New Instructor Kit
August 2021
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Welcome to the University of Toronto Scarborough! You are joining a vibrant teaching community at a time when both our campus and the Centre for Teaching and Learning are embarking on new strategic plans and higher education is facing unprecedented transformation. Implementing innovative ideas and techniques means there are even more opportunities for your growth and development as a teacher.

CTL offers exceptional and extensive programming and services to support you and your students. Our new mission statement reflects the depth and breadth of our services:

CTL provides leadership in educational excellence through supporting and inspiring transformative and inclusive teaching and learning at the University of Toronto Scarborough. We do this by:

- Engaging with all students, individually and through course support and other learning initiatives, to enhance foundational skills required for coursework and beyond.
- Advising and collaborating with all instructors and staff to support an interactive community of scholarly teaching excellence, inquiry, and innovation.
- Leading and collaborating on educational technologies and active learning spaces, which are responsive to the changing needs of our instructors and students.
- Building bridges and leveraging relationships with other partners and communities to support pedagogical research, encourage current and lifelong learning, and deepen CTL’s impact and influence across academic programming at UTSC.

We encourage you to attend our workshops and events and become actively engaged in the UTSC teaching community. We look forward to getting to know you and working with you. Please let us know how we can be of assistance.

Dr. Karen L. McCrindle
Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning
Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning
Associate Professor, Teaching Stream,
Department of Language Studies
About the University of Toronto Scarborough

The University of Toronto Scarborough – Pillars and Priorities

The University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) is a rich, and diverse community that aims to inspire inclusive excellence. Under the Strategic Plan: The University of Toronto Scarborough is the embodiment of inclusive excellence, a bold community of conscientious and adaptable global leaders in scholarship, innovation, teaching, and learning, who constructively disrupt the status quo, connect the world, and advance transformative change for the good of all.

UTSC is guided by four pillars and imperatives to address and support its mission and vision:

1. To advance a culture of leadership that is bold, empathetic, shared, transparent, inclusive and transformational, thereby enabling our collective aspirations
2. To promote and support an inclusive, healthy learning and working environment
3. To strengthen, grow, and sustain local and global networks and partnerships that advance our mission
4. To augment UofT’s global standing through scholarly prominence and exceptional learning in unique areas of established and emerging strength

Getting Ready to Teach, and UTSC Policies and Conventions to Know About

Key support services for instructors are available on campus throughout the year.

A. Getting Ready to Teach

The Registrar’s Office does the scheduling for courses, including last-minute room changes (for over- or under-subscribed courses).

Check your classroom before classes begin and master its AV equipment. The Information and Instructional Technology team (IITS) supports the audiovisual equipment and provides classroom support (with a phone line in classrooms). You can find classroom specifications (AV set-up, room capacity, photo) at https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/iits/classroom-support.

Set up and troubleshoot your course site in Quercus (U of T’s learning management system). CTL’s Ed Tech staff can help with Quercus. Contact them at Quercus.utsc@utoronto.ca

B. UTSC Academic Policies

You will want to familiarize yourself with two important UTSC documents:

UTSC’s Calendar provides many of UTSC’s policies (with the emphasis on the student side): https://utsc.calendar.utoronto.ca/.

Here are a few highlights and terms:

**Term work** refers to tests, assignments and course activities that occur between the first and last day of classes. Please note:

1) Term work has to be due before the exam period.

2) Extensions on term work have to be approved by the Chair.

**Final exams**, by definition, occur in the official final exam period and are scheduled by the Registrar’s Office.

Normal courses have a **final exam** worth 33–80%; deviations from this amount should be approved by the Chair of your relevant department.

**Term work marks**, cumulatively worth at least 20% of the final grade, must be returned to students before the deadline for withdrawing from a course without academic penalty.

**Due dates** for term work should be set thoughtfully, but all term work must be “due” by the last day of classes. Exceptions must be approved by the Departmental Chair.

**Submission of final marks** is done electronically. For courses without a final exam, grades are due 5 working days after the last day of classes. In courses with exams, final grades need to be submitted 5 working days after the exam.

**Maintain student confidentiality.** Have students deliver and receive their assignments securely (do not leave assignments outside offices or labs). Avoid taking student ID numbers except on assignments. Do not post student grades in a public venue.

**Cases of suspected academic dishonesty** must be pursued by the course instructor (not a TA); all offenses must be reported to the Departmental Chair; offences concerning work worth more than 10% must be reported to the Dean’s designate for Academic Integrity through the office of the Departmental Chair. Visit https://utoronto.sharepoint.com/sites/utsc-academicintegrity.
University and Ontario law requires instructors to **accommodate students with disabilities** who have registered with AccessAbility Services (as documented in their assessment letters). AccessAbility Services offers advice to instructors for making these accommodations. Students may make formal accommodation requests throughout the term, as they are assessed or seek support. Do not disclose to others who is being accommodated. Ask for volunteer note-takers, but have them contact AccessAbility Services, not the student who needs the notes. Visit [https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/](https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/).

**C. Syllabus and First Weeks of Teaching**

At UTSC you are encouraged to **distribute a syllabus** to students and your department by the end of the first week of class but must distribute it **no later** than the last date to add the course. Clearly state your learning objectives, methods of evaluation and university policies on academic integrity.

List assignment dates and grade value; types of assignments and any required outside activities, such as field trips and other off-campus events (*University policy*). Be aware that once the grade value of assignments has been distributed in the syllabus, it can only be changed with a simple majority vote for which students are given advance notice.

The anti-plagiarism tool **Turnitin** is often used in courses with large writing assignments. If you plan to use it you must inform students of this by including the standard Turnitin statement in your syllabus (*University policy*). Visit [https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/teaching-technology/turnitin/](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/teaching-technology/turnitin/).

Provide a statement on **accessibility, accommodation and academic integrity**. Visit [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/syllabus-design](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/syllabus-design).

Set out your **policy for penalties** with regard to absences, missed tests and term work submitted late (*best practices*); be consistent with University policies for term work. For absences due to illness, one option is to allow students to self-declare their illness and their need for accommodation for missed assignments (**not** term tests or exams). This self-declaration might require submission of a specified form and have limits (e.g. students must self-declare illness within three business days of an assignment due date, and be allowed a maximum of five declarations in the term). Instructors should contact their Chair for specific department policies and procedures.

**Use a positive tone** for your syllabus and put your deadlines and policies into the perspective of how it will facilitate the students’ overall learning experience.
Classes formally begin at 10 minutes past the hour, and end on the hour. If you have a multiple hour course, it's best to schedule a 10-minute break around the hour mark.

**D. U of T’s Grading Scale**

The U of T grading scale is applied throughout the university. Table 1 shows the U of T grade scale, aligned with the higher order thinking processes usually required for each grade. Consider including it in your syllabus. Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Grade Definitions</th>
<th>Critical Thinking* (cumulative process)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Evaluation: judging results of analysis and synthesis, qualitative or quantitative according to internal criteria (can identify logical fallacies, exactness of statements) or external criteria (major theories, methodologies, recognized standards).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>• strong evidence of original thinking;</td>
<td>Synthesis: applying logic, deducing or extrapolating facts from general theories/concepts to form a precise conclusion, arranging and employing elements/parts creating a new interpretation/plan, relating knowledge to individual knowledge formation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>• good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize;</td>
<td>Analysis: relating form and content, examining structure and arrangement of elements for logic and clarity, pattern recognition, inferring meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>• superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations;</td>
<td>Application: combining concepts in new learning situations, problem solving, employing abstractions in specific concrete situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>• evidence of grasp of subject matter;</td>
<td>Comprehension: explaining or using concepts at a surface level, understanding and translating non-literal statements and vice versa, basic data interpretation, summarizing, generating inferences and predicting trends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>• some evidence of capacity and analytic ability;</td>
<td>Memorization: recalling of facts, terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>• reasonable understanding of relevant issues;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>• evidence of familiarity with literature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>• student who is profiting from his/her university experience;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>• understanding of the subject matter;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53-56</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>• ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-52</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>• some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-49</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1: Adapted from Bloom’s Taxonomy by Fran Sardone, Centre for Teaching and Learning, UTSC, 2004.*
Our Students
Syllabus Design: Best Practices

A well-designed course syllabus is an important part of good course design. Your syllabus sets the tone and standard for your course. Give it lots of thought. Use the same tone in the syllabus that you will adopt with students. Think of them as your audience and write for them.

