**HANDBOOK FOR INSTRUCTORS   
DEPARTMENT OF CELL AND SYSTEMS BIOLOGY**

If this is your first time teaching for the Department of Cell and Systems Biology, welcome! If you have taught with us in the past, welcome back. We hope that this handbook will be a useful guide while you set up, administer and teach your course(s).

**CONTACTS**

Here is a list of people who you may need to interact with before, during and/or after your course.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tamar Mamourian CAO | [tamar.mamourian@utoronto.ca](mailto:tamar.mamourian@utoronto.ca) | 416-978-3501 | hiring process, HR issues |
| Tony Harris, Assoc Chair, Undergraduate | [tony.harris@utoronto.ca](mailto:tony.harris@utoronto.ca) | 416-946-0873 | pedagogical issues |
| Janet Mannone Undergrad Coordinator | [janet.mannone@utoronto.ca](mailto:janet.mannone@utoronto.ca) | 416-978-8879 | general course information |
| Genna Zunde  Undergrad Assistant | [genna.zunde@utoronto.ca](mailto:genna.zunde@utoronto.ca) | 416-978-3477 | prerequisite checks |
| Nyla Maharaj Course Administrator | [n.maharaj@utoronto.ca](mailto:n.maharaj@utoronto.ca) | 416-978-6442 | BIO130, 230, CSB349 administration |
| Peggy Salmon, Course Administrator | [peggy.salmon@utoronto.ca](mailto:peggy.salmon@utoronto.ca) | 416-978-8608 | BIO260, 270, 271, CSB325, 329, 343, 345, 346, 351 administration; help with Portal |
| James McGuire or Adam Hotchin IT | it-help@biota.utoronto.ca | 416-978-6060 | computer issues |
| Ian Buglass Graduate Coordinator | [ian.buglass@utoronto.ca](mailto:ian.buglass@utoronto.ca) | 416-946-3433 | TA info/contracts |
| Anna Kozelj Receptionist | [csb.reception@utoronto.ca](mailto:csb.reception@utoronto.ca) | 416-946-3692 | keys, printing codes |

**SETTING UP A COURSE**

If past course materials are needed, please contact Janet Mannone for the contact information of the previous year’s instructor.

**Portal/Blackboard**

* This is a course management system used to post lectures, enter and track grades, and communicate with students through email or announcements.
* Once you are officially entered as the instructor of your course (done by Janet Mannone), you will be given access to your course on Portal. This can take up to 2 days after you are entered.
* Login through [www.portal.utoronto.ca](http://www.portal.utoronto.ca)
* Training is available through the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) at [www.ctsi.utoronto.ca](http://www.ctsi.utoronto.ca)
* You must make each of your courses available to your students. You do this under the Control Panel: click on Customization, Properties, then, under Set Availability, Make Course Available.
* There is a Help function on portal to guide you through the system or visit [www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca](http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca).
* If you are having difficulties, you can ask Peggy Salmon for assistance and/or email [portal.help@utoronto.ca](mailto:portal.help@utoronto.ca)

**Prerequisites**

* All CSB courses have a prerequisite check done to ensure that students with sufficient background are in the course.
* The course administrator will do the prerequisite checks. If there is no course administrator, the instructor does the prerequisite checks.
* For those done by the instructor, Genna Zunde will determine if there are students in your course who have failed the prerequisite check. If there are, she will send you an Excel file providing you with a list of these students and a pdf file of their academic records.
* Review the files from Genna and determine if the students on the list should be kept or removed from the course. There is also an option for “Pending.” This is only used if the student is currently enrolled in the prerequisite course and a final grade has not been posted. We have to wait to learn if the student has passed the prerequisite course or not before making a decision.
* Some students may have transfer credits or may have taken courses at another campus (UTM, UTSC) that are equivalent to the prerequisites. In these cases, the student should be kept in the course.

**Rooms for Mid-term Tests**

* If your course requires rooms other than your lecture hall for mid-term tests, please inform Janet as soon as possible.

**Teaching Assistants**

* If your course has TAs, there will need to be communication with them, contracts drafted, and, possibly, training. Contact the course administrator or Ian Buglass if you need assistance with this.

**Marking Scheme/Syllabus**

* A marking scheme is required for every course and it must be communicated with the class at the beginning of the term. Janet will provide you with a marking scheme form that must be completed and returned to her for her files.
* Once discussed with your class, the marking scheme cannot be changed without a vote of the students. You must inform your students ahead of time that there will be a vote and the timing of the vote. The change can be made if the majority of students present for the vote agrees to it.

Each course should have a detailed syllabus available to students at the start of classes.

