UTM Office of the Dean Newsletter

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Editor: Rachel Hughes

All flags on the university's three campuses were lowered to half-mast on September 30 to observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
Photo by Lisa Lightbourn

1. From the Desk of the Dean

Whew - we are now a month into the Fall Term 2021, it has been a busy but exciting start to the new academic year. After 18-months of living in a virtual world, we have been able to transition this fall to in-person campus life. Guided by our Chief Medical Officer and the team at Peel Public Health (PPH), a vaccine mandate, and strong compliance with mask wearing, we have about 30 per cent of our UTM classes in-person. I am happy to report that as of September 27th, 76,000 students, faculty, librarians, and staff have declared their vaccination status via UCheck, with 99% indicating that they are vaccinated. Thank you to our UTM community! We have now received the green light from PPH for a return to in-person classes for the majority of our Winter 2022 semester and planning is currently underway. It has been a pleasure for me to share information with so many of you in our town halls, and as we see each other in the food court, library, and hallways – to connect again with so many of you feels good.

If you have not yet visited the U of T UTogether site – please do, as you will find valuable and up-to-date information on our Covid response, including FAQs from our town halls.

Dean Office Updates

In the Dean's office we are very excited to have welcomed several new faces to our evolving team:

- Judith Poë, Professor Emerita in the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences, has joined the team in the position of Special Advisor to the Dean on Equity Deserving Groups in STEM. After earning her ARCS in Chemistry and her MSc and DIC in Biochemistry at Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, Professor Judith Poë joined the faculty at Erindale College (now UTM) in 1970 and made it her home. Judith in this new role, we will work together to devise means by which the recruitment, mentorship, participation and retention of several equity-deserving groups in our community, including female-identifying, Black and Indigenous students, in STEM disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, can be encouraged and increased. Professor Poë will also advise us on how our faculty complement of women in STEM disciplines can be increased
- Negin Dahya, Assistant Professor in ICCIT, has been appointed UTM's special advisor on diversity, equity and inclusion to the Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean. Dahya joined UTM in 2019 with an internationally renowned research portfolio addressing issues of equity, diversity and inclusion in the contexts of education and technology. In her new role, Dahya will provide regular advice on matters related to equity, diversity and inclusion within the academic and operational areas managed by the Dean's Office and provide insights to the Dean on how UTM can meet the recommendations from the Anti-Black racism task force.
- Over the past 6-weeks, a team of 5 Dean's office administrative staff were trained in process redesign, and we have begun to make our processes more efficient! More soon.

As exciting as it is to welcome these new faces, we also said goodbye to a member of our team, Kayla Sousa who is moving on from the EEU into a new role as Program Coordinator in ICUBE. I want to take this opportunity to thank Kayla for all of her incredible work in the EEU. While we are sad to see her go, we look forward to collaborating with Kayla in her new role!

Organizational Structure Update

We had a very exciting development in the Dean's office and UTM's organizational structure. The reporting line of the Registrar and Director of Enrolment Management, Lorretta Neebar, has now changed from the Vice-President & Principal to the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean. Informed by careful discussion and best practices, the change enacts the spirit of recommendations outlined in the 2015-16 Provostial Review of UTM's academic portfolio, offering a new opportunity to leverage the national-leading strength of our Registrar's Office; to acknowledge its role at the core of UTM's academic mission; and to bring its expertise to bear on complementary teams. Empowered by deep collaboration, the new reporting relationship will help enhance the effectiveness of our recruitment and service delivery models; improve the responsiveness and relevance of our academic programming; synchronize our academic strategy with our modelling data; unify our approach to student advising; and coordinate our teaching and learning goals with plans for classroom allocation.

Huge thanks to Lorretta Neebar and her team for enabling this transition and facilitating its success. We look forward to the work that we will do to create an even stronger UTM.

Chairs & Directors Staff Updates

I also want to take a moment to recognize departmental Chairs that ended their terms in 2021:

- Department of Management - Professor Mihkel Tombak
- Department of MCS - Professor Konstantin Khanin
- Department of English & Drama – Professor Holger Syme

Please join me in extending a heartfelt thank you to these Chairs for their steadfast dedication to furthering the objectives and success of their Departments over the years!

We have also welcomed Chairs as of July 2021:

- Department of English & Drama – Professor Richard Greene (Acting Chair)
- Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology – Professor Tracey Bowen (Acting Director)
- Department of Management – Professor Tanjim Hossain
- Department of MCS – Professor Ilia Binder

Please join me in welcoming these Chairs to their new positions. I am eager to see all the amazing work they will do within their departments!

