboard. (The

final score will either always be the same as the preliminary score or higher than the preliminary score.)

- **8) Points:** Points for letter-grade equivalents: See the syllabus.
- **9) Procedure:** As per school regulations, to discourage cheating, AND for the sake of fairness to all, it is necessary to institute specific anti-cheating procedures. Yes, of course, of course, I know you never cheat; but can you say the same is true for everyone else? In fact, there is an entire office on campus dedicated to dealing with the problem of cheating at UB. Anyhow, please pay close attention to these rules:

(a) As per announcement on **Blackboard** (UBLearns) at the beginning of the semester, all QTEs will be available on Blackboard (everything else, including your final scores for all QTEs will be accessible via your class home page—the same page that brought you this document).

(b) After the test goes live on **Blackboard**, QTEs **must** be completed on the specified date within the period of hours allocated.

(c) Tests will be timed; that is, you won't be able to continue with the test beyond the specified time-limit.

(d) Once you begin a test it **must** be completed at *one sitting*; you will not be able to go back to it under *any circumstances*. ← Read this sentence again.

(e) Questions will be presented to you *one at a time*, and you will not be able to go back to it, after you move on to the next question.

(f) Questions will be randomized across all students; meaning not all students will be presented with identical questions—even though the questions will cover the same material. ← Read this sentence again. What questions and in what order they are received will be determined by the Blackboard algorithm.

(g) Your preliminary score, repeat preliminary score (not the final score) will be available after the test is over for everyone via Blackboard. However, **final**

scores will be posted online via a link on the *class home page* and NOT on Blackboard.

(h) Please do not start looking for answers in your homework while doing the test (because you didn't do the homework) and thereby running out of time--prompting you to falsely claim that your internet went down, or your computer exploded, or your screen melted, or you were logged off.

(i) What happens if you are logged off in the middle of a test? First, if this does happen it will be an extremely, extremely rare event. Second, upon being notified by you, I will commence a forensic process of determining how genuine this issue is by doing the following with the tools Blackboard provides to teachers:

(i) Find out if you did the homework by checking **if and when** you downloaded the homework?

(ii) Check at what time you began the test.

(iii) Check how far into the test you had gone before you stopped.

(iv) Check how many questions you got correct before the test was stopped; and

(v) check how much time you were spending on each question.

Only if I am satisfied (after completing this process) that your failure to complete the test was for a genuine technical reason will you be permitted to do a make-up sometime ***at a later date*** (usually during the exam period at the end of the semester). ← Read this sentence again.

- **10) Grading.** No, grades will not be curved in this course. (2 + 2 *always* equals 4, even if only one student out of a million got it correct on a test. Yes?)

