

Beyond the Classroom: Curricular Experiential Learning at UTM

October 15, 2025

Presented by:

Professor Vivienne Luk

Interim Associate Dean, Academic Experience

Rena Banwait

Director, Experiential Education & Community
Engagement

*Experiential Education Unit, Office of the Vice-
Principal Academic & Dean*


**DEFY
GRAVITY**



Core Curricular EL at UTM: Where Education Meets Experience

Research Opportunity Program (ROPs)

- Faculty-mentored research for high-achieving students
- Develops foundational research skills and academic inquiry
- Ideal for students exploring graduate studies or research careers

Academic Internships

- Course-integrated placements in relevant organizations with a defined project
- Apply theory in real-world contexts
- Develop professional skills through reflective practice

University of Toronto Co-op Internship Program (UTMCIP)

- Paid, full-time work term
- Deep immersion in industry settings
- Builds career readiness, networks, and long-term employability

ROP: Curiosity in Action

Research Opportunity Program (ROPs)

- Faculty-mentored research for high-achieving students
- Develops foundational research skills and academic inquiry
- Ideal for students exploring graduate studies or research careers

Academic Internships

- Course-integrated placements in relevant organizations with a defined project
- Apply theory in real-world contexts
- Develop professional skills through reflective practice

University of Toronto Co-op Internship Program (UTMCIP)

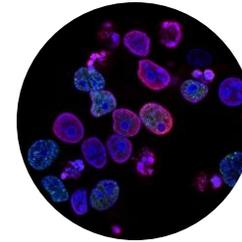
- Paid, full-time work term
- Deep immersion in industry settings
- Builds career readiness, networks, and long-term employability

ROP Structure



Faculty as Mentors

- Faculty members guide and support students throughout the research process
- Help faculty identify high-performing students for labs, research assistantships, or graduate study recruitment
- Student projects contribute to ongoing research and scholarship within the faculty's field.



Benefits for Students

- Develop strong connections with faculty mentors and gain insights into academic research.
- Gaining practical research skills and domain-specific knowledge that can be applied towards future career aspirations and graduate studies
- Earning course credit while engaging in hand-on research work

Faculty Eligibility

Eligible to Participate

- Full-time and Part-time Faculty (including CLTAs and LTAs)
- Associate Faculty (including cross-appointed Faculty to UTM)
- Faculty Emeriti (NB: must have been actively involved with their respective departments within the last 2-3 years)

Ineligible to Participate

- Other appointments:
 - Status-only
 - Adjunct Faculty
 - Visiting Scholars/Faculty
- Post-Doctoral Fellows/Research
- Graduate Course Instructors
- Librarians
- Sessional Lecturers I, II, III



By the Numbers: ROP Student Engagement

Academic Year (Summer, Fall/Winter, Yearlong)	2024-25
Student Enrolments	427 registered students
Total # of ROP projects	231 ROP course offerings

Academic Internships: Bridging Theory and Practice

Research Opportunity Program (ROPs)

- Faculty-mentored research for high-achieving students
- Develops foundational research skills and academic inquiry
- Ideal for students exploring graduate studies or research careers