**COURSE DETAILS**

**Sessional dates**

* The dates for the beginning and end of courses, the final exam period, study breaks, etc., are set by the Office of the Faculty Registrar (OFR; aka, the Faculty Office). A listing of the relevant dates can be found at <https://csb.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-studies/important-dates/>.

**Timing of Lecture**

* Classes start at 10 minutes after the hour (10:10, 2:10….) and end at the top of the hour (11:00, 3:00…).

**Mid-term Tests**

* Mid-term tests are set, organized and run by the instructor of the course. You determine the dates, the times (best to keep the test at the same time as the course if possible) and the location. As noted above, if the test will be held in a room outside of your lecture hall, please inform Janet ASAP to request an additional room.
* If a test is set outside of the regular class time, students may have another regularly scheduled class at that time. If they do have this conflict, the regularly scheduled class takes priority and you have to find another time for these students to write your test.
* You print your own tests. The CSB Receptionist in RW401, Anna Kozelj, can provide you with a copy code so that you can do this on the departmental copiers.
* If your test requires students to answer questions in test booklets, you can get those from the CSB Undergraduate Office (RW424). Contact Janet or Genna to let them know how many you will need and when you want to pick them up so that they will be ready for you.
* In case a fire alarm goes off during your term test, please familiarize yourself with the departmental protocol for such an event prior to your test. It can be found at <https://csb.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-studies/links/>.
* It is up to the instructor to determine how tests are returned to the students. However, it must be done in a way to ensure privacy. No student should be able to see another student’s test. Nor should they ever see another student’s name and student number together.
* If students miss your test, it is at your discretion how to handle this. It is common practice for the student to provide documentation to support why they did not write the test. Generally, students are required to submit a completed U of T Verification of Student Illness or Injury form. Section 7 of the Academic Handbook provides details on this. Janet can provide advice if you are unsure.
* Test grades are usually posted on Portal for students to see. Students have up to 2 weeks after the posting to challenge the grade.

**Final Exams**

* Final exams are set, organized and run by the Faculty Office. In order for them to do this, Genna will contact you early in the term asking for details regarding your final exam (having a final exam is not required) – is it 2 or 3 hours? is it restricted (see below for details of a restricted exam)? will students write on the exam paper, scantron sheets and/or exam booklets? etc.
* You will create the final exam paper. The exam paper is submitted to the Undergraduate Office for review of format not content. If you submit it by the OFR deadline (given to you by Janet), they will print the papers and bring them to the examination room (along with exam booklets and scantron sheets, if needed). If you miss the deadline, you may have to print the exams yourself.
* Instructors can decide if their final exam is restricted or not. If giving a restricted exam, the instructor must provide student with sample questions ahead of time. The restricted exam is on posted on an “Old Exams” website. Students cannot answer the questions on the exam paper as they are not allowed to see the questions again after the exam is written. Please contact Janet or Genna for more details. If you are a sessional instructor, it is most likely that your exam type will be the same as that set by the faculty instructor.
* At the exam, the OFR will have a Chief Presiding Officer (CPO). It is this person’s responsibility to know the rules of running an Arts and Science final exam and to make sure that the rules are followed. If someone is found cheating or if there are any other anomalies, it is the CPO who will deal with reporting these issues and know how to handle them.
* Each course is assigned a certain number of presiding officers who are usually affiliated with the course. They attend the exam to get student signatures, answer questions, escort students to the washroom and watch that students are not cheating. The number of presiding officers is dependent on the size of the course. One of the presiding officers should be the instructor (if you are unable to be physically present at the exam to answer questions, it is helpful if you are available by phone). If more than one presiding officer is needed, TAs usually help with this.
* If a student is not in the examination room, they may be writing the exam with someone else such as Test and Exam Services. These exams will be delivered to the Undergraduate Office a few days after the regularly scheduled final exam. Once we receive them, we will pass them on to you as quickly as possible.
* If a student misses your final exam and contacts you, send them to their College Registrar’s Office. This is not something an instructor deals with.
* Students who miss their final exam can petition to write a deferred exam at a later date (usually months later). It is your responsibility to grade these exams regardless of when they come in.
* After the final exam papers are graded, they need to be put in alphabetical order and returned to the CSB Undergraduate Office. They will be given back to the OFR where they are stored.
* Students have the right to request to see their final exam. However, the student is only provided with a copy of the final exam paper. They will not have access to the original paper to ensure that they do not modify it.
* If a student feels their exam paper has not been graded properly or the grades have simply been miscalculated (usually an addition error), then they can put in a request for a re-read or a re-check, respectively. When this happens, the original exam paper is sent to Janet from the OFR. She will pass it on to you to look over and indicate if the student’s final grade in the course should change as a consequence. Do NOT re-read a final exam paper given to you directly by a student.

