



**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO MISSISSAUGA CAMPUS COUNCIL  
REPORT NUMBER 4 OF THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2014**

To the Campus Council,  
University of Toronto Mississauga

Your Committee reports that it held a meeting on February 12, 2014 at 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chambers, William G. Davis Building, at which the following were present:

Ms Judith Poë, Chair  
Dr. Shay Fuchs, Vice-Chair  
Professor Amy Mullin, Vice-Principal Academic  
and Dean  
Professor Bryan Stewart, Vice-Principal,  
Research  
Professor Shyon Baumann  
Professor Andreas Bendlin  
Professor Tracey Bowen  
Professor Jill Caskey  
Professor Philip Clark  
Ms Diane Crocker, Registrar and Director of  
Enrolment Management  
Ms Sara da Silva  
Professor Amrita Daniere, Vice-Dean, Graduate  
Professor Charles Elkabas  
Dr. Louis Florence  
Professor Kelly Hannah-Moffat, Vice-Dean,  
Undergraduate  
Ms Shelley Hawrychuk  
Dr. Stuart Kamenetsky  
Professor Bernard Katz  
Ms Pam King  
Professor Peter Loewen  
Professor Peter Macdonald  
Ms Sue McGlashan  
Professor Heather Miller  
Professor Kent Moore  
Professor Emmanuel Nikiema  
Professor Esteban Parra  
Dr. Christoph Richter  
Mr. Masood Samim  
Professor Erik Schneiderhan  
Professor Sasa Stefanovic  
Professor Alison Syme

Professor Holger Syme  
Professor Mihkel Tombak  
Ms Edith Vig  
Professor Anthony Wensley  
Dr. Maria Wesslen  
Mr. Ian Whyte, Chief Librarian  
Professor Kathi Wilson  
Dr. Kathleen Wong

**Non-Voting Assessors:**

Prof. Ulli Krull, Vice-President, Special  
Initiatives  
Mr. Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs

**Regrets:**

Professor Deep Saini, Vice-President &  
Principal  
Dr. Kelly Akers  
Mr. Hamza Ansari  
Professor Varouj Aivazian  
Ms Laasya Annadevara  
Professor Craig Chambers  
Professor Tenley Conway  
Ms Sarah Elborn  
Mr. Simon Gilmartin  
Professor Yael Karshon  
Ms Sobia Khan  
Mr. Sheldon Leiba  
Dr. Mark Lippincott  
Mr. Leonard Lyn  
Professor Kathy Pichora-Fuller  
Mr. Michael Paulin  
Professor David Francis Taylor  
Professor Shafique Virani

**In Attendance:**

Professor Kevin Coleman, Department of Historical Studies  
Professor Shashi Kant, Director, Masters of Science in Sustainability Management (MScSM)

**Secretariat:**

Mr. Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council

Ms Cindy Ferencz Hammond, Director of Governance

Ms Mariam Ali, Committee Secretary

**1. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

**2. Presentation on the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC): Mr. Andrew Petersen, Director, Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre**

The Chair invited Mr. Andrew Petersen, Director of the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC), who made the following key points<sup>1</sup> in his presentation:

- Mr. Peterson emphasized the dual nature of the RGASC mandate, which is to support students and faculty through collaboration with faculty to address needs of students;
- He noted that course-specific drop-in consultations, writing and numeracy initiatives and facilitated study groups were the highest impact programs;
- The RGASC had a dual mandate of student support and faculty collaboration;
- RGASC had approximately 11,000 service interactions or 'touches' per year that were not unique and approximately 4,000 unique touches, not including Writing and Numeracy initiatives;
- Mr. Petersen highlighted the one week long Headstart program which runs in the summer for academic skills orientation as well as a seminar held by the Library;
- Resources were concentrated in skills consultations, however the Teaching Assistant (TA) Training program was a service area that was expanding;
- Mr. Petersen noted that the RGASC had many partners, including the Library, Technology Services, Office of the Registrar and Student Services (Accessibility and Health & Wellness);
- Collaboration with faculty relied on input and close cooperation to build capabilities that were used in a range of courses;
- The RGASC deployed resources where instructors believed it to be beneficial and supported the growth of instructors, such as the development of learning environments that meet identified needs, course and artifact designs as well as Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects;
- Mr. Petersen highlighted two dual mandate programs: Writing and Numeracy Initiatives and the Facilitated Study Groups (FSGs);
- The writing development initiative began in 2013-14 and has impacted 5900 students and supporting 14 projects in 10 departments. Aimed at writing intensive courses that required significant additional feedback within the course. The program introduced specialized training sessions of TAs as well as drop-in sessions for specific courses and assignments;
- Numeracy Initiatives ran a pilot for Chemistry and Biology courses, similar to targeted support provided through the writing development initiatives and is currently being assessed;
- FSGs were the largest program, and impacted 5900 students indirectly, through instructors and TAs. The program trained 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students in related disciplines focusing on skill development, not content;

