



Handbook for Instructors

Undergraduate Education | 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).

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CONTACTS

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

Benjamin Eldridge, Chief Administrative Officer	benjamin.eldridge@utoronto.ca	416-978-3501	hiring process, HR issues
Dinesh Christendat, Associate Chair, Undergraduate	dinesh.christendat@utoronto.ca	416-946-8373	pedagogical issues
Melissa Casco, Undergraduate Coordinator	m.casco@utoronto.ca	416-978-5636	general UG and course information
Genna Zunde, Undergraduate Assistant	undergrad.csb@utoronto.ca	416-978-3477	prerequisite checks, marking schemes, final exams
TBA Course Administrator	bio130@utoronto.ca bio230@utoronto.ca csb349.csb@utoronto.ca	416-978-6442	BIO130, 230, CSB349 administration
Nalini Dominique-Guyah, Course Administrator	nalini.dominique@utoronto.ca	416-978-8608	BIO260, 270, 271, CSB325, 329, 343, 346, 351 administration
Madison Marshall, Graduate Assistant & TA Coordinator	madison.marshall@utoronto.ca	416-978-8879	TA information and contracts
James McGuire or Adam Hotchin	biota@utoronto.ca	416-978-6060	CSB tech support
Anna Kozelj, Receptionist	csb.reception@utoronto.ca	416-946-3692	keys, printing codes

SETTING UP A COURSE

If past course materials are needed, please contact the undergraduate coordinator for the contact information of the previous year's instructor.

Quercus

Quercus is the course management system used to post lectures, enter and track grades, and communicate with students through email or announcements. The Help tab in the Quercus navigation menu will direct you to Quercus support resources. Once you have finalized your site, remember to publish the site so your students can access it. If you are having difficulties, you can ask your course administrator or email tts.artsci@utoronto.ca.

[↗ q.utoronto.ca](https://q.utoronto.ca)

Teaching and Learning Resources

Arts & Science Quercus Support – Faculty: Guides for Quercus and other online tools.

➤ <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/85981>

A & S Teaching and Learning Resources: The following website has a list of teaching and learning resources for instructors.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/teaching-learning-resources>.

Pedagogical Consultations: Arts & Science instructors are welcome to reach out to the Teaching & Learning Office for pedagogical consultations with Faculty Liaisons on any aspect of their course design, including online teaching, assignment and assessment design, and other pedagogical issues. The Teaching and Learning support team works in close collaboration with the Online Learning Academy & Teaching Technology Support team to provide resources and consultation to instructors. To consult a Faculty Liaison, Pedagogical Support, please email teachinglearning.artsci@utoronto.ca.

Academic Handbook for Instructors: The Academic Handbook has been designed to help instructors follow the rules and regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/academic-handbook>

A&S Online Learning Academy (OLA): The OLA helps all faculty and instructors deliver digitally-enabled and online teaching that enhances student learning and the student experience. Through virtual drop-in sessions, workshops and web resources, the OLA team provides consultations and discussions of online and digital teaching methods.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/online-learning-academy>.

Video Conferencing Resources: The University of Toronto offers different solutions for hosting video meetings for teaching or for administrative work.

➤ <https://uoft.me/videoresources>.

CTSI resources and webinars: The Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation has a number of upcoming webinars to support instructors to continue teaching virtually.

➤ <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/>.

Assessing Learning: The CTSI website offers some resources on how to assess learning.

➤ <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resource-categories/assessing-learning/>.

Plagiarism Detection Tool - Ouriginal: This is an integrated tool in Quercus. It appears as an option when creating an Assignment.

➤ <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/tool-guides/plagiarism-review-ouriginal/>

Course Prerequisite Checks

All CSB courses undergo a prerequisite check to ensure that only students with sufficient background are enrolled in the course. The course administrator will do the prerequisite checks. If there is no course administrator, the instructor will need to do the prerequisite checks after the undergraduate assistant sends a list of students enrolled in the course who have failed the prerequisite check. 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.