Snider Lecture

This month we hosted the 2021 UTM Snider Lecture featuring Robin Wall Kimmerer and her talk entitled, Restoration and Reciprocity: Healing Relationships with the Natural World.   Robin is a scientist, decorated Professor and best-selling author of Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants. 1200 people logged in to listen to Robin's talk and positive feedback was received from the UTM community and the general public.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On the 30th September we recognized the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day at UTM. This day is used to honour the children who went to residential schools, create awareness of residential schools, and create dialogue about the lasting impact of the legacy of residential schools. Members of the UTM community wore orange as a symbol of support for the survivors of Canada's residential schools, for those who never returned home, and for the families and communities that still experience trauma today. In our new strategic framework, as in our everyday practice, UTM has committed to centre truth, openness, and reciprocity in relations, aiming to deepen connections with Indigenous communities, to renew respectful relationships with Indigenous colleagues, and to realize national and institutional calls for action. UTM will continue taking the urgent steps necessary to become a more deserving home for Indigenous students, faculty, staff, librarians, and communities.

2. Vice-Dean, Academic Experience

Experiential Education Unit

Lecture Me! a series

Lecture Me! a series launched its 2021-22 season virtually on September 14, 2021 in collaboration with the Mississauga Library System. Our first speaker was Professor Sonia Kang (Department of Management), whose talk was entitled "Naming and Framing: Perceptions of Racial Group Labels." Professor Kang discussed the racial group labels used to categorize people in formal and informal contexts, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); white; visible minorities; and First Nations. The lecture was well attended by students, faculty, staff, and members of the local community. For a full list of this year's speakers, visit uoft.me/lectureme.

2021 Experiential Education Fair

The Experiential Education Unit's annual flagship event, the Experiential Education Fair, will took place on **Thursday, October 7, 2021**. Students had the opportunity to learn about the wide range of experiential learning (EL) experiences offered by academic and co-curricular units in collaboration with community partners. At the Fair, faculty, staff, and community partners hosted 18 Virtual Tables and 19 Information Sessions about specific EL opportunities available at UTM.

Gaining Experience Remotely: Faculty Edition

Building on the Experiential Education Unit's "Gaining Experience Remotely" campaign, which ran in March 2021, the Student Ambassador team conducted brief promotional video interviews with faculty members. Participating faculty shared insights and advice for student success in remote experiential learning opportunities. Published between July and September 2021, the interviews were showcased across the EEU's social media platforms: YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram. The full-length videos can be accessed at Featured Experiences.

Academic Integrity Unit

- To handle the high volume of academic integrity cases reported over the past 18-months, the Academic Integrity Unit (AIU) hired two additional assistants, both for 24-month terms. The positions have been filled by Rachel Gorjup and Camille Angiers. Rachel and Camille have extensive experience working with students, staff, and faculty on academic misconduct matters and will provide much-needed administrative support to the AIU.
- In the 2021-2022 academic year, five Dean's Designates will preside over official academic misconduct hearings: Professor Emeritus Charles Elkabas (Department of Language Studies), Professor Shay Fuchs (Department of Mathematical and Computational Sciences), Professor Emeritus Michael Georges (Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences), Professor Catherine Seguin (Department of Management), and Professor Timothy (TJ) Yusun (Department of Mathematical and Computational Sciences).
- This fall, the AIU launched the AIU Student Ambassador Program. The program provides upper-year UTM students with the opportunity to promote greater student understanding and awareness of academic integrity issues. In its inaugural year, four

upper-year students enrolled in the program will assist in sharing their experiences and participating in a variety of AIU outreach and educational initiatives. Please join us in welcoming Marielle Cruz, Emily Minasvand, Saja Qureshi, and Dellannia Segreti.

- In August's UTM Express, Vice-President and Principal Alexandra Gillespie discussed how UTM aims to address the increasing cases of academic integrity, especially amid the continued practice of online teaching and evaluation.

- October 18-22, 2021 is Academic Integrity Week (AIW). During this week, the AIU encourages students, staff, and faculty to promote a culture of academic integrity on our campus. AIW aligns with the 6th International Day of Action (IDoA) Against Contract Cheating, October 20, 2021. **Contract cheating** is a "form of academic dishonesty where students get academic work completed on their behalf, which they then submit for academic credit [and/or advantage] as if they had created it themselves" (source: ContractCheating.com). Monitor the AIU Website and Instagram (@utm_aiu) for information on how UTM will be participating in this important initiative.

3. Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs

On October 12, 2021, a Virtual Coffee with the Vice-Dean Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs: was held. This was a webinar targeted at senior undergraduates considering applying for grad school. The event was a great success and around 250 students registered for this online event.

Mark your calendars for upcoming events sponsored by the Vice-Dean Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs:

1. **October 28, 2021 at 2pm**, a seminar with Jennifer Polk (@PhDtoLife) for senior grad students and postdoctoral fellows considering non-academic career paths. Please register at this link https://uoft.me/phd-to-life
2. **November 18, 1:30-3:00pm**, a UTM consultation on graduate student intake in tri-campus graduate programs, with Faculty of Arts & Science Vice-Dean Graduate, Prof. Antoinette Handley. In addition to discussions that will occur within tri-campus graduate departments, this consultation will focus on campus-specific concerns regarding graduate student intake and program enrolments in the post-graduate expansion era. More details will be forthcoming in a direct email.

4. Vice-Dean, Teaching and Learning

UTM is excited to have recently launched a new Major in Technology, Coding & Society (TCS), offered through the Institute of Communication, Culture, Information & Technology (ICCIT). This new program, which welcomed its first cohort of students in September 2021, focuses on the impact of technologies, including hardware, platform and associated software, on people and society more generally. Students learn essential computer coding skills, are taught theories on the use of digital platforms from humanistic and social science perspectives, learn to analyze the data that digital platforms produce, and then apply these concepts through practical labs and through optional work-integrated learning opportunities.

This program is one of the few in Canada to merge Social Informatics, Computational Social Science and Digital Humanities. Additionally, TCS students will have the opportunity to concurrently obtain a Professional Experience Certificate in Digital Media, Communication, and Technology. This is a complementary stand-alone certificate program available to students in any ICCIT program and includes two paid summer work terms plus three professional development courses. Furthermore, TCS students can also complement their studies by participating in ICCIT's new Certificate of Completion in Media Skills, a not-for-credit certificate designed to refine and build connections with media concepts, technologies, ideas, industries, peers, mentors, and community outside of the formal classroom.

Learn more about the new Major in Technology, Coding & Society from the academic calendar: https://utm.calendar.utoronto.ca/section/Communication,-Culture,-Information-and-Technology
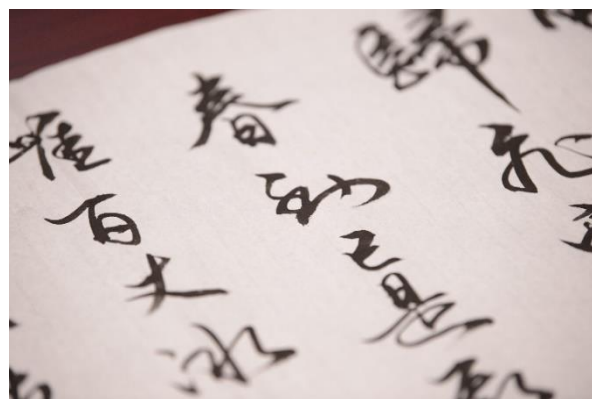
September 2021 also saw the launch of a new freestanding Minor in Chinese Language & Culture (CLC), offered through the Department of Language Studies. This new minor builds upon the existing Chinese language and culture courses in the Department to enhance global and cross-cultural academic options. Advanced learners with near-native proficiency will improve their written and oral communication skills in both academic and professional settings while also advancing their linguistic knowledge and cultural literacy from a cross-cultural perspective.

This program will be a good compliment to existing programs that highlight a global perspective and emphasize the importance and benefit in language acquisition and cultural awareness, such as programs in Linguistics, History, International Affairs, Management, Anthropology, and Communication (ICCIT). Completion of the CLC Minor in combination with one or more of these complementary programs will provide a demonstrable and distinct bicultural competence in Chinese and English, positioning them well for careers in areas such as business, government, diplomacy, journalism, education, and cultural exchange.

Learn more about the new Minor in Chinese Language & Culture from the academic calendar: https://utm.calendar.utoronto.ca/section/Chinese

The Institute of Communication, Culture, Information & Technology (ICCIT) also introduced a Certificate of Completion in Media Skills this past February 2021. This not-for-credit certificate offers students in any ICCIT program the opportunity to refine and build their connections with media concepts, technologies, ideas, industries, peers, mentors, and community outside of the formal classroom. Through a series of self-curated workshops, students will direct their own learning and engage with their community in unique ways. Workshops will enrich classroom learning by providing students with active learning opportunities to hone and practice technical skills; learn about professional and industry application; hear from industry leaders and experts as well as ICCIT faculty and alumni; and network with their peers and mentors.