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<sup>1</sup>A copy of the presentation is attached as Attachment A.

- Before 2009, the FSGs at RGASC were run on a funded model; by moving to a facilitated dual mandate, the Centre was able to move to a volunteer model. Individuals shifted from working 8-10 hours a week to a team based model of 2-4 hours per week;
- Students return multiple times, which demonstrates value. The number of senior students administering FSGs grew from 37 to 160;
- Moving forward, RGASC will continue with its dual mandate, seeking more partners and further collaboration to identify more areas of support;
- RGASC in partnership with the Office of the Registrar, is developing an early alert system to identify vulnerable students as early as 4 or 5 weeks into the start of classes as well as a program for academic re-orientation for students returning from probation;
- Mr. Petersen noted that there was anticipated growth and demand with English language learners and Accessibility;
- Mr. Petersen asked that faculty enlist the support of the RGASC through group sessions in advance of major due dates to help relieve pressure on the Centre during peak periods.

In response to a member's question, Mr. Petersen confirmed the number of student touches provided in the presentation was based on enrolment numbers from the Office of the Registrar.

A member asked how the RGASC would address the inefficiencies in the UTM system to avoid overlapping student support and to move towards a holistic approach in solving students' writing problems. Mr. Petersen advised members that the RGASC did not run the same program for similar courses, but provided customized writing support based on instructor feedback. He noted that writing continued to be a challenge for students and the Centre would continue to identify areas of support to make sure students had the necessary resources to succeed.

### **3. University of Toronto Mississauga Bridging Pathway (UTMBP) Program\***

The Chair invited Professor Mullin, Vice-Principal Academic & Dean to discuss the UTM Bridging Pathway program (UTMBP). Professor Mullin explained that UTMBP would provide an opportunity for successful direct entry to undergraduate studies leading towards an Honours Bachelor of Arts (HBA) degree to individuals who are at least 20 years of age, have not been enrolled in school for three years, and do not meet the traditional admissions requirements of UTM. The UTMBP would offer non-degree admission to a small number of students in 2014-15, whose academic success would be evaluated by the Office of the Registrar. The success of students would be enhanced by the development of essential learning skills in sessions offered by the RGASC and through their participation in academic advising sessions, which would be catered to non-traditional students. Professor Mullin noted that students admitted to UTMBP would be required to enrol in and successfully complete two half-credits during the fall and winter academic sessions with an average of 73 percent in order to be eligible for full-time studies at UTM; the successfully completed courses would then count towards credits required for an HBA. Those students who would achieve a 63 percent average would be permitted to proceed to part-time studies. Consultation had occurred with the RGASC, the University's Executive Director of Enrolment Services & University Registrar, and the Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment located on the St. George campus, and all were in full support of this initiative.

In response to a member's question, Professor Mullin noted that the program was specifically for students who had never attempted university, but would still qualify if the applicant had enrolled at college previously. Ms Diane Crocker, Registrar and Director of Enrolment Management further noted that students who were previously not admissible to U of T based on their high school grades and had

unsuccessfully attempted university studies at another academic institution, would be encouraged to enrol in another academic institution to improve their admissibility to U of T.