Teaching Assistants

If your course has TAs, you will need to contact them regarding possible training, grading, etc. A contract must be created for each TA. Please contact the course administrator or the TA coordinator for more assistance. Each TA will need orientation for each course. Instructors can also encourage TAs to take part in the Teaching Assistants' Training Program.

➤ <https://tatp.utoronto.ca/>

Marking Scheme and Syllabus

Submitting marking scheme: A marking scheme is required for every course and it must be communicated with the class at the beginning of the term. Marking schemes are submitted through the Course Information System (CIS). The undergraduate assistant will contact you at the beginning of the term to provide you with information on how and when to submit a marking scheme and syllabus. ➤ <http://cis.utoronto.ca>

Making changes to marking scheme: 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 is made if the majority of students who vote agrees to it.

Course syllabus: Each course should also have a detailed syllabus available to students at the start of classes. If you decide to use the plagiarism detection tool Ouriginal, it must be made clear in your syllabus that you will be using this tool for your course. You can find the standard text to include in your syllabus on the following website.

➤ <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resources/plagiarism-detection/>.

For more guidance on how to design your syllabus, please go to:

<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/academic-handbook#DesigningSyllabus>.

The following are important rules to keep in mind when designing your syllabus, marking scheme and deadlines:

- Prior to the course drop date, you must return to students at least 10% of the total course mark for H courses and 20% for Y courses.
- No assessment can be worth over 80% of the course grade.
- No test or combination of tests worth over 25% can be due in last two weeks of classes.

COURSE DETAILS

Sessional Dates

The dates for the beginning and end of courses, the final assessment period, study breaks, etc., are set by the Office of the Faculty Registrar (OFR).

➤ <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/sessional-dates>.

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.

Student Absences

If students miss a test or assessment, 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 or missed an assignment. Typically, 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. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students are only expected to declare their absence on ACORN. To obtain a report of your students' declared absences, please contact your course administrator or the undergraduate assistant.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/covid19-artsci-student-fags#fall-absence-declaration-accordion-5>

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. At this time, students can self-declare illness through ACORN. Please remind students to submit their absence declaration through ACORN. The instructor also decides the penalty, if any, for work submitted late. Information about documentation and penalties should be clearly stated in the course syllabus.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/academic-handbook#MissedWork>

Mid-term Tests

Planning mid-term tests: Mid-term tests are set, organized and run by the instructor of the course. The instructor determines the dates, the times and the location. It is best to keep the test at the same time as the course to avoid any conflicts with other courses and to ensure you have a room for your test.

Requesting additional room(s) for tests: If you plan to have the test in a different room than your regular classroom, please contact the undergraduate assistant or your course administrator 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 will need to find another time for these students to write your test.

Printing tests and requesting test booklets: You print your own tests. The CSB receptionist in RW401 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 undergraduate assistant.

CSB protocol for fire alarm during test: 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.

➤ <https://csb.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-studies/resources/>.

Returning tests to students: It is up to the instructor to determine how tests are returned to the students. However, it must be done in a way that ensures 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. Test grades are usually posted on Quercus for students to see. Students have up to 2 weeks after the posting to challenge the grade.

Final Exams and Online Final Assessments

Exam/Assessment details on CIS: At the beginning of the term, you will be asked to submit details about final online assessments and final exams through CIS. It is not required to have a final exam or assessment. If you do not have a final exam/assessment you can go into CIS and indicate this.

➤ <http://cis.utoronto.ca>

Final exams: To minimize conflicts for students, the OFR sets and administers the final exam and assessment schedule. To do this, they will need exam details on CIS:

- Exam length (2 or 3 hours)
- Whether the exam is restricted [see below for details of a restricted exam]
- If students will write on the exam paper, scantron sheets and/or exam booklets.

You will create the final exam paper. The exam paper is submitted through CIS to the Undergraduate Office for review of format but not content. If you submit it by the OFR deadline, the OFR 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 and take them to the examination location(s).

