

The Robert Gillespie
ACADEMIC SKILLS CENTRE



Instructor Support and Programming

OUR MISSION

The RGASC has a dual mission:

» For Students

To provide a full range of individual consultations, workshops, and programs to help **students** identify and develop the academic skills they need to be successful in their studies.

» For Instructors

To work collaboratively with University of Toronto Mississauga **instructors and teaching assistants** to help them create the best possible environments for learning in their classes, labs, and tutorials.

The RGASC provides UTM instructors and teaching assistants with support through one-on-one consultations, formative observations of teaching practices, academic skills workshops, and initiatives and programs focused on the enhancement of student learning.

Students meet with writing, numeracy and academic skills instructors





Maanjiwe Nendamowinan building.
Home of the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre.

INSTRUCTORS

The RGASC offers several resources for UTM instructors

The RGASC Educational Developers are available for one-on-one consultations to support the following:

» Course design or redesign of aspects of existing courses, including integrating evidence-based instructional and assessment strategies, fine-tuning syllabi, developing student learning outcomes, generating innovative ideas for inclusive and collaborative learning, and integrating Universal Design for Learning principles.

» Observations of teaching for professional development through reflection and discussion of teaching practice.

» Teaching as scholarly work and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research projects.

» Guiding initial teaching dossier development including refining of teaching philosophy statements and diversity statements.



The RGASC writing, numeracy, ELL, and academic skills instructors as well as supplemental instruction specialists are available to consult with UTM instructors and provide courses with pedagogical and academic integrity support in addition to academic skills workshops.

FUNDING GRANTS

Writing Development Initiative (WDI)

provides financial and pedagogical support for projects that integrate more writing instruction into courses through assignments, direct instruction, providing feedback, and/or TA training.

English Language Learner Support Initiative (ELLI)

provides financial and pedagogical support for instructors who wish to implement specific ELL programming (e.g., workshops or innovative activities in language development).

Numeracy Development Initiative (NDI)

provides financial support to help instructors integrate instruction and learning activities on numeracy to help students gain and improve their ability and confidence to employ quantitative reasoning.

UTM offers several teaching and learning grant opportunities for projects related to enhancing teaching and learning, assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical innovation, or developing new experimental learning components. The RGASC instructors and Educational Developers can partner on projects and assist by providing pedagogical insight to support grant applications.

uoft.me/TeachingLearningGrants



Active Learning Classrooms and Pedagogical Support at UTM

UTM is outfitted with active learning classrooms, which are equipped with round tables and instructional technology to facilitate collaboration and interactive group work. The RGASC Educational Developers in collaboration with I&ITS and the UTM Library, provide UTM instructors with pedagogical support to ensure effective use of these innovative spaces.



The Teaching and Learning Collaboration (TLC) at UTM

is a community of colleagues centered on a shared interest in teaching and learning, offering professional development through workshops and seminars, pedagogical reading groups, and teaching and learning exchange lunches. An initiative of the Office of the Dean, the TLC fosters a culture of teaching excellence and innovation to enhance student learning across our campus. The TLC provides an avenue for instructors to collaborate, share ideas, engage in critical discussion, explore challenges, and build teaching and learning expertise.

STUDENTS

Supporting students

Students are able to book or drop-in for individual one-on-one appointments with writing, numeracy, and academic skills instructors who offer support with writing skills, math skills, general study skills, and English Language Learning.

RGASC instructors are also available to support students with graduate school applications. Academic resources, such as videos, tip sheets, and exercises, are available online and the following programs and academic skills workshops are offered for advanced, novice, and English Language Learner students:

1// The Elements of Academic Reading and Writing Series:

develops critical reading skills and a better understanding of academic writing.

2// Facilitated Study Group (FSG) Program:

enhances student learning experience through study groups led by former students in collaboration with UTM instructors.

3// Head Start:

supports first-year students' transition to university by introducing them to university expectations.

4// Appointments for Undergrads:

provide academic skills enhancement through one-on-one support.

5// Just-in-time First-year Math Review:

connects foundational math and more advanced calculus concepts for first-year students.

6// Professional English Language Skills (PELS):

helps students improve their English language and academic skills.

6// Programs for Accessing Research Training (PART):

introduces advanced research skills through core, quantitative, and qualitative research training modules.

8// Writing Retreats:

provide a supportive space for students to be creative and find inspiration in a community of writers.

Graduate Writing Groups are a great way for graduate students who are currently working on a thesis, dissertation, publication, or a large writing project to stay motivated, set and meet writing goals, earn about aspects of writing, and connect with a writing community while being supported by a Writing Specialist.



The RGASC runs training programs for teaching assistants and collaborates with course instructors to provide training for teaching assistants on providing effective feedback, facilitating tutorials, and other teaching activities. The RGASC also collaborates with the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation's Teaching Assistant Training Program (TATP) to offer professional teaching development to help TAs, especially new TAs, improve their teaching skills.

The RGASC supports UTM's Graduate Students by offering one-on-one consultations for support with grant applications, research proposals, presentation skills, and teaching dossiers. The RGASC also runs the Graduate Student Professional Development Conference (GPDC) where UTM's Graduate students can better prepare for the future by enhancing transferable skills and making meaningful professional connections with UTM staff, instructors, and other graduate students.




The RGASC works collaboratively with associations, student clubs, and UTM's Student Union (UTMSU) to promote academic skills development through student-led activities, events, and initiatives.

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 uoft.me/RGASC

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Other useful links

- » Teaching & Learning Collaboration
utm.utoronto.ca/tlc
- » Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation
teaching.utoronto.ca
- » Teaching Resources for Instructors
writing.utoronto.ca/teaching-resources