A member asked how the decision of the cut-off mark of 63 percent was reached, since students in all other programs needed 51 percent in order to advance. Professor Mullin responded that this was consistent with the longstanding and successful academic bridging program offered at Woodsworth College. Further, she noted that the grade requirement was higher because UTMBP students would be enrolled in only one course per academic session and would receive intense academic advising. If they were not able to succeed under those circumstances, their advancement would not be recommended.

A member inquired whether there were other academic admission requirements beyond high school marks, and also why UTMBP was not offered for an Honors Bachelors of Science (HBSc). Professor Mullin advised that applicants were required to submit English language proficiency results. Ms Crocker explained that generally admission requirements for an HBSc were more stringent, requiring specific high school courses for entry into some programs, which mature students would likely not have. The program was meant to assist not only domestic but also applicants who had been educated internationally and may not hold a domestic academic record or who have been out of the educational system for a prolonged period and were looking to transition into university studies. A member remarked that if a student was admitted to UTMBP and were to decide to pursue an HBSc, they could return to high school and take the prerequisites required.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED,

THAT the proposed University of Toronto Mississauga Bridging Pathway (UTMBP) Program, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, in the proposal dated January 28, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014.

#### **4. New Minor in Ethics and Society, Department of Philosophy\***

The Chair advised members of the Committee that they were responsible for major and minor modifications to existing programs. She noted that major and minor modification as noted in the terms of reference under section 5.6 refer to “major and minor modifications to existing degree programs”, however, she noted that in the case of the two minor programs proposed in the agenda, there was no existing specialist or major program. The Chair provided the definitions of major and minor modifications as defined by the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP): a major modification included a new minor where there was no existing major or specialist, and a minor modification included a new minor where there was an existing major or specialist.

The Chair invited Professor Mullin back to present the item. Professor Mullin stated that the new Minor in Ethics and Society targeted students who majored in Social Sciences and would be an addition to the Department of Philosophy’s suite of minors. There was growing recognition in various sectors of society of the importance of improving understanding in the areas of ethics and public policy, corporate ethics and a renewed interest in bioethics. She noted that the department anticipated high demand for the proposed new minor, and that it was built on the department’s existing research strengths in the area of value theory. The new minor also would provide opportunities for students to learn from the best scholars in the field and gain a deeper understanding of ethical theories and their application in various contexts. Faculty, staff and students in the Department of Philosophy, Chairs and Associate Chairs of Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Political Science, and Psychology, and faculty at the Departments

of Philosophy at the St. George campus and the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) who work in the area, were all consulted and were in support of this proposal.

A member noted that the Department of Management offered a course in business ethics, also a requirement of the new Chartered Professional Accounting designation and believed the scope of the minor could be expanded to include this aspect of ethics. Professor Mullin noted that she would consult further with the Management and Philosophy departments.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED,

THAT the proposed New Minor in Ethics and Society, offered by the Department of Philosophy, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, in the proposal dated January 27, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014.

#### **5. New Minor in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Department of Historical Studies**

The Chair invited Professor Mullin to discuss the additional new minor. Professor Mullin informed members that the new minor in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) at UTM would provide students an opportunity to gain integrated understanding of the region. The new minor was designed to offer interdisciplinary study opportunities to students planning careers in teaching, research, journalism, government and business providing a foundation for an international career where Latin America and the Caribbean would play an increasingly important role. Students would gain a broader understanding of the history, politics and cultures of the region and have the opportunity to pursue studies in Spanish, Portuguese, French and Creole linguistics based on their interest. The departments of Language Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Geography, Anthropology as well as faculty, staff and students in the department of Historical Studies at UTM were consulted and were in support. Additional, extensive consultations with the department of Historical and Cultural Studies at UTSC as well as UTSG's programs in Latin American Studies and Caribbean Studies, along with the Centre for International Experience, also yielded support.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED,

THAT the proposed New Minor in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, offered by the Department of Historical Studies, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, in the proposal dated January 22, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014.