Academic Internships

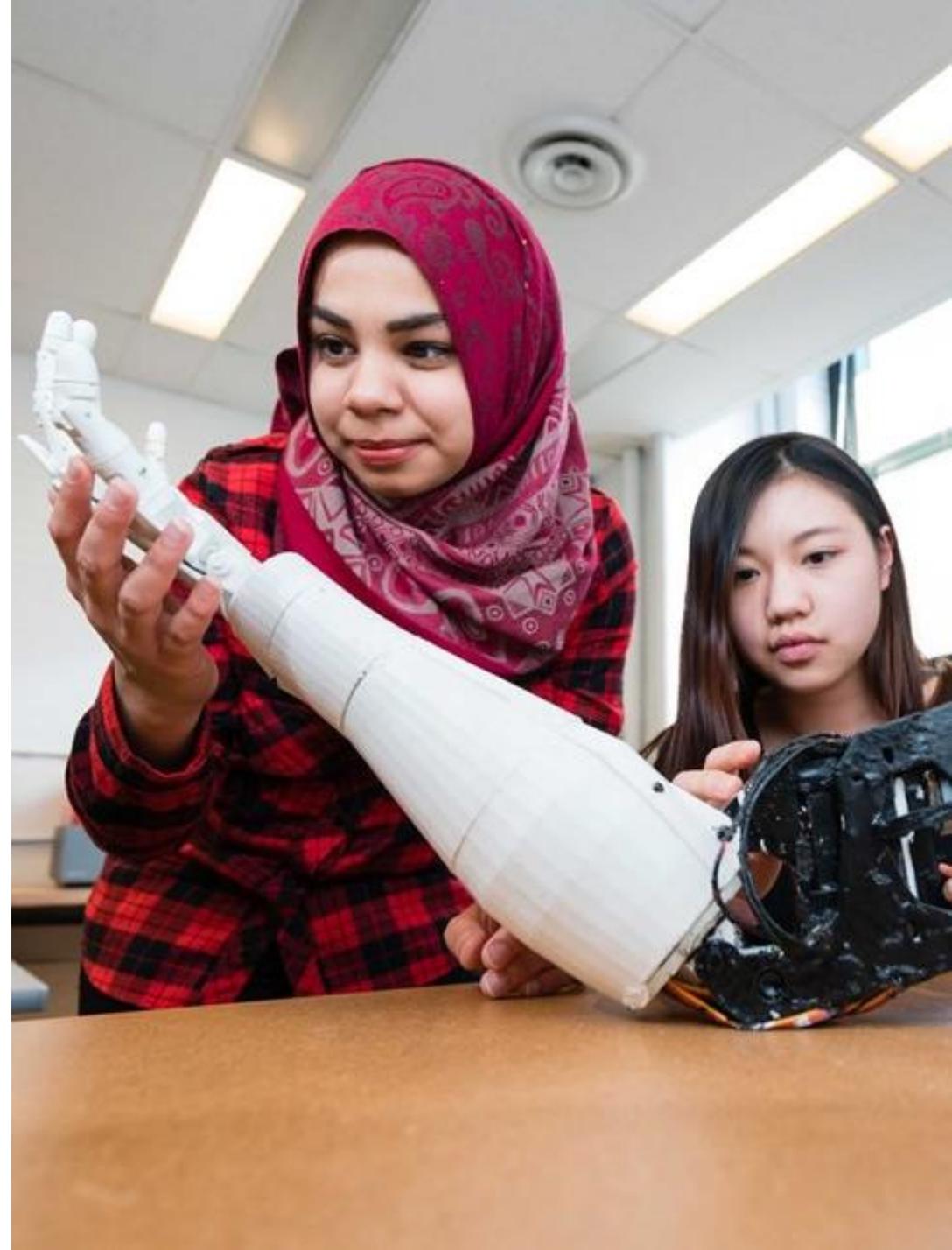
- Course-integrated placements in relevant organizations with a defined project
- Apply theory in real-world contexts
- Develop professional skills through reflective practice

University of Toronto Co-op Internship Program (UTMCIP)

- Paid, full-time work term
- Deep immersion in industry settings
- Builds career readiness, networks, and long-term employability

Academic Internship Structure

- Senior-level students entering their third and fourth years of study, primarily unpaid placement opportunities.
- Students complete 100–200 hours with an external organization over 4 or 8 months and earn course credit.
- An Experiential Learning Officer (ELOs) is available to support employers with accessing student talent.



