

UTM Virtual Townhall Questions & Answers

ACADEMIC PLANNING & PROCESSES

When will decisions regarding summer 2021 course delivery be announced?

The Office of the Dean, the Office of the Registrar, and our academic departments have already made considerable progress on discussions regarding course delivery options for summer 2021. Following our established timelines, we will publish the options by early March in advance of the enrolment period. Our modes of course delivery will depend on public health conditions, but we expect to make available a combination of in-person, hybrid, and remote options.

Will UTM allow for unlimited credit/no credit options?

UTM doesn't plan on changing our credit/no credit process this semester, since our [deadline](#) already comes at the end of classes. For reference, the [Faculty of Arts and Science](#) extended their credit/no credit deadline for Fall/Winter 2020-21 courses, without making any other changes to policy or process. The usual number of credit/no credit options continues to apply; such options still cannot be used to satisfy program requirements. We strongly encourage students to schedule an appointment with an [Academic Advisor](#) in the Office of the Registrar for assistance with course planning.

MAINTAINING EMPLOYEE WELLNESS & WELLBEING

How does the University plan to address the burn-out of instructors and student-facing staff?

University faculty, staff, and librarians have made ongoing adjustments to maintain a high quality education and outstanding support services for students: we understand that this continual pace of change has increased susceptibility to burnout. In response, U of T has delayed the start of the winter 2021 semester from January 4 to January 11, hoping to provide something of a reprieve.

We understand, however, that the change also creates more work for some staff members, who have the responsibility both of adjusting plans to fit the revised schedule and of organizing and supporting activities for students on-campus that week. THANK YOU, staff: we truly appreciate your continued flexibility, hard work, and dedication. Accordingly, U of T has provided employees who return to work on 4 January with three paid wellness days: with manager approval, employees may take the days anytime between now and August 31 2021. Meanwhile, we ask people who have to work in January's first week to refrain from scheduling non-essential meetings: please take

measures, where possible, to lessen your and your colleagues' workload as we transition into the new semester.

Concurrently, we should recognize that the shift to remote work has created a high-efficiency environment, in which employees can jump from virtual meeting to virtual meeting while remaining in one location. The fast pace makes it harder to find a balance between work and rest. We strongly encourage employees working remotely to schedule breaks as necessary to mentally and emotionally disconnect from work. Managers of administrative and academic units operating virtually may consider instituting meeting-free workdays, so that employees can more easily disengage from their busy schedules.

The pace and uncertainty generated by the pandemic, we know, can lead to stress. As Professor Farb suggested during the town hall, the desire to plan for the future, and the tendency to worry about what that future holds, comprise a normal part of the human condition. But Professors Farb, Malti, and McEwen offered tangible advice in turn. Try shifting focus, they explained, from an interpretive narrative to immediate sensation: to your surroundings in the present moment and to the things for which you're grateful. Set an intention every day to pursue activities that bring you joy: to walk, cook, draw, read, reflect, play. Be patient with yourself and be kind to others.

And if you find you need help, please reach out, including to your community here at UTM. Faculty, staff, librarians, and their dependents have access to counselling, coaching, and wellbeing services through the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#). UTM students, meanwhile, can find similar support through our [Health and Counselling Centre](#) and [My SSP](#). Our entire community—wherever its members now live—can connect with additional wellbeing resources on our [Mental Health Supports Website](#). For more information, and for further resources available at UTM, please follow the links below.

Mental Health Supports and Resources

[Mental Health Supports Website](#): Organized by UTM's Office of Student Affairs, this website presents comprehensive mental health services in convenient lists. The lists will help our community—wherever its members now live—to find wellness resources and connect with meaningful forms of support.

[My SSP](#): Open to all U of T students, the program offers counselling, conversation, and care 24/7, in multiple languages, through an app and toll-free number: 1-844-451-9700 inside North America; 001-416-380-6578 outside North America.

[Employee and Family Assistance Program](#): Available for eligible faculty, staff, librarians, and their dependants, this program offers confidential counselling, personal coaching, and wellbeing advising: call the toll-free number anytime, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: 1-800-663-1142.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: Supports & Resources

UTM's Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Office ([EDIO](#)) provides equity, Indigenous, and human rights-related programs, services, and community building opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and librarians.

UTM's [Indigenous Centre](#) supports Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and librarians; promotes equity and inclusion of Indigenous peoples in the campus community; and leads programs for Indigenous and non-Indigenous UTM community members.

CONTACT INFORMATION

EDIO Email: edo.utm@utoronto.ca

Indigenous Centre Email: indigenous.utm@utoronto.ca

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @UTMEDO

RESOURCES

[UTM Connections & Conversations](#): For staff and faculty who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour, this affinity group builds community, supports professional development, develops innovative plans and strategies, and advocates for effective change.

[UTM Positive Space Committee](#): For LGBTQ+ staff, faculty, and students, and their allies, this committee aims to foster a safer campus inclusive and celebratory of sexual and gender diversity.

[Restore @ U of T](#): Organized by the tri-campus Antiracism and Cultural Diversity Office ([ACDO](#)), this program coordinates a series of restorative activities to address the impact of racism on U of T's Black, Indigenous and Racialized communities.

[UTM Black Table Talk](#): For Black faculty, librarians, staff, and students, this bi-annual UTM gathering generates productive dialogue and enables community building. The next meeting will occur on March 3, 2021.