#### **6. New Course, Course Change & Change in Program Requirement: Master of Biotechnology (MBiotech)\***

The Chair invited Professor Amrita Daniere, Vice-Dean Graduate to present this item. Professor Daniere advised members that the MBiotech program was enhancing its course offering with the introduction of BTC1720H Biomaterials and Protein Chemistry Laboratory. This course provided students with a hands-on introduction to biomaterials and complemented the existing lecture course, BTC1710H Biomaterials and Protein Chemistry Theory. The existing course BTC1710H was split in two courses

BTC1710H and BTC1720H, in order to reflect the relative number of contact hours in the laboratory course and the theory course. The addition of BTC1720H was designated a requirement for completion of the MBiotech program and total number of required science credits increased from 3.5 to 4.0.

A member asked if the total number of lab and in-class hours completed would remain the same. Professor Leigh Revers, Associate Director, MBiotech advised that the number of hours would remain the same, and by splitting the courses, it better reflected the workload of the course.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED,

THAT the proposed Master of Biotechnology (MBiotech) course name change of BTC1710H, which is offered by the Institute for Management and Innovation (IMI), from Biomaterials and Protein Chemistry Laboratory to Biomaterials and Protein Chemistry Theory, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, and described in the proposal dated January 22, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014; and

THAT the proposed new MBiotech course, Biomaterials and Protein Chemistry Laboratory (BTC1720H) to be offered by the IMI, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, and described in the proposal dated January 7, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014; and

THAT the proposed MBiotech change in program requirements offered by the IMI, as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, and described in the proposal dated January 22, 2014, be approved, effective September 1, 2014.

#### **7. New Courses: Master of Science in Sustainability Management (MScSM)\***

The Chair called on Professor Daniere to introduce the proposal of new courses for MScSM. Professor Daniere itemized and briefly described the following six new proposed courses: SSSM1070H Sustainability Law and Policy, SSM1080H Strategies for Sustainability Management, SSM1090H Capstone Course, SSM1110H Sustainability Management Internship, SSM2020H Sustainability Ethics and SSM1100Y Research Paper.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED,

THAT the proposed new Master of Science in Sustainability Management (MScSM) courses offered by the Institute of Management and Innovation (IMI), as recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, Professor Amy Mullin, and described in each of the proposals dated January 7, 2014, be approved, effective on the date specified for each course in each proposal.

#### **8. Assessor's Report**

Professor Mullin provided an overview of items for the upcoming Academic Affairs Committee meeting. She highlighted the major modification to the existing B.B.A. Management Specialist program, which would be the first instance where streams were created at the undergraduate level all UTM. Professor

Mullin invited faculty members and department Chairs to utilize the Office of the Dean if interested in pursuing the addition of streams.

**9. Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

THAT the consent agenda be adopted and that Item 10, Report of the Previous Meeting, be approved.

**10. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report 3 – January 9, 2014**

**11. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting**

**12. Date of Next Meeting - March 26, 2014, 4:10 p.m.**

The Chair reminded members that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for March 26, 2014, 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, William G. Davis Building.

The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

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Secretary  
February 19 2014