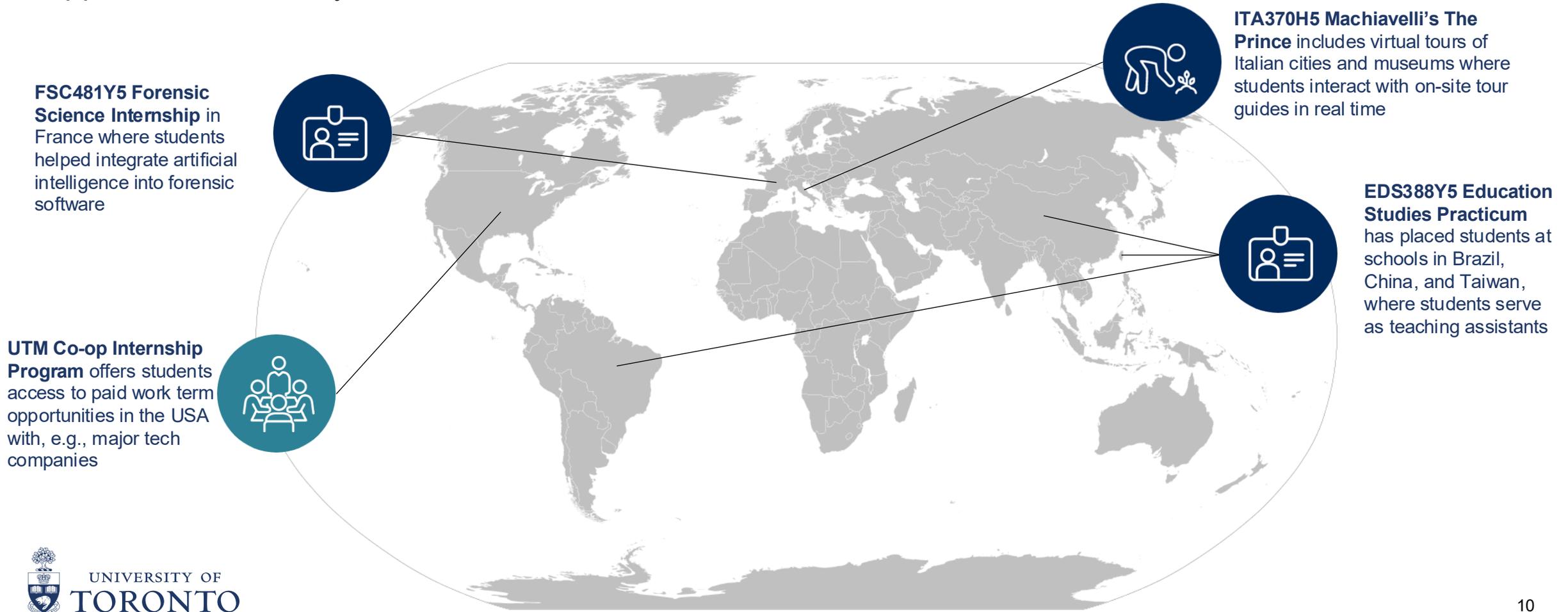


By the Numbers: Academic Internship Engagement

Academic Internship Courses	Examples of Placements	2024-25 Enrolments
Humanities 7 distinct courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blackwood Gallery• Royal Ontario Museum• Peel Institution on Violence Prevention	51 students
Sciences 6 distinct courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Riverwood Conservancy• Credit Valley Rehabilitation Day Hospital• Peel Regional Police Forensic Identification Services	90 students
Social Sciences 9 distinct courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MP Constituency Office• Crossroads International• Mind-Easy	250 students

Remote/Global Experiential Learning

In addition to study abroad programs offered by the International Education Centre, the EEU works with international partners around the world to create opportunities for students to complete experiential learning opportunities remotely.



UTMCIP: Immersive Professional Development

Research Opportunity Program (ROPs)

- Faculty-mentored research for high-achieving students
- Develops foundational research skills and academic inquiry
- Ideal for students exploring graduate studies or research careers

Academic Internships

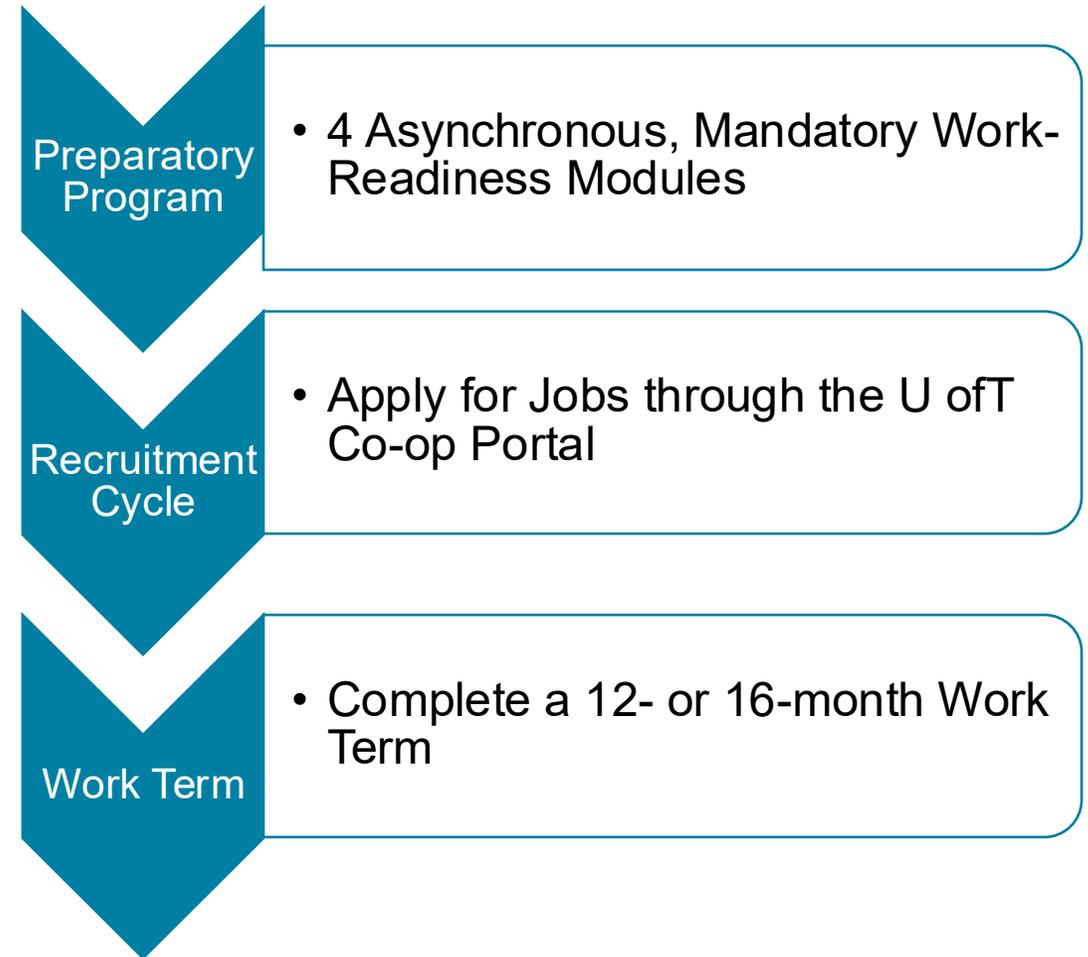
- Course-integrated placements in relevant organizations with a defined project
- Apply theory in real-world contexts
- Develop professional skills through reflective practice

