



PDAD&C #66, 2013-14

To: PDAD&C

From: Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Date: May 27, 2014

Re: **Report of the Joint Working Group on Undergraduate Tutorials**

The Report of the Joint Working Group on Undergraduate Tutorials has now been released and the Provost has accepted the recommendations contained therein. Attached is an endorsement of the Report by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group. The Report and the Provost's Acceptance Letter are available online at <http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/public/reports.htm>.

To assist with the rollout of the Report's recommendations, I have convened an Implementation Working Group. The membership of this group is as follows:

Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs (Chair)
Kelly Hannah-Moffat, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, University of Toronto Mississauga
Susan McCahan, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering
Carol Rolheiser, Director, Centre for Teaching Support & Learning
Mark Schmuckler, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, University of Toronto Scarborough
Suzanne Stevenson, Vice-Dean, Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Arts & Science
Sandy Welsh, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education and Program Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science

This memorandum summarizes the key recommendations of the Report and identifies next steps.

The Joint Working Group was a collaborative initiative undertaken by the University and CUPE, Local 3902, Unit 1 and the Report makes important recommendations designed to enhance the training provided to teaching assistants assigned to tutorials. Both parties recognize the nature and quality of the education experience that undergraduate students encounter in tutorials are highly significant components of their undergraduate educational program and the recommendations contained in the Report align well with the institutional commitment to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience.

The Report provides a **clear definition of the term "tutorial"** and further **categorizes tutorials into four different types of activities**. Specific training that aligns with these categories will be available for teaching assistants through the TATP to allow them to effectively support student learning.

Recommendation 1 states as follows on page 5 of the Report:

That the University of Toronto adopt the following definition of 'tutorial': The term 'tutorial' is used to identify interactive and participatory sessions, primarily led by Teaching Assistants. During these interactive and participatory tutorial sessions, Teaching Assistants are responsible for gauging student understanding and providing formative feedback, in line with assessment structures and guidelines set by the instructor

The Report recommends the following four tutorial categories in Recommendation 2:

- Discussion-based sessions
- Skill development sessions
- Q&A and exam/test/assignment review sessions, and
- Laboratories/Practicals

These activities are not mutually exclusive and it is acknowledged that any one tutorial may involve a range of them based on the established learning objectives. The categories, however, are intended to denote the primary activity (or activities) of a given tutorial. See Appendix B, subsection (E) for a full description of the categorization scheme. [page 19]

The Description of Duties and Allocation of Hours (**DDAH**) form (on page 46 of the Report) is currently under revision to include the additional tutorial categories.

The Report includes a **guiding framework** for the instructor in the assessment of whether the teaching assistant requires additional training on the basis of the activities undertaken in the tutorial (Appendix D, page 27).

The Report also suggests a **threshold for tutorial size training** (page 32), and if there is an increase beyond the suggested threshold, teaching assistants should receive appropriate training in order to accomplish the pedagogical goals of the tutorial. If the teaching assistant has not received this training as part of their first or subsequent appointment, up to three additional hours of paid training may be provided as described below.

Recommendation 6 on page 7 states:

That the University offer paid training the first time a TA's appointment includes facilitating tutorials in one of the particular categories noted in this document. This training should be tailored to the primary activity in the tutorial section(s) that the TA will facilitate (e.g., "Leading Small-Group Discussions", "Effective A&A Sessions", etc.). That the University also offer paid training when a TA's appointment involves facilitating tutorials whose enrolment exceeds the suggested threshold ranges found in Appendix D: Thresholds for Additional TA Training.

Payment for such training shall be as follows:

- a) Such training may be included within the hours of mandatory training currently stipulated in the Unit 1 Collective Agreement for a first appointment.
- b) If the TA did not receive relevant Tutorial-specific training as part of the training for the first appointment, then up to three additional hours of paid training may be provided.

- i. One hour of this additional training shall be in addition to the specified hours of the TA appointment (but will not be included in the terms of any future appointment commitments).
- ii. Up to two hours shall be built into the terms of the appointment.

One additional hour of training (as per b(i) above), will be funded centrally for academic year 2014-15.

The Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) is developing resources to support this initiative and enhance tutorial teaching for instructors and teaching assistants. These resources include the expansion of the TATP program, the development of tutorial workshops for instructors, and online modules for instructors and teaching assistants. Information about these resources will be forthcoming at the end of June.

This is a tri-campus initiative which will ensure the quality of the learning experiences of our students and further enhance the undergraduate student experience. The Provost's Office is working closely with the Divisions to implement the recommendations over the next academic year. Divisions will be in contact with their academic units concerning the details of implementation, and a list of training resources and FAQs will be available soon through your Division, and also on the CTSI website.



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO



To: University of Toronto Community

From: Morgan Vanek
CUPE3902

Jill Matus
Vice-Provost, Students and First-Entry Divisions

Date: May 27, 2014

Re: Working Group on Undergraduate Tutorials

As Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Undergraduate Tutorials, we are very pleased to announce that the TWG's report and recommendations have been accepted by the Provost. The report will be made available on the Provost's website at <http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/public/reports.htm>.

We would like to thank all members of the Working Group for their contributions.