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Chair

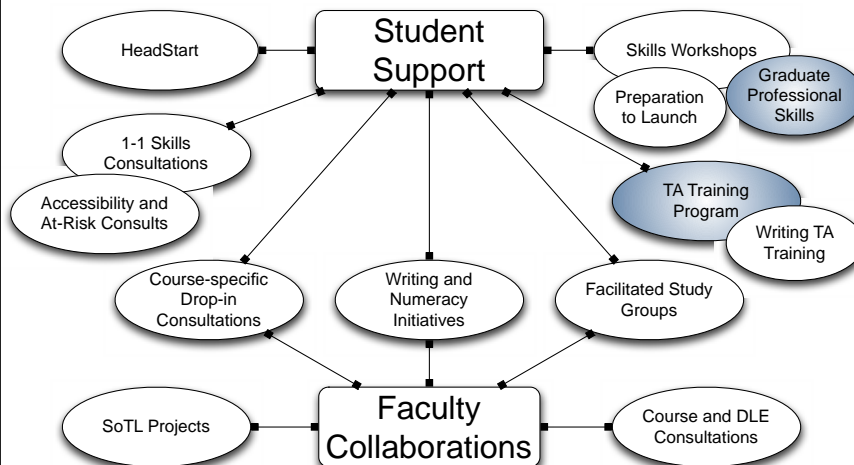


# The Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre

12 February 2014

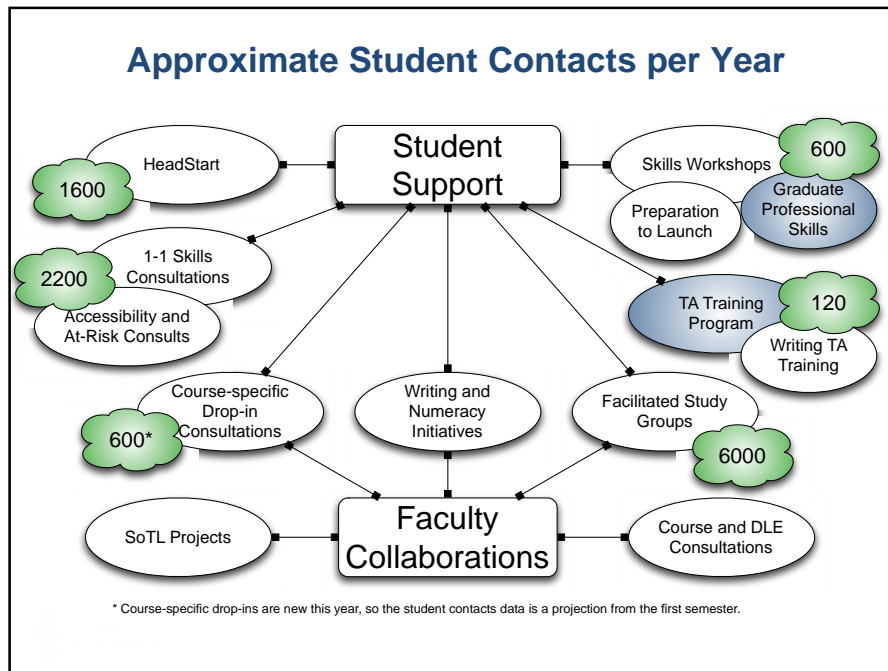


## Key RGASC Activities



Blue-tinted services are tri-campus programs that are supported but not managed by the RGASC.





## Partners

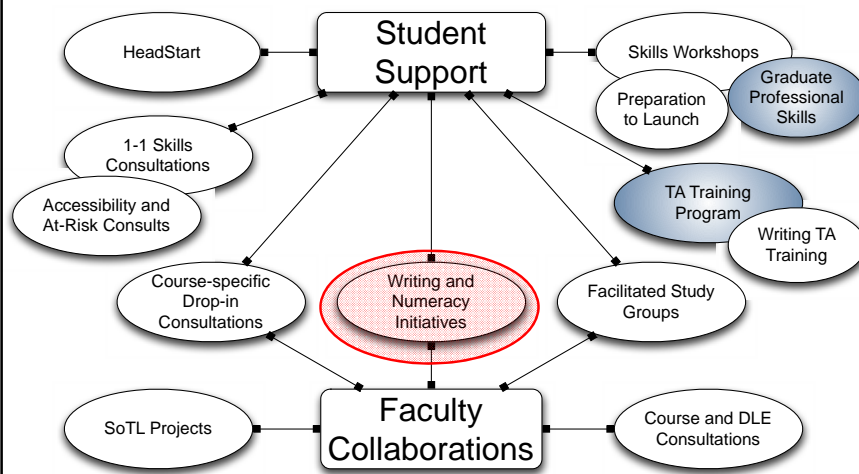
- The RGASC seeks close partnerships with a range of units across UTM.
- Library
- Technology Services
- Registrar
- Student Services
  - Accessibility
  - Health and Wellness



## Collaboration with Faculty

- Our most important partners are departments.
  - Collaboration with faculty is a critical component of the RGASC's procedures.
1. We deploy resources where instructors believe it will be of the most benefit.
  2. We work with instructors to develop learning environments that meet identified needs.
  3. We support the growth of instructors in and out of the classroom.

## Key RGASC Activities



Blue-tinted services are tri-campus programs that are supported but not managed by the RGASC.



