First-Year Transition Courses at UTM

First-year transition courses are small sized for-credit courses designed to help your transition from high-school to university. At UTM, our utmONE courses focus on building foundational academic skills while also supporting you to become a well-rounded student.
Agenda:

- Introductions
- Key Benefits of utmONE
- Student highlights & comments
- How to Enrol
- Advantages by course:
  - UTM115: Communication Among Cultures
  - UTM118: The Science of Learning
- Foundations LLC
- Question & Answer
Key Benefits of utmONE:
Plus! Earn 0.5 credits toward your distribution requirement!

Supportive classroom environment.
Interact meaningfully and build a collaborative classroom community with your instructor, TA and peers (lectures capped at 55 and tutorial capped at 28).

Strong academic foundation.
Develop transferable academic skills such as group work, critical thinking, effective communication, strategic reading, note-taking and essay writing. The skills you learn will support your success throughout your degree.

Holistic student success.
Participate in tutorials that focus on a well-rounded student experience including topics like becoming an engaged learner, building community, developing a growth mindset and finding your passion.

Focus on active learning.
Classes are designed so that every session is interactive and engaging. Become an active participant in your own learning through discussions, collaborative group work and strategic learning activities.

In 2020-21 all utmONE courses are taught by professors from the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre.
80% of utmONE Students surveyed would recommend utmONE to an incoming first-year student.

The majority* of students reported that participation in their utmONE course:

- Resulted in a friendship with another student.
- Taught me strategies that helped support my performance in other courses.
- Helped me feel supported with my personal growth.
- Increased my motivation to be engaged in my courses.
- Had an overall positive impact on my classroom success.

*70% and over; from the December 2019 and April 2020 utmONE Program Survey.
"This course was amazing, I recommend it to every student I can. I revisit the material in this course constantly and I apply it to not only other areas of school but also in my life."

"This course focuses on exploring different strategies and helps students form good habits for future success, and the resources and articles used throughout the course were very insightful and changed many of my previous perspectives and misconceptions."

"This course is very different from my other first year courses as this course explains how to learn better rather than what to learn. This course helped build my skills such as critical thinking and note taking which I apply in all of my classes."

The main strength of utmONE was..."The way it encouraged students to engage in critical thinking, to immerse themselves in learning and to develop a creative and efficient attitude towards their work in addition to finding ways to enjoy their course material."

"The course overall was a very positive space, where everyone had the chance to speak and contribute their opinions. It was also a great course to take in first year, because it helps build skills that will make us more successful moving forward, in university and life."
How to Enrol in a utmONE Course:

UTM115 and UTM118 are open to all new incoming students from all program areas.
- UTM115: Communication Among Cultures - 1 section offered in the Fall Term
- UTM118: The Science of Learning - 3 sections offered in the Fall Term; 1 section offered in the Winter Term

You can enrol in your preferred utmONE course when you enrol in your other courses through ACORN. The Office of the Registrar offers course enrolment support for new students, including webinars to help you navigate the course enrolment process.

https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/new-students/course-enrolment
ABOUT THE COURSE

- Communication Among Cultures is a small first-year seminar course designed to encourage dialogue about and beyond the classroom.
- It has primarily been designed for English Language Learners (ELL), but the course is open to all students interested in this topic.
- Tutorials for the course highlight core academic skills necessary for university

Assistant Professor, Laura Taylor
English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist
UTM115: Communication Among Cultures

CONTENT - TOPICS

Course material focuses on:

- Verbal and Non Verbal Communication
- Health and Culture
- Business and Culture
- Multiculturalism and the Environmental Context
- Microcultures
- Cultural Conflict
SKILLS - TOPICS

- Grammar and Academic Vocabulary
- Annotated Bibliographies and Research
- Academic Reading
- Academic Writing

UTM115: Communication Among Cultures

Assistant Professor, Laura Taylor
English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist
UTM115: Communication Among Cultures

BENEFITS TO TAKING UTM115

- Small Class Sizes
  - Get to know your peers
  - Get to know your prof
  - Get more one-on-one attention

- Helpful Tutorials
  - Learn skills that will help throughout university

- Fun!
  - Interesting topics
  - Unique methods of instruction

Assistant Professor, Laura Taylor
English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist
What are the advantages of taking this course?

LEARNING HOW TO LEARN!

- Active versus Passive Learning
- How to prepare for multiple choice tests
- How to read and write effectively
- How to study and manage my Time
- Why group work is essential in higher education
- Communicating with your Instructor & TA
- Getting the most out of first year at UTM

Associate Professor, Michael deBraga
ACTIVE LEARNING VS. PASSIVE LEARNING

- What are the differences?
- How do we know that we are learning actively?
- Does it take more time to learn in an active way?
- What is Collaborative Learning?
- What is Critical Thinking?
- How do I Develop & Construct an Argument?
MULTIPLE CHOICE & TEST PREPARATION

- What is the difference between lower order & higher order questions on a test?
- Do I have to memorize the textbook?
- I have always done well on tests in high school, why should I change my way to prepare?
- How early in the term do I need to begin preparing for a test?
READING & WRITING EFFECTIVELY:

- Can I learn how to read or write more effectively?
  - What is an essay outline? What is a reading summary?
  - What is meant by Critical Reading? How do I cite properly?
- How much time will it take to become a better reader and/or writer?
  - Will I have to read everything that is assigned?
  - What if my text-book has over 1000 pgs.?
  - I’m hoping to go into computer science/commerce – do I need to worry about writing?
- What is SQ3R?
MANAGING MY TIME & STUDY PLANNING:

- How do I avoid procrastination?
- When should I begin to study for a test or how early should I begin an essay or assignment?
- How many hours a day or week do I need to spend on studying?
- Is there a “BEST” way to study & does it work for everyone?
GROUP WORK:

- I prefer working by myself, do I have to work in a group?
- Is it fair for everyone to get the same mark if they are part of the same group?
- What is a group test?
- Can I choose who I work with in a group?
TALKING TO MY PROFESSOR AND/OR MY TA:

- If I am not having any trouble in the course, should I still reach out to my professor?
- My TA runs my labs/tutorials, should I reach out to him/her or the professor if I have an issue with a lab/tutorial?
- How do I communicate with my professor or TA through email or an alternative online platform?
- I’m shy, how do I approach my professor?
HOW DO I GET THE MOST OUT OF UTM IN MY FIRST-YEAR?

- Should I join clubs?
- Can I ask professors to volunteer in their labs in first year?
- Are there research opportunities for first year students at UTM?
Foundations LLC

Foundations Living Learning Community (Foundations LLC)
A residence community for UTM118 students. Students enrolled in other utmONE course are also encouraged to apply.

- You will live in McLuhan Court Residence alongside classmates and an LLC-specific Peer Academic Leader who will be there to support you with your academic transition into university.
- Beyond academic support, you will be able to take part in exclusive faculty field trips with your professors to get to know them outside the classroom. In addition, your Peer Academic Leader will host monthly workshops, biweekly academic meetups, and other programs.
- Examples from past years include dinners with your professors, skating faculty field trip, attending TEDxUofT with faculty, LLC-led collection and donation to local charities, monthly workshops on topics such as developing presentation skills, exam preparation and personal finance.
- If you are interested in learning the foundations of being a successful student, learning how to live on your own for the first time, and want to give back to the community, you should apply now! https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/housing/applying/undergraduate

For more information contact
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For more information, please do not hesitate to contact the utmONE coordinator:

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Questions & Answers!