

Course Evaluations, Fall 2007
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General for all courses, Fall 2007:

I had emergency surgery during the first half of the semester, requiring some adjustments of teaching.

NORAM 4521

This course began with four students. Two dropped out. Both talked to me about their decisions beforehand. Both were new MA students and they had misjudged the different level of work required at the MA level in comparison to the BA. Both had done well in earlier courses with me and took the course because they liked both the subject matter and my teaching style. One was trying to take 4 courses, instead of 3. The other had children and another career job on the side. Both were running their own small businesses. Both thought that they could simply read before the exam, as they had in BA courses. Neither realized that as MA students, they would need to keep up with the reading throughout the semester, or that they would be expected to fully contribute to a discussion. They sat with pens poised to take notes only. Each realized around the time of my surgery that this would not be enough at the MA level – in any of their courses.

The remaining two students had health issues (One was pregnant and teaching our NORAM 1506 groups), but were able to meet and prepare. We did more independent work and held fewer, longer discussion sessions. These times were mutually agreed upon by the three of us.

Both students did well, despite the challenges of the semester in terms of health and time changes. One of the students will be expanding the work she began for this paper in her MA thesis. The other is writing for David Mauk on a related topic, and found the different point of view helpful.