Focus on key information to provide a clear and succinct overview of your course, and relate your course positively to students’ learning. Think of your syllabus as a contract between you and your class. More than that, the syllabus is a tool in which you can relay to students your commitment to creating a safe, equitable, and accommodating learning space for everyone involved.

Basic Course Information:

This is where you include information such as the course code and title, day, lecture/tutorial time and room number of your course. It is also helpful to provide contact information (e.g. email address, office number, office hours) for yourself and your TAs. We highly discourage faculty from collecting or distributing their own, their TAs, or their students personal information such as personal phone numbers or e-mail addresses.

This is also where you should provide a brief course overview and welcome statement, highlighting what the course will be about broadly and the general themes. Let students know if your course has any prerequisites or if your course is a prerequisite for senior courses.

It can be easy to gloss over the welcome statement, but this is often one of the first things students read. Use this as an opportunity for them to not only get a broad overview of the course, but also the environment in which they will participate and collaborate in. Find ways to model and express UTSC’s commitment to supporting different ways of knowledge, and supporting the idea that learning is not about just them learning from you, but an endeavor of co-creation of knowledge, content, and experience.

Learning outcomes:

Learning outcomes are statements of what students will be able to know and do by the end of your course. It is often helpful to frame learning outcomes using the phrase: “After successful completion of this course, you will be able to…” The goal of learning outcomes is to clearly articulate what learning students will engage with through this course, and it allows you to show links between activities, readings and assessments. This will motivate students by helping them see the goals to which they are working throughout the course. One thing to keep in mind is that when creating learning outcomes to apply best practices of inclusivity, as well as Universal Design for Learning.
For more information, visit Developing Learning Outcomes (CTSI):
https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/course-design/developing-learning-outcomes/

Course Schedule/Key Dates

This might include a weekly breakdown of activities including readings, assignment deadlines and lecture topics. Oftentimes it can be helpful to include a section in your schedule to prompt students to think of what is coming ahead. Using a table can help present the information concisely and can allow students to see assignments and readings at a glance.

Course Work and Grading

It is important to provide a clear breakdown of all assessments, assignments and how each will be graded. This should include what the assignment is (a brief description), percentage of their total grade and the due dates. Any information that contributes to a student’s mark (e.g. late penalties) should be included. It is also encouraged that you indicate the relevant learning outcomes that are being achieved through engagement with each assignment and assessment.

To keep your syllabus from being too long, a short description of each assessment is often provided in the syllabus while a more detailed document is used for a full explanation of the assessment. Make sure to draw students’ attention to the additional document if you are using one.

If you are having a final exam, you will not know the date at the beginning of the course. It is best to indicate that there will be a final exam and that it will occur during the final exam period, which can be found on the Registrar’s website: https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/academic-dates.

It is important to note that once the grading scheme has been provided to students, you may only change any grade-related element in a course by following these prescribed procedures:

1. You must hold a vote in a regularly scheduled class and obtain the consent of at least simple majority of those attending the class.
2. The vote must be announced no later than the class previous to the one in which the vote will take place.
3. After consent has been achieved, you must deposit the revised marking scheme with the department sponsoring the course.

For more information about grading policies, please review the Academic Handbook:

Course/Departmental/Program Policies
Your program or department might have specific policies that would be helpful to mention. This could include aspects around lab safety, highlighting rules and regulations around off-campus work or e-mail policies. It is best to reach out to your department administrator to inquire about department- or program-specific policies. Furthermore, although you are not obligated to accept late work, except where there are legitimate and documented reasons, it may be helpful to articulate your policy around late submissions and extensions; however, make sure to check to see if your department has an official policy.

In-course Resources

Ensure that students know what resources are required to be successful in this class. This could include textbooks, articles and various resources, where to purchase them and if they are mandatory or optional. Also indicate if course reserves are available in the library or through Quercus. Tip: Talk to your UTSC liaison librarian about setting up course reserves.

If you are using Quercus, you should explain to students how they can access the learning management system, what they will be able to find and how you expect them to use it.

Syllabus Statements and Additional Resources

There are a couple of required statements that must be on all syllabi. The first is the Accessibility Statement at [https://www.utoronto.ca/accessibility](https://www.utoronto.ca/accessibility) and the second is the Academic Integrity Statement at [https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/smart-strategies/writing-and-using-a-syllabus/](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/smart-strategies/writing-and-using-a-syllabus/). If you are opting to use Turnitin, you must include the Turnitin statement. For more information, please visit [https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/teaching-technology/turnitin/](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/teaching-technology/turnitin/) AND [https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/integration-turnitin](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/integration-turnitin).

Additional statements that you might wish to consider adding to your syllabus:

- Course-Specific Policies: Email policy, participation expectations, etiquette for a safe and respectful learning environment and for electronic devices, required documentation, policies for missed or late work, etc.
- Links to support services at the Centre for Teaching and Learning: Writing Support, English Language Development Support, Math and Stats Support, Facilitated Study Groups.
- Links to other Academic Supports: Library, Academic Advising, etc.

A note about Accessibility

It can be easy for us to just put in an Accessibility statement and leave it at that. However, it can be helpful to let your students know that you are constantly thinking about and aiming to provide a safe, equitable, and accessible learning experience. Provide them with resources and ways in which they can communicate any concerns they may have. More than that, begin to build your syllabus and your course
in ways that are accessible. For more information, please check out the Accessibility Course Design Module.

Copyright

If a student wishes to video or audio record, photograph or reproduce any course-related materials, they must be done with written consent from the instructor beforehand. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor’s consent will not be unreasonably withheld. For more information about copyright in instructional settings, please visit the copyright page.

Circulating Your Syllabus

Ensure that your syllabus is completed before the start of your first class. Once completed, give a copy of your syllabus to your department administrator. Official syllabi must be distributed to students before the last day to add the course (usually 2 weeks from the start of class).

Syllabus Checklist

<p>| Basic course information                                      | • Course code and title, day, lecture/tutorial time and room number |
|                                                               | • Your contact information (e-mail address, office phone number, office, office hours) |
|                                                               | • Contact information for your TAs (email address, office, office hours) |
|                                                               | • Brief course overview and welcome statement |
|                                                               | • Prerequisites: Let students know if your course has any prerequisites or if your course is a prerequisite for senior courses |
| Learning Outcomes                                             | • State learning outcomes for your course. Outcomes should complete the phrase: “After successful completion of this course, you will be able to…” |
|                                                               | • Show a link between weekly activities, readings and assignments |
| Course Schedule &amp; Key Dates                                   | • Weekly breakdown of activities including readings, assignment deadlines, etc. Using a table presents information concisely and allows students to see assignment and readings at a glance |
| Course Work and Grading                                       | • Assignments, percentage of grade and due dates |
|                                                               | • Exams and their date or approximate date |
| In-course Resources                                           | • Textbooks, other required resources/materials |
|                                                               | • Course reserves |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllabus Statements and Additional Resources</th>
<th>Required:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An Accessibility Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Academic Integrity Statement</td>
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<td>• Turnitin Statement (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Optional:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course-Specific Policies: Email policy, participation expectations, etiquette for a safe and respectful learning environment and for electronic devices, required documentation, policies for missed or late work, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Official syllabus must be distributed to students before the last day to add the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Remotely or Online

This short guide contains a few best practices to help you with your remote or online course. For additional support, please see the CTL Academic Continuity Guide or book a one-on-one consultation with a CTL expert.