Final online assessments: Final online assessments are administered through Quercus by the course instructor. The final exams are organized and run by the OFR.

Restricted exams: A restricted exam means that the exam is not posted on an “Old Exams” website. However, students can answer the questions on the exam paper and will be allowed to see the questions again after the exam is written, but under strict supervision. If you are giving a restricted exam, you must provide students with sample questions ahead of time. 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 who usually teaches the course.

Chief Presiding Officer (CPO): At the exam, the OFR will have a 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.

Presiding Officers: 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.

Students who miss the final exam: If a student misses your final exam and contacts you, please direct them to their College Registrar’s Office. Students who miss their final exam can petition to write a deferred exam at a later date (usually months later). You will need to grade these exams regardless of when they come in.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/faculty-registrar/petitions-appeals>

Accommodated Testing Services (ATS): If a student is not in the examination room, they may be writing the exam with ATS. 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.

Final exam grading: 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.

Exam recheck or reread: Students have the right to request to see their final exam and can request this through the OFR. If a student feels their exam has not been graded properly or the grades have simply been miscalculated, then they can put in a request for a reread or a recheck, respectively. When this happens, the original exam paper is sent to the undergraduate office to pass on to the instructor who will need to look over and indicate if the student's final grade in the course should change as a consequence. Please do not recheck a final exam paper given to you directly by a student.

➤ <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/faculty-registrar/exams-assessments/exam-recheck-or-reread>

Final Grades

Final grades are due 7 business days after the final assessment. If there is no final assessment, the grades are due 7 business days after the last day of classes. Final grades have to be a round number – no decimals and 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 offence, 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. Grades are submitted electronically through eMarks.

➤ <https://emarks.utoronto.ca>

Academic Offences

The Undergraduate Associate Chair needs to be notified of all academic offences.

- If the alleged offence is on a test or assignment worth 10% or less of the final grade, then it is dealt with within the department. Student Academic Integrity (SAI) must be informed if the student is found guilty.
- If the alleged offence is on a test or assignment worth more than 10%, then there is an initial meeting with the student within the department. After that, appropriate forms and evidence are sent to SAI and they handle the case.

If you suspect a case of academic misconduct and you are unsure how to handle it, contact the Associate Chair or the undergraduate coordinator. You can find more information on the following sites.

➤ <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/process-and-procedures/>

➤ <https://utoronto.sharepoint.com/sites/ArtSci-GOV-SAI-Resources>

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 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. Please refer to the following document for more guidance on allocating class time for students to complete their course evaluations at the end of the term.

➤ <https://csb.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Conducting-Online-Course-Evaluations-In-Class.pdf>

Accessibility and Student Accommodation

Accessibility Services (AS): Students who require special accommodation may be registered with AS. These students should provide you with a letter of academic accommodation which outlines the accommodations the student may require. If they do not provide you with the letter, you are still obliged to accommodate the student when contacted by Accessibility Services. Not all students are registered with Accessibility Services but may need accommodation from time to time. It is expected that these students be accommodated also whenever possible. Concerns about accommodations can be discussed with the AS contact to find the best solution.

➤ <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>

Accommodated Testing Services (ATS): ATS is the University of Toronto department that coordinates course quiz, term test, final exam, and online assessment accommodations for students who are registered with Accessibility Services. Students will need to register with ATS at least 14 days in advance of a test or exam. Instructors will receive a notice from ATS to submit test details on CIS at least 7 days in advance. Tests and exams written with ATS will be delivered to the Undergraduate Office a few days after the regularly scheduled assessment. Once we receive them, we will pass them on to you as quickly as possible.

➤ https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/info_for_staff.html

➤ <http://cis.utoronto.ca>.

Students in Difficulty

If a student contacts you about difficulties academically or personally and you are unsure how to handle this, please contact the Undergraduate Associate Chair or the undergraduate coordinator 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/>. Please refer to the following document to help students find the mental health resources they need.

➤ <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Stepped-Care-One-Pager.pdf>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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