University of Toronto Co-op Internship Program (UTMCIP)

- Paid, full-time work term
- Deep immersion in industry settings
- Builds career readiness, networks, and long-term employability

UTMCIP Structure

- Paid professional work-integrated learning opportunity for UTM students enrolled in specific programs of study.
- Students enrolled in the UTMCIP stream of their Program of Study complete mandatory Work-Readiness modules, followed by a 12- or 16-month paid, full-time, academically related work experience.
- The time to degree completion for students enrolled in the UTMCIP is normally 5 years. Students that complete the UTMCIP graduate with an acknowledgement (“UTM Co-op Internship Program”) on their transcript.



Participating Programs

- The UTMCIIP launched in Fall 2024, introducing UTMCIIP streams in 17 programs offered by 5 academic units.
- The Department of Management joined UTMCIIP in Fall 2025.
- UTMCIIP program streams are being introduced in 5 academic programs offered by the Department of Management.

Department of Biology

- **Biology-Specialist**

Department of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

- **Computer Science- Major**
- **Computer Science- Minor**
- **Computer Science- Specialist**
- **Information Security- Specialist**

Department of Chemical & Physical Sciences

- **Astronomical Sciences-Specialist**
- **Biological Chemistry-Specialist**
- **Biophysics-Specialist**
- **Chemistry-Specialist**
- **Earth Science-Specialist**

Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology

- **Communication, Culture, Information and Technology-Major**
- **Digital Enterprise Management-Specialist**
- **Professional Writing & Communication-Major**
- **Technology, Coding & Society-Major**

Department of Economics

- **Economics-Major**
- **Economics and Political Science-Specialist**
- **International Affairs- Specialist**

Department of Management

- **Commerce: Accounting-Specialist**
- **Commerce-Specialist**
- **Commerce: Finance-Specialist**
- **Commerce: Marketing-Specialist**
- **Management-Specialist (BBA)**



By the Numbers: Co-op Engagement

- In September 2024, the UTMCIIP welcomed its first cohort of **247 students**.
- 215 students (87%) are from Computer Science programs to account for UTM no longer participating in PEY Co-op Program
- Each new participating academic unit was allotted a maximum of 10 students in their first year.

Department	UTMCIP Stream	Registered	
		N	%
Mathematics & Computational Sciences	COMPUTER SCIENCE	214	86.6%
	INFORMATION SECURITY	1	0.4%
	MCS Total	215	87.0%
Chemical & Physical Sciences	ASTRONOMICAL SCIENCES	2	0.8%
	BIOLOGICAL CHEMISTRY	7	2.8%
	CHEMISTRY	1	0.4%
	CPS Total	10	4.1%
Economics	ECONOMICS & POLITICAL SCI	1	0.4%
	ECONOMICS	9	3.7%
	ECO Total	10	4.1%
Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology	COMM, CULTURE, IT & TECH	3	1.2%
	DIGITAL ENTERPRISE MGMT	4	1.6%
	TECH, CODING & SOCIETY	3	1.2%
	ICCIT Total	10	4.1%
Biology	BIOLOGY	2	0.8%
	BIO Total	2	0.8%
UTMCIP Total		247	100%

Note: No student applications were received from the following programs: Biophysics Specialist, Earth Sciences Specialist, International Affairs Specialist, and Professional Writing & Communication Major.

10-Year Growth of UTM Co-op Internship Program

- Steady increase in student enrolments across broad discipline areas
- Incremental annual targets to drive sustainable growth
 - Adding 50 new students to each entering cohort on annual basis
 - Entering cohort enrolments will more than double over the 10-year period (i.e., **247 students** in 2024-25 → **770 students** in 2034-35)
- Expansion of program infrastructure to support operations
- Strategic staffing increases to meet service and program delivery needs



Join us in expanding opportunities for students to learn, grow, and lead—beyond the classroom.

Thank you!

uoft.me/experience

experientialeducation.utm@utoronto.ca

[Uoft.me/UTMCIP](https://uoft.me/UTMCIP)

coopinternship.utm@utoronto.ca



Follow the EEU