Setting Up Your Remote or Online Course

The transition from in-person teaching to online or remote teaching can be jarring. However, there are many resources to help you create a strong teaching and learning experience. (Visit the CTL Academic Continuity Guide to view faculty webinars, and more.)

When planning and setting up your course, think about which pre-existing course materials can easily be pivoted to an online or remote format. You’ll also want to consider what the learning outcomes of your course are; what can be realistically addressed in an online or remote setting; and what might have to be changed or even removed given the new learning environment.

The University has resources to help with lecture capture; synchronous and asynchronous online tools; and guides on setting up your Learning Management Site (which we call Quercus here at UTSC). For questions regarding Quercus, you can always reach out to CTL’s Educational Technologies team (Quercus.utsc@utoronto.ca) or check out the tip sheet index page for specific guides on various tools.

It is important to discuss with your department the specifics of your course, and the components that will happen synchronously and/or asynchronously. Provide options for students to engage with the course, the content and even you in the various spaces they find themselves in. Regardless of whether you are hoping for a synchronous or asynchronous experience, we encourage you to always provide asynchronous opportunities for your students (e.g. recorded lectures and discussion boards) as engaging synchronously may not always be an option for them.

Instructors are encouraged to be inclusive and flexible and to consider the student perspective when establishing requirements for online learning. For example, there are many valid reasons why a student might opt to (or need to) turn their camera off. Instructors should facilitate various opportunities to promote participation and engagement. Some students in synchronous courses may also need to access recorded materials at other times.

Designing Your Assessments

Many assessments lend themselves well to an online or remote format. For example, students are still able to upload research papers and any electronic assignments. However, some assessments require a bit of modification. Regardless of the assessment structure, keep in mind technological obstacles that could affect both you and your students. It is important to ensure the pedagogy is leading the technology to ensure the appropriate technologies are being used.
to support your learning goals, teaching, and students’ learning. All of these questions and answers should inform how you approach assessment design in remote and online teaching.

For more information on addressing various learning outcomes through remote or online assessments, please see the CTL Academic Continuity Guide.

**Engaging Your Students**

One of the major challenges of remote and online teaching is the lack of nonverbal cues, which makes it a bit harder for students to connect with each other and develop a strong sense of community. Below are some strategies on fostering community in an online, asynchronous environment.

1) Adopt a friendly, welcoming tone in your correspondence with students.
2) Create space (such as discussion boards) for students to interact with each other.
3) Communicate your expectations to students – and communicate what students can expect of you.
4) Create space for them to get to know you, whether through office hours, announcements or even discussion-board posts.

**Promoting Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity can be very challenging in a remote environment. However, being clear with students about your expectations and their responsibilities can help promote academic integrity. For further assistance, please read Academic Integrity and Teaching Online/Remotely.

**Supporting Students and Your Teaching Team**

Although our students and TAs may be more comfortable with technology, the technologies that we implement in our courses (e.g. learning management systems, synchronous teaching tools) are often new to them. Providing clear instructions to both TAs and students on how to use each technology will help students succeed. We also suggest highlighting the supports available to them. With your TAs, be clear about your expectations and goals for the course early and offer them plenty of opportunities to ask questions. For more information on TA support, see the CTSI TA Tip Sheet. For more information on student support, see the CTL Academic Learning Support Site.

**Making It Accessible**

It is essential to do everything within our control to support and accommodate students in need. Although remote and online teaching can create some complexities around this, reaching out to AccessAbility Services is a great first step in ensuring that your course is accessible to your students.
Keep in mind that students may not have access to technology, or may have obstacles around engaging with the course synchronously. We strongly suggest that all synchronous activities be paired with an asynchronous parallel activity. Furthermore, let your students know that you want to help them flourish in the classroom. Ask them if there are practices that you can adopt in order to promote a safe and engaging learning environment. One strategy is to have a pre-course survey via Quercus to gather demographic information (such as time zones), and learn about obstacles students might have regarding access and engagement.
Assessing Student Learning

There are many guides available to guide you through the process of designing effective assessments. How you assess your students varies greatly across discipline, year, context, and depends greatly on your learning outcomes. Below are some general guiding principles to help you with your assessment creation process. For more support, please reach out for a consultation with a CTL Educational Developer (ctl@utsc.utoronto.ca).

Guiding Principles for Assessing Students

1. What is the purpose/goal of your assessment? Clearly identify how your assessment connects and aligns with specific learning outcomes of the course.
2. Communicate clear expectations for learning. What knowledge and skills will they develop and/or expect to gain throughout the experience?
3. Communicate clear expectations around grades, policies and framework. Provide clear guidelines on what they need to do, when it’s due, and how they will be graded.
4. Provide examples and rubrics if possible. It can be extremely helpful to students to know what a quality example looks like. It is also helpful if students know what tools and guidelines (e.g. a rubric) you will be using to grade them, so show them so they know what to look out for.
5. Think about assessment tools not just for assessment, but also for learning. Are there ways of providing scaffolding to the assignment in order to help build the knowledge and skills in a structured and step-like manner?
6. Provide feedback on student progress often, with clear suggestions on how to improve.
7. Use a variety of assessment types and offer students options whenever possible.
8. Get feedback on your assessments if possible. Have a colleague review them or reach out to CTL for a consultation.
Supporting Academic Integrity through Writing and Research Assignments: Strategies for Instructors

The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* protects academic integrity at the University. Some examples of offences that are sanctioned under the Code include:

- **Plagiarism**: Using the words or ideas of another person without citing the source
- **Unauthorized Aids**: Using unauthorized aids, which could be considered cheating on tests and exams
- **Unauthorized Assistance**: Having someone else do the work for you
- ** Forgery or falsification**: Making a false statement, presenting a false document or signing someone else's name on a document required by the University
- **Personation**: Having someone else write an exam for you or writing an exam for someone else
- **Concocting**: Using false data or providing false references
- **Self-Plagiarism**: Submitting work for credit in a course when you have submitted it in another course

Instructors need to be aware of relevant policies and procedures if academic integrity offences are suspected. Additionally, instructors can be proactive about taking steps that can deter offences in the first place.

1. **Incorporate academic integrity into your course design**

   - Include an academic integrity statement in your syllabus. Writing and using a syllabus:
     
     academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/smart-strategies/writing-and-using-a-syllabus

   - Consider breaking larger assignments into steps or smaller assignments (often called “scaffolding”). Among the benefits, this practice may make plagiarism more difficult.

   - Ensure consistent assessment of academic integrity issues. For example, consider using a rubric that includes criteria relevant to academic integrity, such as correct citation and legitimate paraphrase/summary to ensure consistent marking across tutorial sessions. You may also wish to provide your TAs with some guidance on interpreting Turnitin reports to ensure they are all assessing the reports in the same way.

Integration, Turnitin (Quercus): [https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/integration-turnitin](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/integration-turnitin)

- Consider **practices recommended by U of T Writing Centres** for deterring plagiarism. Deterring Plagiarism: [https://writing.utoronto.ca/teaching-resources/deterring-plagiarism/](https://writing.utoronto.ca/teaching-resources/deterring-plagiarism/)

2. **Discuss academic integrity with your students**

- **Define academic integrity** and ensure students understand what it is. Highlight what it means in your discipline, course and specific assignments. Consider discussing academic integrity as part of training in professionalism. Academic Integrity, what is it exactly: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/tipsheet-code-brief](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/tipsheet-code-brief)

Academic Integrity Matters: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/academic-integrity-matters](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/academic-integrity-matters)

Academic Integrity at the University of Toronto: [https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/)

Classroom strategies: Talking about Academic Integrity


- **Highlight practices of your own discipline**, providing and discussing relevant examples. Model academic integrity through course materials, readings, slides, etc. Encourage students to ask questions. Tip: Consider speaking to students about codes of ethics for your professional organizations so that they can see the standards to which scholars in your area are held.

- **Ensure assignment instructions include an explanation of what is and is not allowed.** Remember that your students will have worked under different expectations in high school, as well as different expectations in other courses, possibly even within your own department.

