The proposed Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy (ISUP) at the University of Toronto Mississauga will provide an intellectual space foregrounding research on university-level pedagogy, as an academic discipline focused on the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills in a university context. The Institute’s mission will be to promote the study of university pedagogy through example, shared experiences, instruction, training, scholarship, and assessment of programs and initiatives. ISUP will share developments in the study of university pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning with the wider university community through invited lectures by internationally significant practitioners in the field, the hosting of workshops and conferences, and the research and teaching work of its own members.

The creation of this new Institute will be a direct response to the 2017 UTM Academic Plan as well as President Gertler’s call for the reimagining and reinventing of undergraduate education in his Three Priorities for the University of Toronto. It will incorporate faculty from the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC) and faculty funded by the 2017 UTM Academic Plan for the new Foundational Skills Initiatives, beginning with Writing Studies scholars and adding Numeracy scholars and others, along with educational staff from the RGASC and the Centre for Student Engagement. The creation of this Institute will bring together UTM faculty and educational staff involved in research, teaching, and training in university-level pedagogy across the curriculum.

In addition to research-related projects, Institute members will continue to provide extensive course- and topic-specific collaborative instruction, training, and advice for faculty teaching courses across all departments and disciplines at UTM, expanding on the faculty support programming already offered through the RGASC and Teaching and Learning Collaboration at UTM. Through the continued existence of an internal Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre, the Institute will continue to provide thousands of hours of direct support and training to UTM undergraduates. ISUP will expand on the existing graduate training and professionalization programs at UTM, and provide additional opportunities and mentorships for graduate student education in the study of university pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

While this new Institute will not immediately offer a degree program, it will administer the existing extra-departmental utmONE and utmScholars courses, a set of cross-disciplinary courses focused on first-year undergraduate learning and transition; a number of these courses are already taught by faculty who will be based in the Institute. ISUP members will develop, administer, and teach the new Foundational Writing Skills program, as well as planned Numeracy and other first-year academic skills courses to be created over the next five years as a major university-wide initiative stemming from UTM’s 2017 Academic Plan. The Institute will also coordinate existing academic support programs for students in upper-level courses taught by faculty in departments across the curriculum (e.g., the Writing Development Initiative, English Language Learner Initiative, Numeracy Development Initiative, and new Experiential Education Initiative). Combining these strengths in the proposed Institute will promote and increase interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of university pedagogy and provide a home for UTM’s innovative studies, initiatives and programs in the scholarship of teaching and learning.