University of Toronto Mississauga
Writing Development Initiative (WDI)
Call for Proposals, 2022-2023

The Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC) is pleased to invite Departments to submit proposals to the 2022-2023 Writing Development Initiative (WDI) program.

As in previous years, a pool of funds is available to support projects that integrate writing instruction in core courses across the curriculum. We are inviting Departments to submit proposals for projects that will use writing to help students learn and engage with course content, and that will also enhance students' ability to write according to the requirements of their discipline. These objectives are typically carried out through the use of such methods as a) writing exercises, b) instruction in writing, c) additional writing assignments, and/or d) enhanced feedback on writing. The Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC) can assist instructors in designing interventions in order to ensure that the writing instruction meets the unique needs of the Department's students; the RGASC can also assist in developing proposals. Some key areas of writing proficiency targeted in funded projects include organization, editing and revision skills, coherence, sentence-level mechanics, and discipline-specific conventions for integrating sources.

Submission Requirements

To submit a **new proposal**, please go to https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/faculty/writing-development-initiatives-wdi-program to download the Word document form found there. This must be completed and submitted to Michael Kaler at michael.kaler@utoronto.ca. The deadline for submission of new proposals is **April 15, 2022**.

Please note that proposals that have already been approved, have received funding, and have been carried out in 2021-2022 do not need to be resubmitted. Rather, the details in the project's Final Report will be used by the Committee to determine the project's continued funding. Instructors will be able to signal changes in the course, the project, and/or the budget in their Final Report. A template for Final Reports will be distributed to instructors; Final Reports will be due May 31 2022.

Funding recommendations for both new proposals (and renewals of existing proposals) will be made by a committee consisting of representatives of the RGASC, the Library, and Departments from across the disciplinary spectrum.

Starting in September 2020, UTM has begun offering a first-year writing course, ISP100H5 *Writing for University and Beyond: Writing About Writing*. For the 2022-2023 school year, this course will be required by the **Departments of Anthropology, Chemical and Physical Sciences, Mathematical and Computational Sciences, Political Science, and Visual Studies** for admission to some of their Specialist and Major programs. If you are proposing a project for a first-year course in any of these Departments, please be sure to consider how the project would complement or reinforce instruction offered in ISP100H5. For further details about ISP100H5, please contact Michael Kaler (michael.kaler@utoronto.ca).

Assessment and Final Report

Proposals must indicate the project's desired learning outcomes; these will be used to craft assessment mechanisms, designed by the instructor (or Department contact) and the Writing Specialist in collaboration.

The RGASC will conduct a basic assessment of all funded WDI projects, but to do so we will require some minimal assistance from participating instructors and TAs (e.g., for in-course data collection, reminding students to complete a survey, filling out reflective questionnaires). This basic assessment structure prevents assessment planning and execution from being too onerous for Departments or instructors; that said, the RGASC is happy to collaborate or support in the development of more specific or detailed assessment mechanisms, especially as projects develop over several iterations.

Basic assessment will, at a minimum, include the following two things:

1. Objective assessment of writing submitted in pre- and post- samplings (ca. 15% of participating students), with specific regard to the funded intervention: in other words, testing not for overall improvement but rather improvement in the competencies identified in the application;
2. Pre- and post- information regarding student attitudes both towards the techniques or skills taught in the intervention, and towards their own writing, to be elicited through surveys, focus groups, or other means;

The RGASC will provide the resources to administer basic assessment, with an RGASC faculty member taking the lead. Resource sharing for more complex assessment plans will be negotiated between the Writing Specialist and the course instructor or Departmental contact as applicable.

A link to an online **Final Report template** will be provided to instructors to document the details of the assessment of, reflection on, and changes to the project. Final reports for 2021-2022 projects will be due by **May 31, 2022**.

RGASC Support

The RGASC is pleased to make a variety of centralized resources and services available to Departments participating in the WDI. As much of the additional writing work and instruction that the WDI supports is done by TAs, we offer training and support to assist them, and also to provide them with valuable professional development. This training is in the form of a 7-hour WDI Writing TA Training Session for all **new** TAs. If the proposal's execution requires further training for course TAs, such training (not to exceed 4 hours per TA per course) can be designed collaboratively by the Writing Specialist and the course instructor or Department contact.

In addition to these TA training opportunities, the RGASC is also pleased to offer the option to set up "dedicated drop-ins" at the RGASC during the term, in which students in WDI-funded courses can receive special consultations with RGASC Writing Instructors on an assignment-specific basis. These special drop-ins are additional support above and beyond our regular face-to-face and online appointments and workshops, all of which are available to all UTM students. And as always, faculty and staff at the RGASC will be available to assist instructors and Departments with assignment design, classroom instruction, and other activities that integrate writing into their curriculum.

The amount of money allocated to a single project will depend on a variety of factors, including but not limited to the number of students enrolled in the targeted course(s). Please note as well

that preference will be given to projects embedded in courses that are part of a program of study in which emphasis on developing writing skills extends beyond the individual course.

Contact Information

For guidance in planning proposals or to learn more about other Departments' approaches to discipline-specific writing instruction, please see the selection of past successful proposals that has been posted at the WDI online archive (http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/faculty/writing-development-initiatives-wdi-program).

Proposals for new projects should be submitted to Michael Kaler at the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre by **April 15, 2022,** using this address: michael.kaler@utoronto.ca. Decisions on funding will be made by the end of June 2022.

If you have any questions regarding the WDI or your specific proposal, please contact Michael.