- Emphasize that there are **rules for academic integrity at the university and that there are consequences for breaking the rules**. These rules support academic standards and fairness for all students. Key Consequences: academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/key-consequences

- Encourage students to attend the campus **Academic Integrity Matters workshop**. For more information, please email integrityadmin@utsc.utoronto.ca.
3. Ensure your students have academic skills needed for your assignments

**Identify academic skills that students will need to complete your assignment.** Consider if they have these academic skills, such as writing, paraphrasing/summary, research, using citation, or if there are gaps.

If needed, **help students learn academic skills** needed to complete your assignment. Please contact the Centre for Teaching and Learning and/or UTSC Library for support.

- Centre for Teaching and Learning: ctl@utsc.utoronto.ca
- UTSC Library – Liaison Librarians: https://utsc.library.utoronto.ca/librarians

4. Encourage student self-evaluation of their work to ensure academic integrity

- Consider including an **academic integrity checklist** with your assignments to encourage your students to check their work, such as the following one from York University.

  Academic Integrity Checklist: https://www.library.yorku.ca/spark/academic_integrity/Academic%20Integrity%20Checklist.pdf

- Consider **allowing students to use Turnitin to assess their own drafts** for any academic integrity violations.


5. Be aware of policies and procedures to follow if you suspect a student has committed an academic offence

- Ensure that you and your TAs know about the **process for reporting suspected academic offences at UTSC.** Familiarize yourself with procedures as required under the *Code of Behaviours on Academic Matters.*


6. Be aware of how an academic offence allegation may affect student mental health
Regardless of the circumstances, students who are faced with an allegation of academic offences may react with panic or extreme anxiety. Be ready to provide students with contact information for Health and Wellness and other mental health resources.

Health and Wellness Centre: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/hwc/health-wellness-centre](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/hwc/health-wellness-centre)

- Students may panic about the impact that the offence will have on their GPA, graduate school applications or career plans. Students can visit counsellors in AA&CC to address these issues.

Academic Advising: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/academic-advising-career-centre](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/academic-advising-career-centre)
Inclusive Teaching
Tina Doyle, AccessAbility Services, and Nancy Johnston, CTL

“A university student with disabilities wants to learn like any other student. Learning requires a little creativity and an open mind.” – a UTSC student

What is Inclusive Teaching?
Inclusive teaching is an approach to curriculum design that integrates active learning methods to respond to student learners who come to our classrooms with a breadth of different learning abilities and backgrounds. Universal Design (UD) in education – or Universal Instructional Design (UID) – is a proactive method used to engage and anticipate diverse student learning needs, rather than react to individual learning concerns as they arise.

The principles and methods of UD or UID can help you to:

• promote accessibility and fairness
• develop inclusive teaching methods that minimize unnecessary effort
  improve clarity, simplicity and consistency in communication
• build flexibility in assessment and approaches
• create a supportive student environment and plan to minimize accommodation needs

Student Rights and Accommodations
Canadian universities and colleges are committed ethically and legally to make their campuses accessible and their curriculum inclusive. The University of Toronto, like other campuses, recognizes the rights of all students. Equal access to education is recognized as integral to the university’s larger plan for diversity, human rights and ethical practice in education. Students are entitled to equitable treatment and reasonable access to facilities and services. Some typical accommodations may include note-taking support; requests for electronic copies of course materials (for alternative formatting); use of technical devices; exam and test support outside of class; and additional time in class or during test taking.

Some tips for instructors:

• Invite students with disabilities to talk to you about accommodation needs during your office hours. Avoid asking for personal or medical information
• Talk to AccessAbility Services, CTL or your department when making complex accommodations.
• Keep accommodation letters and requests confidential. Don’t make a student’s accommodation information (such as note-taking needs) public in the classroom.
• TAs should direct accommodation requests to the instructor.
**Student Experience and Inclusive Practices**

Preplanning your course and introducing inclusive strategies support a breadth of student needs and may set the groundwork for accommodation. Building some flexibility in your course design and considering alternative methods of testing and class activities can reduce time and energy adapting later to student needs. The most common accommodation requests are:

- Note-taking in the classroom
- Use of technology in the classroom (such as laptops for notes)
- Providing course materials, such as lecture slides
- Alternative testing, such as alternative testing sites (with AccessAbility Services)

**Students with Disabilities Offer Advice on Inclusive Teaching**

We asked students registered in AccessAbility Services to speak about their positive learning experiences at UTSC. Students offered these strategies and suggested they would also benefit all students:

- Provide a syllabus that communicates deadlines, grading expectations, readings.
- Offer a regular break during 2-hour lectures.
- Make course materials available electronically; post lectures or class outlines before class to promote participation.
- Use adapted or new technology with a variety of other teaching methods.
- Be available during regular office hours.
- Create a welcoming environment that includes students with disabilities: use an accessibility statement.*
- Reduce unnecessary learning barriers that may add stress. Support student use of note-takers and other learning assistants.
- Support student use of assistive devices (such as recorders, FM systems).
- Break class activities and assignments into steps; scaffold or relate assignments to support learning goals.

*The following is recommended for inclusion in your syllabus by CTL/AA:

Accessibility: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. I will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Inquiries are confidential. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Contact them at 416-287-7560 or ability@utsc.utoronto.ca.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning, AccessAbility Services, and the AODA offices have created support materials on inclusive teaching and collaborated on supporting faculty at U of T. Planning to minimize common accommodation needs in your course design and planning can enhance the learning experience.
environment for all students. The following list of documents are meant to draw attention to supports available at U of T on making accommodations and planning to support students both in person and online.

A Tri-Campus University of Toronto committee created a Faculty FAQ’s on Accessibility and Accommodation in relation to COVID-19 Updates. This document

**Tips for Accessibility When Moving to Online Course Delivery [PDF]**

In collaboration, Tina Doyle, director of AccessAbility Services and Nancy Johnston, Centre for Teaching and Learning, published an article from a student survey about positive changes in courses, “Inclusive Teaching: Perspectives of Students with Disabilities”


The AccessAbility Services office has created a Faculty FAQ page about providing accommodations for students with disabilities and other support:

https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/faculty-faq

The following links provide information from the AODA office in collaboration with other offices on suggestions for making courses and programmes accessible.


The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (2021) has recently published a summary of student perspectives on accessible learning in remote education:

**Improving the Accessibility of Remote Education: Lessons from the pandemic and recommendations**

**Bibliography**

ACCESS Project. 2008. The History and Philosophy of UDL. Colorado State U.


High-quality experiential learning (EL)* is a core component of UTSC’s academic mission and an integral part of the academic experience for all students at UTSC. Over the years, UTSC has provided EL opportunities for students that include co-op, community-engaged learning, internships, practicum, research-intensive teaching in EL, innovation and entrepreneurship, and international EL experiences. The Centre for Teaching and Learning’s Community Based Learning and Outreach program has helped provide community placements for students across disciplines.

UTSC is currently engaged in expanding and strengthening campus-wide support for instructors who wish to provide EL experiences for their students. Please visit the following EL websites for a breadth of faculty resources including information about funding opportunities:

https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/209988/pages/remote-experiential-learning-at-utsc

https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/experiential-learning and
https://experientiallearning.utoronto.ca/

The Experiential Learning Steering Committee leads the initiative that includes encouraging and supporting academic units to strengthen EL opportunities, strengthening and aligning coordination for EL activities across UTSC, and working closely with central U of T offices on EL-related issues. The group is composed of directors and managers of stakeholder units across the campus, including the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning.

If you are interested in exploring ways in which you might integrate EL opportunities for students into your teaching, please contact the following:

**Dr. Al Hearn**, Educational Developer, Experiential Learning, Centre for Teaching and Learning: al.hearn@utoronto.ca

- Al supports course and curriculum development, course delivery, student assessment, and grant writing as it relates to EL.