### **The Writing Development Initiative Program**

- In 2013-2014, we supported fourteen projects in ten different departments.
  - 5,900+ students impacted
- All writing instruction was integrated in courses and involve providing feedback on writing.
- New this year: we are providing specialized training of Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- Also new: specific drop-in sessions for specific courses and assignments.

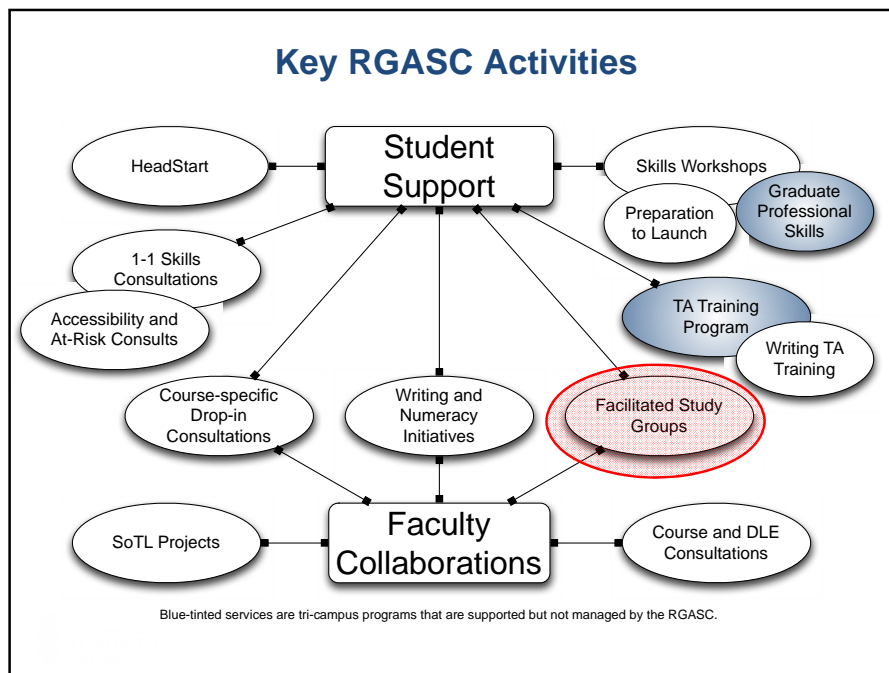
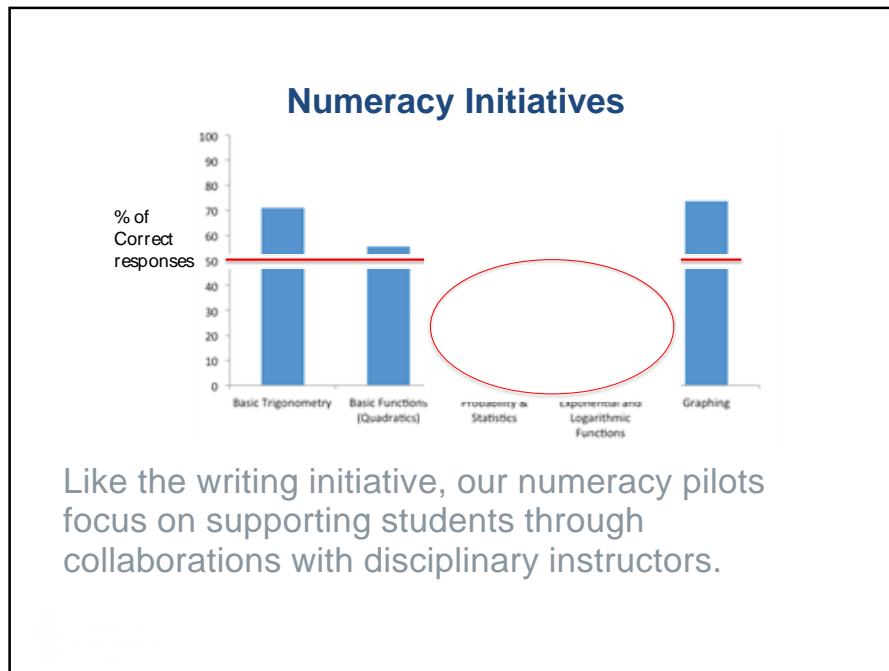
### **Training and Support for Writing TAs: A Dual Mandate**

#### **Professional Development for TAs**

- Supports TAs in being effective, consistent markers.
- Improves TAs' own writing.
- Provides TAs with an important skill for increasingly competitive job market.