Learn more about the Certificate of Completion in Media Skills from the academic calendar: https://utm.calendar.utoronto.ca/section/Communication,-Culture,-Information-and-Technology

The first rule of sustainability is to align with natural forces, or at least not try to defy them.

Paul Hawken

Launched in September 2021, the Certificate of Completion in Global Sustainability from the Institute for Management & Innovation (IMI) offers a greatly expanded opportunity for all UTM undergraduate students to learn about global sustainability, which is not limited to just environmental conservation issues. This not-for-credit certificate will provide students with an intellectual and practical understanding of the holistic nature of global sustainability, develop students' applied and managerial skills to address real-

life sustainability issues, and enhance students' qualifications for summer and post-graduation employment opportunities.

Students will complete three (3) required modules and select three (3) elective modules over the course of their undergraduate studies to earn their Certificate of Completion in Global Sustainability. Modules average two 5-hour sessions (for a total of 10 hours) and offer a combination of workshops, group discussions, case studies, and presentations.

Learn more about the Certificate of Completion in Global Sustainability from the academic calendar: https://utm.calendar.utoronto.ca/section/Management-and-Innovation

The Office of the Dean and the Program & Curriculum Unit (PCU) are very happy to welcome Amanda Pullan to our team in the newly created role of Research Analyst, Academic Programs & Curriculum. Amanda began this role in March 2021. Previous to joining the Dean's Office, Amanda served as the Research & Innovation Liaison at the Centre for Research & Innovation Support in the Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation where she developed research training events and resources to support faculty researchers. Prior to this, Amanda was the Senior Project Manager for Post MD Education in the Faculty of Medicine. This role saw Amanda coordinating the Continuing Professional Development Office's 2018 external accreditation review. Amanda completed her PhD in History at Lancaster University (UK) where she investigated British women's seventeenth-century embroidery as a vehicle of literacy and education. As Research Analyst, Academic Programs & Curriculum, Amanda will support academic units as they undergo external reviews, with special focus on verification and interpretation of data as well as special data requests. Additionally, Amanda will utilize her expertise to assist with academic change proposals related to certificate programs, freestanding minors, and program closures.

In July 2021, the PCU launched our new website! This site is the new home for quality assurance at UTM, providing information and resources on external reviews, undergraduate and graduate curriculum review and renewal, new programs, extra-departmental units (EDUs), major modifications, certificates, program closures, and course evaluations. This comprehensive new site also features the first annual report of the PCU, highlighting the work we have undertaken during the 2020-2021 academic year.

4. Vice-Dean, Faculty

NEW UTM MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

We are excited to announce that the Office of the Vice-Dean, Faculty has launched a new mentoring program for faculty in the tenure and teaching stream who started July 1, 2021. The program is designed to formalize relationships between more senior faculty (mentors) and new faculty (mentees). In support of this, we have created a Quercus site for the mentoring program through which mentors / mentees can connect with each other and develop networks of support at UTM and across the tri-campus. Mentors / Mentees were sent a formal invitation to join the Quercus site – from the site mentors / mentees can access and download documents relevant to the program including:

- Roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentees;
- A mentorship letter of understanding,

- A self-assessment plan to assist mentees in identifying short and long-term career goals and related mentoring needs

We strongly encourage mentors and mentees to meet regularly (i.e., monthly) and to assist with these meetings we have developed a set of suggested monthly topics for discussion that align with various aspects of teaching, research/pedagogic and professional development, and academic HR. Through the program, we will also be offering workshops and talks.

We wish to thank members of our mentorship advisory panel who provided input and guidance on the launch of our new mentorship program and participated in a workshop for mentors that was held on September 22. Members of the panel include:

- Beth Coleman, Associate Professor, Tenure Stream, Department of ICCIT
- Joel Levine, Chair, Department of Biology
- Barbara Murck, Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Geography, Geomatics, and Environment
- Judith Poe, Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences
- Emmanuel Nikiema, Chair, Department of Language Studies

The mentorship program places an important emphasis on multi-level mentoring. In support of this, we are working with the Office of the Acting Vice-Dean Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs, the Office of the Vice-Principal, Research, and the Director of the Black Research Network to develop a series of workshops for mentors and mentees.

If you have any questions about the program, or recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact Vice-Dean Kathi Wilson at vdfaculty.utm@utoronto.ca or Dina Moreira (dina.moreira@utoronto.ca).