**Dr. Kamini Persaud**, Coordinator, Experiential Learning, Centre for Teaching and Learning: kamini.persaud@utoronto.ca

- Kamini coordinates information pertinent to UTSC EL-interested faculty, supports an EL community of practice, and is available for consultation to consider your interests and provide direction. (Kamini will be on Sabbatical 2021-2022 and will have limited contact)

**Julie Witt and Saddaf Syed**, Integrated Learning Experiences (ILE) Coordinators: utsc.ile@utoronto.ca
Julie (julie.witt@utoronto.ca) and Saddaf (saddaf.syed@utoronto.ca) work with academic departments and instructors to research and support connections with community organizations and develop placement opportunities for students.

**Dave Fenton**, Entrepreneurship and Work Integrated Learning Program Coordinator: dave.fenton@utoronto.ca

- Dave works with management instructors to research and support connections with community organizations, develop placement opportunities for students and to seek funding for EL courses and projects.

**Wei Huang**, Career Counsellor, Experiential Learning, Academic Advising & Career Centre: weinancy.huang@utoronto.ca

- For EL student preparation support on broad topics such as increasing student understanding of the purpose of EL and training in professional skills.

Consider joining the UTSC EL listserv (experiential-learning@utsc.utoronto.ca), a faculty mailing list intended to facilitate communication and increase awareness of experiential learning programming and events at UTSC. To join, email experiential-learning-request@utsc.utoronto.ca and type “subscribe” into the subject line.

*Experiential Learning* is an umbrella phrase that captures a wide variety of learning experiences and is considered a high-impact practice. Other phrases that refer to some kind of experiential opportunity include work-integrated learning, community-engaged learning, community based learning and integrated learning. See: Re-thinking Higher Education Curricula: Increasing Impact through Experiential, Work-Integrated, and Community-Engaged Learning. University of Toronto White Paper. June 2017.

Indigenizing the Curriculum and Working with Indigenous Students

Contacts at UTSC:
Kelly Crawford, Assistant Director, Indigenous Initiatives: kelly.crawford@utoronto.ca or 416-434-1763
Dani Kwan-Lafond, Assistant Professor – Teaching Stream. Dept of Sociology: dani.kwan.lafond@utoronto.ca

4Rs APPROACH

Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility

This Guide draws from an Indigenous 4Rs Framework founded on the principles of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility (Barnhart & Kirkness, 2003). This foundational framework provides ways to imagine reorienting the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the university environment. Rather than expecting Indigenous students to assimilate into the dominant university culture, this framework places responsibility on institutions and their representatives to learn about Indigenous peoples and to reflect upon and unlearn ethnocentric bias. The framework also places responsibility on university communities to develop relationships, and better understand how processes of colonialism and dominant Euro-Western norms are embedded in Canada’s educational system. Dr. Michelle Pidgeon (2016, 2008) has tailored the 4Rs Framework in a way that privileges Indigenous ways of being and knowing. This framework recognizes the holistic and interconnected nature of Indigenous knowledge systems and Indigenous learners.

**RESPECT** for perspectives that Indigenous students bring into the learning environment, for Indigenous thought and scholarship in academic discourses, and for Indigenous ways of knowing as valid in the academy.

**RELEVANCE** means that Indigenous students’ interests and diverse learning needs are considered in the development and delivery of university curriculum, policies, practices, programs, and services.

**RECIPROCITY** involves establishing mutually beneficial relationships between local Indigenous peoples and the university and between and among faculty, staff, and Indigenous students.

**RESPONSIBILITY** entails taking critical and meaningful action at personal and institutional levels that contributes to removing systemic barriers and to engaging all students and communities in the long-term processes of reconciliation.

Figure 2: Guide to Working with Indigenous Students: https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/indigenousguide.html
Support for Indigenization: Teaching and Learning

Indigenizing Curriculum

Indigenous people have a long and complicated history with Canadian society; this includes a problematic relationship with researchers, academics, and other data collectors (RCAP, 1999). Despite improvements in establishing an inclusive space for working with Indigenous peoples, the approaches used for this work are typically framed, collected, and used in a non-Indigenous manner, and don’t necessarily benefit Indigenous people or their communities (TCPJ, 2010).

The fundamental difficulty for academics working with Indigenous people is the underlying Western belief (to some extent) of knowledge in positivistic terms, which contrasts with the relativistic approach to knowledge that Indigenous people have (Little Bear, 2000). It is hard for many Western academics to appreciate how Indigenous people conceptualize and use knowledge, for example, the significance of spirit, land and sky, the four directions, and our relationships to ancestors, animals, and plants, and how they transmit knowledge and understanding. Academics can, and do, describe Indigenous worldviews, but communicating the meaning, role, and use of these worldviews has been exceptionally difficult (Little Bear, 2000). As such, it is inevitable that academics from a non-Indigenous worldview will unintentionally codify knowledge with their own values and rules about knowledge and, thereby, continue to colonize Indigenous people through the inauthentic teaching of Indigenous knowledge, history or culture.

Indigenization is a strategic and purposeful process to work with and for Indigenous education and people, while supporting the development of deeper understanding with non-Indigenous people.

Contact

Stryker Calvez, PhD – Education Development Specialist
GMCTL, Room 50 Murray Building, 306-966-6280, stryker.calvez@usask.ca
Making Classes More Inclusive and Equitable for Multilingual Students
by Elaine Khoo, CTL

Introduction

Multilingual students have a great deal to contribute to their classes but may be hampered by their lack of Academic English proficiency. Many of them are English Language Learners (ELLs) who have to cope with enormous pressures related to their lack of ability to communicate effectively in English as well as their different cultural conditioning and expectations.

Experience working with ELLs at UTSC provides evidence on how hard ESL students work to meet academic requirements. Many make dramatic progress in their courses when they receive the necessary support and encouragement.

To enable your students to get a reality check on their level of Academic English and use the support available, encourage them to do the Academic English Health Check (AEHC) in the first week of the semester.

Ways to Support Your Students

The following strategies can support the ELLs in your class and assist them in getting the most out of it.

Oral and Written Communication

- Build vocabulary and concept learning into lessons
- Speak more slowly in class
- Write key concepts or terms on the board
- Print or write legibly to reduce time deciphering instructions
- Avoid too many abbreviations or shorthand versions
- Offer an outline or agenda (class outlines; print instructions)
- Use a variety of graphic organizers to show relationships between ideas, concepts and facts

Minimize “unnecessary noise”

- Reduce use of culturally specific slang, idioms, jokes or references to Canadian or American culture
- Provide context for cultural references when significant
- Emphasize your complex ideas/concepts
Encourage Participation

- Organize group work with attention to group dynamics
- Encourage diverse groups for discussion
- Instruct students on positive/constructive feedback in peer work
- Encourage participation and direct questions to ELLs
- Incorporate a variety of ways to participate (online responses, submitted questions, small group work)

Oral Presentations

- Build some flexibility for group presentations
- Encourage peer or group participation for mutual support

Assignment design

- Provide written instructions
- Repeat oral instructions with written ones
- Define plagiarism and disciplinary methods of referencing by examples

Grading Remarks and Criteria

- Provide students with the grading criteria to explain relative significance of grammar issues
- Encourage markers to provide substantive feedback or final explanations for grades
- Use a few full sentences rather than multiple single-word comments

Encourage all students to use other support

- Refer students to the English Language development programs and services for individualized help
- Review and announce programs and services such as Communications Cafés, seminars and workshops
Working with Your TAs: Six Key Areas for TA Training and Development

1. Roles and Responsibilities

Review the big picture with your course TAs: What are the key learning objectives of the course?

- What are your goals and the student learning outcomes for any tutorials/labs associated with the course?
- What kinds of teaching approaches will your TAs be using in the tutorials/labs? What kinds of learning activities will they be expected to lead with students? (Note: This will help you decide what training your TAs should receive – see Section 3 below.)
- How do TAs fit into the course as a whole? How does their work help build toward course objectives?
- For which portion(s) of the course are TAs directly responsible?
- For what elements of student support or student skills developments are TAs responsible? E.g.: Writing skills? Research skills? Should they refer students who are in difficulty or crisis, and if so, how and where?
- What are the students responsible for doing?
- What are your obligations toward the TAs?