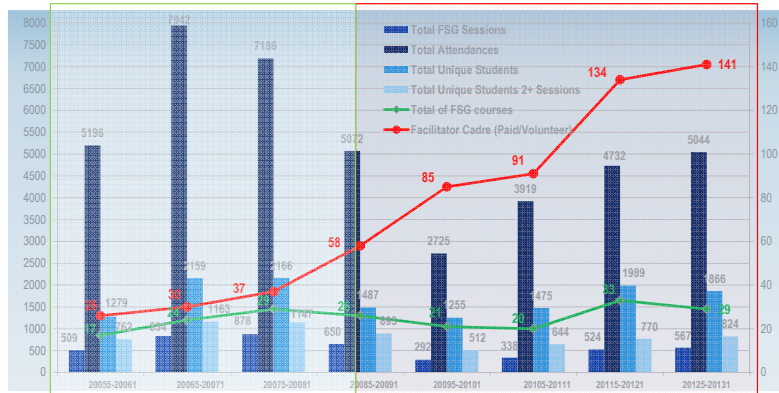
#### **Writing Instruction for Students**

- Provides formal writing instruction tailored to assignment and course.
- Ensures improved feedback on writing & content.
- Allows practitioners who know disciplinary conventions to offer writing instruction





### Facilitated Study Groups, 2005 to 2013



Note 1: Change over to 12 week term (September 2009)

Note 2: Composition of facilitator cadre 2008/09 – 30 paid/28 volunteer

### FSGs: A Dual-Mandate Program

#### Study Groups for Students

- Study groups are organized for challenging, transitional courses.
- Students learn about study and time management strategies from experienced peers.

#### Development for Facilitators

- Facilitators receive over 16 hours of training.
- Each facilitator team is observed and receives individual feedback.
- Facilitators develop a reflective portfolio and receive a transcript annotation.



## Moving Forward

The writing and numeracy initiatives and facilitated study groups are examples of the RGASC's commitment to:

- Collaboration with faculty and various campus units.
- Our dual mandate to support student learning and instructor development.

Moving forward, our goal is build stronger relationships with collaborators across campus to engage with emerging teaching and learning challenges.

## Moving Forward

Several emerging areas will require new or updated initiatives:

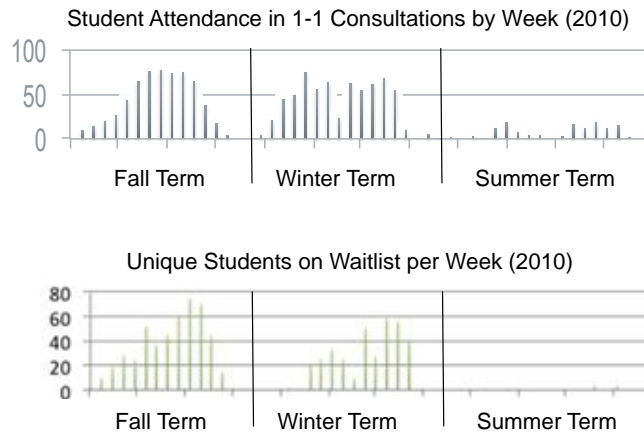
- "Early Alert" programming to identify and support students at risk in their first year.
- Academic re-orientation programs for students on probation or returning from suspension

We also anticipate growth in demand for:

- Support for English Language Learners (hiring for July 1)
- Scalable support for students with accessibility needs
- One-on-one and course-specific drop-in sessions



## Seasonal Variation in Demand



## Contact Information

For up-to-date information, please visit us on the web:

<http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/>

You can also be directed to the appropriate RGASC staff by sending email to [academicskills.utm@utoronto.ca](mailto:academicskills.utm@utoronto.ca)

I welcome feedback and queries at [director.tlsi@utoronto.ca](mailto:director.tlsi@utoronto.ca)