**Final Grades**

* Final grades are due 7 business days after the final exam. If there is no final exam, the grades are due 7 business days after the last day of classes.
* Submit grades electronically through eMarks (<https://emarks.utoronto.ca>). Amended grades are also submitted this way. Tony approves them.
* Final grades have to be a round number – no decimals, no letter grades.
* A grade close to the next GPA level can be rounded up to that level, but the decision is yours.
* A final grade of zero (0%) should only be assigned if the student has done no work in the course.
* If a student is under suspicion of having committed an academic offense, the grade is entered as NGA (no grade available). This will be amended once the student’s case has been heard and a decision has been made.

**Rooms**

* Lecture rooms are assigned to us. If you have a problem with your room (e.g., configuration, temperature, etc.), contact Janet for assistance.
* Information on how to hook up your laptop to a teaching station can be found at <http://sites.utoronto.ca/teachingstation/handbook.html>
* If the problem is with the teaching station (computer, AV issues), hit the help button and someone will talk you through it.

**Academic Offenses**

* If the alleged offense is on a test or assignment worth 10% or less of the final grade, then it is dealt with within the department. The Office of Student Academic Integrity (OSAI) has to be informed if the student is found guilty.
* If the alleged offense is on a test or assignment work more than 10%, then there is an initial meeting with the student within the department, then OSAI handles the case.
* More details about preventing and reporting academic offenses are available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/instructors-and-staff> .
* If you suspect a case of academic misconduct and you are unsure how to handle it, contact Tony or Janet.

**Assignments**

* If a student has failed to submit or is late submitting an assignment, the instructor decides if the work is accepted after the deadline and what, if any, documentation the student needs to provide.
* The instructor also decides the penalty, if any, for work submitted late.
* Information about penalties should be clearly stated in the course syllabus.

**Course Evaluations**

* The university evaluates the teaching of all instructors, including sessional instructors, at the end of the term.
* Students complete course evaluations electronically. Instructors are encouraged to allow students to do their evaluations in class to garner a larger response.
* Instructors can select a subset of questions to gather direct feedback on their own teaching practice and/or course design. Only the instructor will see the answers to these questions.
* Results of the evaluations are released after final grades are submitted.

**Accessibility**

* Students who require special accommodation can register with Accessibility Services (AS). These students may bring you a letter of accessibility. This letter outlines the accommodations a student may require; extensions for submission of classwork, class absences, etc. If they do not bring you the letter, you are still obliged to accommodate the student when contacted by Accessibility Services.
* If there is a student in your course who does need accommodation, they will write your tests and final exam through Test and Exam Services (TES). TES will contact you and ask you to provide them with a copy of the test and for details (time and date of regular sitting, aids allowed, etc.) ahead of time. You email the test to TES.
* A written test is delivered to the CSB Undergraduate Office and we give it to you.
* The majority of accommodated tests and exams are administered at the same time as the regularly scheduled class sittings. However exceptions sometimes have to be made; the instructor will be notified if a student is writing outside of the regular test time.
* Concerns about accommodations can be discussed with the AS contact to find the best solution.

**Students in Difficulty**

* If a student has come to you about difficulties academically or personally and you are unsure how to handle this, you can talk to Tony or Janet for advice. More often than not, we will recommend that the student contact their College Registrar’s Office for assistance as they deal with students’ academic, financial and personal issues.
* In urgent situations, see <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/DistressedStudent.htm/>

**Difficult Students**

* If you have a student in your course who is disruptive in lecture, lab and/or tutorial, contact Tony and Janet. We will contact people on campus with experience in this area for advice.
* In urgent situations, see <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/DistressedStudent.htm/>

**Summer vs Fall/Winter Courses**

* Whether you teach a course in the Summer, Fall or Winter session, the number of lectures and labs given for the course remains constant. The Summer session is half the time (6 weeks) of the Fall or Winter sessions (12 weeks each), so a course that is taught in the Summer will have twice as many contact hours **per week** as its Fall/Winter counterpart.

**Academic Handbook**

* The OFR created an Academic Handbook to help instructors follow the rules and regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Science. You can find it at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teacher-info>. There is a quick reference version of this document. It is attached to provide you with some of the highlights.

**Undergraduate Office**

* More teaching resources for CSB instructors is available at <https://csb.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-studies/links/>
* If there are issues not dealt with here, please let Janet know so that we can add information to this document.
* Always feel comfortable to contact us in the CSB Undergraduate Office if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to help!