2. Boundaries

Discuss limitations of the TA role.

- TAs should not be re-lecturing course material – they are not yet professors nor are they different versions of you.
- TAs cannot go rogue and change due dates or design tests or assignments on their own without consulting you. Explain there are clear procedures for diverging from a syllabus and they must avoid doing so.
- TAs are not allowed to handle cases of suspected plagiarism, so let them know what the process is if they encounter it.
- Provide guidance on how to establish and maintain boundaries with students.
- Advise that they should inform you immediately if there is a possible conflict of interest between them and a student (e.g. a personal relationship with someone in the course).
- Discuss their working relationship with you and the Course Coordinator (if applicable).

3. Description of Duties: Questions to Consider When Drawing Up the List of Duties for Your TAs

Training

a. A minimum of 3 hours of employment training is mandatory in a first TA appointment at U of T; first-time Course Instructors are to receive 6 hours of training.

b. TAs who lead tutorials or labs must receive one hour of training that is directly relevant for the instructional focus of the tutorial or lab. This means that you should identify which of the University’s four tutorial categories your TAs should be trained in:
discussion teaching, skill development, review, lab/practical. If the TAs lead large
tutorials, as determined by a U of T formula, they must receive an additional hour of
training for adapting teaching techniques to larger tutorials.

c. Course-specific information should be provided in a pre-course meeting. This meeting
should be indicated in their contract, as should all course-specific meetings.

d. Additional training specific to each department or course may be specified in the TA’s
contract.

e. Relevant, key departmental, divisional and institutional policies and procedures must be
communicated to TAs. When the TAs receive this information, either at the mandatory
training session or the pre-course meeting, have them sign for receipt of any hard copy
information.

f. Consider getting a senior TA involved in training and pre-course meetings, if possible.

Preparation

a. Clarify what TAs are expected to already know.

b. Prep time covers preparation of instructional materials, not learning of subject content.

c. How much time should it take to prepare a typical lab/tutorial section/class?

d. How much time should it take to prepare a quiz/test/essay question/exam?

e. Provide strategies for time management (both in terms of preparing a realistic amount
of material for a set amount of time, and managing time while teaching within a section
or lab).

f. If possible, provide a sample lesson plan or a sample assignment to use as a model.

Contact – describe what counts as “contact time” with students

a. How and when are office hours to be conducted, if applicable? What should happen
during office hours?

b. Consider out-of-the-classroom contact. Can TAs meet with students in cafés or in the
library to review class material?

c. Virtual contact: How much email is too much email? Can TAs grade assignments that are
submitted via email attachments? Are TAs even expected to correspond with students
via email? A specific time limit on email use would be helpful.

d. Will TAs be required to attend lectures? If so, this must be included in the Description of
Duties and Allocation of Hours (DDAH) form.

Grading

a. Provide explicit instructions and guidelines for evaluation of assignments.
b. If applicable, provide a rubric.

c. If possible, provide a sample graded assignment. You could either use an anonymized copy from a former student in the course or invent your own with comments.

d. If possible, run a group grading session before TAs must mark the first assignment or exam; ask TAs to mark the assignment first individually and then come together to discuss the comments and grades given. TAs should explain and justify their feedback and marks.

Other Duties

a. Exam invigilation/proctoring
b. Designing the mid-term or final exam
c. Assignment or test design
d. Management of discussion or student questions in Quercus
e. Working as a Lead TA
f. Preparation of study guides or manuals for students
g. Uploading information into the portal (e.g. grades) or management of course materials in the portal
h. Photocopying

4. Expectations

- Your expectations regarding TAs: preparedness, content competence, overall professionalism (punctuality, etc.), conduct with other TAs in the team, conduct in class, conduct outside of class, quality of feedback given to students, availability/responsiveness.
- Your expectations for students: in-class conduct, how students should progress through the course (what are potential blocks that you might anticipate?), your definition of “student success.”
- What TAs should expect from students: Let the TAs know what kinds of students they’ll be working with in this course. What the TAs can expect from you.

5. Communications

How will you stay in touch with your TAs?

- Mass emails?
- Portal community set up for course TAs?
- Online newsletter?
- How often should you check in with them and they with you?
• How should TAs communicate with students? What constitutes acceptable or unacceptable discourse?
• TAs should acknowledge all course information and official documents received – if possible, in writing.

6. Email Etiquette (does your department have a specific email policy?)

• Recommend TAs adopt office email etiquette; assume that messages are public and could be read by anyone; all messages should have a professional tone; messages should be brief.
• TAs should acknowledge ALL emails from you and from their students – they don’t need to answer every message, but a brief acknowledgement should be sent.
• Recommend to TAs that they:
  - Be concise, polite
  - Avoid teaching complex or well-lectured material via email
  - Never argue via email
  - Never give out grades via email (or discuss grades at all)

7. Additional Support – Some Options

• If at all possible, share your lesson plans, representative teaching materials and best strategies.
• Encourage TAs to also share their materials; perhaps build a course repository for instructors.
• Provide a list of useful websites and resources, as well as a list of contacts.
• For international TAs, provide a list of “gambits”– sentence fragments (teaching phrases) they can use in specific situations when speaking with students.
• Also for international TAs, provide a list of vocabulary or terms useful for teaching in your discipline.
• Perform in-class observations for your TAs and invite them to observe you teaching.
• Organize informal gatherings (brown-bag or pizza lunches, coffee breaks) for TAs to vent frustrations and raise issues, concerns or questions.
• Invite senior TAs to pair up with junior TAs (the buddy system).
• Identify a mentor in the department for you (a senior colleague with experience managing a TA).

Questions regarding the CUPE 3902 Unit 1 collective agreement should be directed to the Designated Authority in your department or to Labour Relations.

From the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation:

https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/working-w-grads/six-areas/
Classroom Management

First Class Strategies

McKeachie, in his book *McKeachie’s Teaching Tips* (2006, p. 28), suggests some goals for the first day of class.

By the end of the first day, students will have:

1. A sense of where they’re going and how they’ll get there
2. A feeling that the other members of the class are not strangers, that you and they are forming a group in which it’s safe to participate
3. An awareness that you care about their learning
4. An expectation that the class will be both valuable and fun

The following are strategies that can help you meet these goals in your first class.

PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

- Visit your classroom prior to the first day; familiarize yourself with the room and equipment. Walk around the room to assess the physical space, sightlines and acoustics.
- Ensure that your course outlines are prepared, photocopied and ready to hand out during the first class, and, if relevant, uploaded to Quercus or the course website.
- Ensure that required texts have been ordered or placed on reserve in the appropriate library. If you have an opportunity, check that they’re appropriately placed and labelled at the bookstore. Put items on course reserve in the library.
- Obtain an up-to-date copy of the class list from your department or from Quercus.
- Familiarize yourself with administrative policy regarding prerequisites, waiting lists, late enrolment and add/drop dates. Students often have questions about these policies on the first day of class.
- Meet with your TA or lab assistant to go over the course content, your expectations for their work, office hours, and other relevant issues. (Also see Working With Your TAs, pg. 46.)
- If you’ve included a research assignment in your course, consider contacting the UTSC liaison librarian for your subject area. He/she can tell you about various services the library offers to support teaching, and arrange support for your course at your request.

THE FIRST DAY – SETTING THE TONE

The first day is an important opportunity to model how you hope and expect that classes will proceed throughout the semester or year, and to get students immediately engaged in course topics. To set a tone that will support success throughout the course, you might:

- Plan to use all of the time in your first class. This will communicate that you take class sessions and your students’ learning seriously.
- Build a sense of community through active participation. Plan an activity that allows students to get to know you and each other or to solve problems (see some suggestions in “Building a Classroom Community,” pg. 34).
• Describe how class time will be structured, and what kinds of learning activities (lecture, discussion, small-group work, etc.) students can expect to experience during class sessions.
• Clarify, via a handout or discussion, your expectations for students, including those for in-class behaviour and participation, preparation for class, assignments and interaction with you and the TAs.
• Explain your organization of the course, including your selection of texts and materials.
• Contextualize academic regulations and standards (such as those regarding academic integrity) within the broader goals and outcomes of advanced education in the field and within the academic community.
• Provide a brief overview or review of the material students must have already mastered in order to succeed in the course.
• Introduce the subject matter of the course. You can provide a brief overview of course topics, identify key questions you will address or introduce a key concept in an engaging manner (e.g., you might stage a provocative demonstration, work through a case study or pose a controversial question). See below for one such example from a U of T instructor.

Strategies from U of T instructors
You might consider using your first class to introduce students to the big questions the course will consider. According to award-winning U of T English professor Nick Mount, the first class is an opportunity to model scholarly curiosity in your discipline – perhaps through a specific example that would allow you to move from the particular to the general. For instance:

A professor of physics enters class and displays a tennis ball. He claims that, in 20 minutes, he will throw the tennis ball through the wall. He spends 20 minutes providing a lecture that details specific concepts from physics that prove that it is indeed possible to throw an object through a solid wall. At the end of 20 minutes, he throws the tennis ball at the wall. It does not, of course, go through – but in that 20 minutes, he has described some of the counter-intuitive and mysterious properties of matter, an idea that will help to frame students’ understanding of course topics throughout the semester.

THE FIRST DAY – INTRODUCING COURSE DETAILS, POLICIES AND RESOURCES
The first day is also an opportunity to draw student attention to course details, expectations and policies, and to the resources that can help them succeed. At some point during the first class, it is usually beneficial to:

• Provide some information about yourself, including your professional background and academic interests, as well as the best ways to contact you.
• Introduce the syllabus and ensure students have time to read and discuss it. Share reasons for your approaches and expectations and respond to questions and students’ contributions. Make modifications if necessary.

Strategies from U of T instructors
Carol Rolheiser, award-winning U of T professor and Director of the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, recommends conducting a “Say Something” exercise to introduce the syllabus to your students:

• Distribute the syllabus and ask students to review specified portions.
• Ask students to pair with a partner to discuss the syllabus. Students may identify a question about the course or about course policies, identify sections of the course that are of particular interest to them, identify topics or assignments that they anticipate to be challenging, or make a connection to previous course work or personal interests.
Once students have had an opportunity to read and discuss the syllabus, provide an opportunity for students to raise questions or to comment on the course.

Discuss evaluation and grading approaches. Help students see the connections between evaluation methods and course goals. Provide suggestions on how to succeed in your class.

Describe resources that will support learning and let students know how to access these. These resources might include you as the instructor, other course staff, the course website or other course materials, or divisional or institutional student support services. You might also show them the Library resources button in your Quercus course, which includes library resources for your discipline. The resources listed can be modified at your request. Contact your UTSC liaison librarian for assistance. You might also provide strategies for how students can serve as peer support for each other (through, for example, study groups or by sharing contact information for questions).

**AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST CLASS**

- Leave some time to address students’ concerns and questions.
- Request some feedback from your students about their first impressions of the course.
- At the end of the first class, have students complete a 2-minute anonymous written reaction to the first class session. You might ask them to note any questions they still have, their goals for taking the course, the topics they are most excited about or most concerned about, or how they see this course interacting with their personal or professional interests. This demonstrates an interest in them and their learning, and begins to build a learning climate where students have responsibilities for thinking about their learning and providing input to the instructor. You might use some of their responses to begin the next class session.
- Before dismissing the class, briefly discuss what you will be covering at your next meeting and give them something to do before the next class (e.g. a reading or a short assignment).

**BUILDING A CLASSROOM COMMUNITY**

The first day is also a good opportunity to get to know the students and to have them get to know each other, in order to pre-empt some of the challenges anonymity in the university environment can cause. Some students, especially first-year students, may also have questions or concerns about your expectations or the expectations of the university environment in general. To build community and address some of these anxieties, some instructors have found success in the following strategies:

- Ask students to fill out information cards with their name, field of study and a memorable detail (this can take the place of attendance).
- Use clickers or flash cards to poll students about any anxieties they have about the course or about university in general, or about their current familiarity with the topics of the course.
- Assess students’ prior knowledge. You might poll them about previous courses in the subject, conduct a brief (anonymous) clicker quiz or ask them about previous experience with the topic. Communicate the value of the diverse experiences that students can bring to the course.
- Conduct an icebreaker activity, such as asking students to introduce themselves and share the last book they’ve read, or describe their interest in the course topic. With a small class, everyone can participate; with a large class, you may ask students to introduce themselves to a neighbour, or give small groups of students a short problem to solve and present to the rest of the class.
- If students are required to complete a research assignment in your course, you may consider an activity to assess their information literacy skills. Consider talking to your liaison librarian who can suggest an appropriate assessment.
Navigating Microaggressions

The past year has had educators teaching in various online learning environments, and while this mode has many benefits, it has unfortunately produced unexpected consequences. One of these consequences has been the increase of microaggressions, which creates an unwelcome and uncomfortable learning environment that negatively impacts students and instructors. Importantly, these aggressions can occur and take shape in the following ways: peer-to-peer, directed towards the instructor or TA, or perpetrated by the instructor or TA. Therefore, recognizing the impact of microaggressions on the learning process and ensuring they are addressed and not tolerated is critical in successfully developing inclusive and anti-racist learning environments. To help you navigate microaggressions in your classroom (i.e., online, blended, or in-person), please check out the following resources:

1. University Affairs Article – Navigating Microaggressions in the Online Learning Environment
2. Working Group Document – Navigating Microaggressions in the Classroom
Professional and Faculty Development
Events, Awards and Grants

Teaching Grants: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/teaching-grants](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/teaching-grants)

There are several teaching grant programs to which instructors can apply for funds to enhance their courses for deeper student engagement. The CTL grant program (with two rounds per year) offers several different grants: enhancement, equipment, assessment, professional development, seed and matching funds, and a software grant (through IITS). Annually, the U of T Provost’s office offers LEAF and ITIF grants.

Teaching Awards: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/teaching-award-nominations](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/teaching-award-nominations)

There are various awards that recognize excellence in teaching – including UTSC, U of T, provincial and national awards. There are also TA awards.

Teaching at UTSC: Policies and Best Practices

This event is offered at the start of each semester for UTSC faculty. It covers fundamentals of creating and teaching a well-run course, key teaching policies, educational technologies, working with TAs, support for your courses and your students, and more.

Director’s Workshops:

CTL’s Director holds workshops on Teaching Portfolios, Teaching Awards and Teaching Grants throughout the academic year.

Educator Workshops: [https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/educator-exchange-workshop-series](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/educator-exchange-workshop-series)

This workshop series offers one or two teaching-related events per month from September to April each year. Topics can include presentations/discussions on engaging students, working with TAs, developing better multiple-choice exams, innovative teaching practices, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Experiential Learning, and more.

Celebration of Teaching and Faculty Showcase

This annual event (typically in April each year) is an opportunity to celebrate UTSC’s teaching excellence, and share instructional knowledge and expertise. This event usually includes plenary speakers, roundtable discussions and/or concurrent sessions, and a poster/interactive display session. It is an excellent opportunity to connect with faculty in other disciplines.
Exploring Best Practices in Teaching and Learning Course:

We are currently piloting a year-long course for educators and faculty that aims to engage participants deeply with pedagogical best practices across a variety of topics. Each session is 2 hours long and will encompass a combination of facilitated discussion and application-based opportunities. The course only accepts a small number of participants each year and applications open up in June.

TA and Grad Student Programming: https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/grad-students

CTL coordinates a suite of programming (including TA training) that your grad students and/or TAs can attend to enhance their teaching skills and professional development.

More Information

See the list of CTL contacts if you have further questions about these programs and services.

For more events and opportunities: https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl.

There are also tri-campus programs and opportunities available to you.

Visit https://teaching.utoronto.ca/about-ctsi/.
Guidelines for the Assessment of the Effectiveness of Teaching

“The UTSC Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching (e.g. divisional guidelines) establish the norms and expectations for teaching at UTSC, describe how teaching effectiveness is to be evaluated at the University of Toronto Scarborough and specifies what documentation should be collected to support that assessment. These Divisional guidelines apply to the evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness for faculty in the Tenure Stream (Section A) and Teaching Stream (Section B) at the University of Toronto Scarborough. Guidelines for each stream are provided in separate sections for clarity.” (p. 4)

- Office of the Dean and Vice-Principal (Academic), University of Toronto Scarborough, 2017-18

Course Evaluations

The University of Toronto is committed to ensuring the quality of its academic programs, its teaching and the learning experiences of its students. An essential component of our commitment to teaching excellence is the regular evaluation of courses by students. At the University of Toronto, course evaluations are conducted to collect formative data for instructors to improve their teaching, to provide summative data for administrative purposes (such as annual merit, tenure and promotion review) and for program and curriculum review, and to provide members of the University community, including students, with information about teaching and courses at the university.

More info about the Course Evaluation Framework and Process
https://courseevaluations.utoronto.ca/ (login required)
## Support for Your Course
### Consult with CTL

CTL offers one-to-one consultations for all course instructors (faculty and CUPE instructors).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karen McCrindle, Director, CTL</td>
<td>Portfolio construction, program creation and review, analysis of course evaluations, teaching award nominations, teaching grants and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah King</td>
<td>Creating effective writing assignments and scaffolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Johnston</td>
<td>Creating effective writing assignments and scaffolding, writing in the disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zohreh Shahbazi - On leave to January 2021</td>
<td>Collaborative learning and mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamini Persaud – On short term leave</td>
<td>Service Learning, E-Portfolios, Reflective Writing, Experiential Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine Khoo</td>
<td>Supporting English language learners in accelerated academic integration, inclusive assignment and test design, Academic English Health Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiangying Huo</td>
<td>Supporting English language learners in accelerated academic integration, inclusive assignment and test design, Academic English Health Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Kleeb</td>
<td>Supporting English language learners in accelerated academic integration, inclusive assignment and test design, Academic English Health Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Chan, Senior Educational</td>
<td>Syllabus and course design, assessment design, classroom management, course troubleshooting, degree learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>Expectations and curriculum mapping, teaching grants, faculty professional development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Hearn, Educational Developer</td>
<td>Experiential learning, grant applications regarding experiential learning, work-integrated learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Experiential Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:al.hearn@utoronto.ca">al.hearn@utoronto.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krystle Phirangee, Educational</td>
<td>Assessment design, online course design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer – Assessment and Online Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adon Irani, Manager</td>
<td>Educational technologies in the classroom, Quercus solutions, online learning, test-scanning, learning modules and educational video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:adon.irani@utoronto.ca">adon.irani@utoronto.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Educational Technology and Other Tech Support

A. Quercus support (Learning Management System)

Quercus Help: quercus@utsc.utoronto.ca

More info about Quercus: https://uoft.me/AcademicContinuity

B. Information and Instructional Technology Services

Classrooms have projectors, teaching stations and Wi-Fi for instructor and student use. Faculty are encouraged to bring their own slide advance to class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom support</th>
<th><a href="https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/iits/classroom-support">https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/iits/classroom-support</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Classrooms equipped with a Teaching Station/Teaching Station Junior help provide an enhanced learning environment for students. Many classrooms have Teaching Stations built into the room itself and provide a standard function and user interface. | Teaching Station  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJiv8pERAeE &feature=youtu.be  
Teaching Station Junior  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHo0rujb5Mk &feature=youtu.be |
| Technical questions about assistive learning systems on campus | Contact av@utsc.utoronto.ca |
| Information about disability-related supports and accommodations | Contact: https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/contact-overview/ |
| For classroom and AV assistance: | Phone: 416-287-4357 (HELP)  
Email: av@utsc.utoronto.ca  
Office: AC200, IC35, BV487 |

Tips – Wi-Fi in Your Classroom

- Most classrooms have sufficient Wi-Fi access points to sustain heavy use, but best to always check first.
- Some devices may have an issue with connecting to U of T Wi-Fi system and we recommend asking students to test their laptops/phone in advance before quizzes.

CTL Services and Support for Instructors and Students

A. For Instructors
Teaching Support and Development

Contact: Dr. Karen McCrindle, (adteaching@utsc.utoronto.ca); Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning; Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning. Available for consultation on portfolio construction, program creation and review, analysis of course evaluations, teaching award nominations, teaching grants and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Writing and Language Support and Development

Contact: Dr. Sarah King, Writing support coordinator, sd.king@utoronto.ca

https://uoft.me/AcademicLearningSupport

English language support:

Contact: Dr. Elaine Khoo, English language support coordinator, elaine.khoo@utoronto.ca

https://uoft.me/AcademicLearningSupport

Math and Stats Support

Math Contact: To Dec. 31, 2020: Parker Glynn-Adey, parker.glynn.adey@utoronto.ca. Beginning Jan. 1, 2021: Zohreh Shahbazi, z.shahbazi@utoronto.ca.

https://uoft.me/AcademicLearningSupport

Educational Technology and WebOption

Quercus Help: quercus@utsc.utoronto.ca and https://uoft.me/AcademicContinuity

Curriculum Development

Contact: Dr. David Chan, Educational Developer, davidyt.chan@utoronto.ca

Service Learning and Outreach/Experiential Learning

Contact:-- Dr. Kamini Persaud, Coordinator, slo@utsc.utoronto.ca

https://utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/service-learning-outreach

TA and Graduate Student Support

https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/ta-support

TA and Graduate Student Professional Development
Contact: Dr. Greg Sharzer, greg.sharzer@utoronto.ca

Graduate Student Writing Support
Contact: Dr. Cindy Bongard, bongard@utsc.utoronto.ca

Test Scanning Services
Contact: scan-services@utsc.utoronto.ca

https://utsc.utoronto.ca/technology/test-scanning-services

Communications and Appointments for Karen McCrindle and Adon Irani:
Stacey Gibson: stacey.gibson@utoronto.ca

B. For Students

Writing and language support and development
Writing

English Language support
Math and Stats Support
Facilitated Study groups

https://uoft.me/AcademicLearningSupport
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Campus Contacts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AccessAbility Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and support for students with disabilities/health challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/">https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Advising and Career Centre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and supports for students including tip sheets, workshops, appointments, degree planning, and more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Integrity Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advises and administers relevant U of T codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/faq-0">https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/faq-0</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Student Centre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports all globally minded students, international and domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/utscinternational/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/utscinternational/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Wellness Centre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides medical, nursing, counselling, health promotion and education to UTSC students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/hwc/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/hwc/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity and Diversity Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDO promotes an equitable and inclusive campus community, free from discrimination or harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/edio/">https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/edio/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UTSC Library</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to U of T print and online collections, reserves, guides, digital scholarship, makerspace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.library.utoronto.ca/">https://utsc.library.utoronto.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photocopying (Academic Printing and Custom Publishing Services)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for official campus printed materials including exams, banners, shredding, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/businessdev/printing-services">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/businessdev/printing-services</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information and Instructional Technology Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom and AV support, phones, email, and more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/iits/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/iits/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vice Principal and Dean’s Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies (Academic Handbook), guidelines, funding opportunities, programs and curriculum and more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/vpdean/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registrar’s Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about the course timetable, key dates and deadlines, and more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/">https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vice-Principal, Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports, enhances and promotes research and innovation at UTSC and more</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="https://utsc.utoronto.ca/research/">https://utsc.utoronto.ca/research/</a></td>
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