



Teaching Remotely

Welcome Package for Teaching Assistants

2020 - 2021

As the University continues to address the new realities of teaching and learning with limited in-person delivery, the MacPherson Institute and other groups on campus have developed and continue to deliver important resources to assist with the transition to remote teaching for teaching assistants.

The **Paul R. MacPherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence in Teaching** provides pedagogical support for McMaster teaching assistants, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, sessional instructors, faculty, and staff.

Preparation for online teaching and learning are underway and there are a variety of resources that have been developed for reference and consideration.

Events & Workshops

Virtual Training Sessions & Upcoming Events

A variety of webinar sessions and upcoming events can be found on the MacPherson Institute Upcoming Events page. Virtual training sessions cover introductions and how-tos on tools like Avenue to Learn, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and PebblePad, as well as topics related to effective online teaching, facilitating online discussions, creating a learner-centered syllabus, and more. Upcoming events include opportunities like the **TA Q&A Drop-In Sessions with an Educational Developer**, where TAs can ask any teaching-related questions they may have.

To see a full list of upcoming virtual training sessions and events, and to register, visit the MacPherson Institute Upcoming Events webpage: <https://mi.mcmaster.ca/upcoming-events/>

2020 Teaching & Learning Forum (TLF)

This virtual event offers TAs, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and sessional instructors information sessions and workshops on various teaching and learning topics. Participants can access nearly 30 unique asynchronous (pre-recorded) workshops any time throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. Some key workshops that would be of value to any TA (especially new TAs) include:

- Knowing Your Rights, Benefits and Obligations as a CUPE 3906 Member
- TA Professionalism and Good Practices
- An Introduction to Avenue to Learn
- An Overview of McMaster Supported Teaching Technologies
- Marking Efficiently and Effectively

For more information about the TLF, and to register, visit: <https://mi.mcmaster.ca/events/2020-teaching-learning-forum/>

There is no limit to the number of online asynchronous workshops participants can complete.

Note: *If you are asked to engage in the TLF as part of mandatory TA training, please connect with your employment supervisor to discuss expectations (i.e., sessions to attend and the number of hours to be accounted for on your Hours of Work Form). Training deemed to be optional will not be accounted for in your hours of work and will not be compensated.*

Resources and Guides

Teaching Assistant Guide for Remote Teaching

This guide provides an overview of important information to assist TAs in fulfilling their role remotely at McMaster, including questions that TAs should consider asking their supervisor, information about educational technologies, online etiquette, and online teaching development opportunities. To download the guide, visit:

<https://mi.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2020/06/Teaching-Assistant-Guide-for-Remote-Teaching-Fall-2020.pdf>

Teaching Assistant Guide

This guide covers the basics of TA roles and responsibilities at McMaster, including lesson planning, engaging students in active learning, assessing and providing feedback on student learning, applying accessibility and inclusivity in teaching methods, and documenting teaching effectiveness. This resource also highlights common TA-related questions and challenges.

To download the guide, visit: <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/taguide/>

Teaching Remotely Website

The MacPherson Institute Teaching Remotely website is a key resource for information about teaching in online and virtual environments. The site covers essential considerations, supported tools (Avenue to Learn, Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, MacVideo and Echo360) and assessment strategies. It is regularly updated with new resources, training events and best practices. The site also offers information about pedagogical strategies for a variety of teaching and learning contexts. To learn more, visit: <https://mi.mcmaster.ca/teaching-remotely/>

Forward with FLEXibility: Accessibility and Inclusion Resource

This is a comprehensive guidebook to support instructors, TAs and those in other educational roles in applying Accessible Education principles. Modules 1, 2, 3, and 5 are particularly relevant to TAs. These modules cover the foundational principles of inclusive instruction/accessible education and how to apply those principles in your teaching/TA duties.

To download the guide, visit: <https://flexforward.pressbooks.com/>

E-Learning Section of McMaster's Accessibility Hub

TAs can leverage this resource to find support with developing accessible content for digital media, including Word, PowerPoint, Email, and recording presentations in an accessible format.

This resource also provides accessibility-related information for McMaster's supported tools, and a remote teaching and captioning guide.

To learn more, visit: <https://accessibility.mcmaster.ca/digital-accessibility/e-learning/>

Additional Resources & Guides

The MacPherson Institute has developed a variety of resources and guidebooks. These can be leveraged while considering the design and development of virtual or online classrooms including:

- [Teaching Remotely Guide](#) [Guidebook]: This guide provides an introduction to teaching remotely and shares best practices, tips and links to resources for teaching in virtual or online classrooms.
- [Tests and Exams in Avenue to Learn](#) [Guidebook]: This guide offers information about Avenue to Learn (McMaster's Learning Management System) test and exam features, best practices and additional resources.
- [McMaster's Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guide](#) [Website]: This website outlines principles and examples of how to put inclusive teaching into practice.
- [Responsibility to Accommodate under the AODA](#) [Website]: This webpage outlines the requirements for creating educational materials in accessible formats.
- [MacPherson Teaching Remotely Resources MacVideo](#) [Video Channel]: This video resource channel provides a growing collection of playlists aimed at supporting instructors, students and staff on improving and enriching teaching and learning.
- [Blended Learning Community of Practice](#) [Teams]: This Microsoft Teams channel allows educators to connect with other educators to discuss best practices, ask questions and find resources related to online teaching.

The Library Remote Support Hub

Whether you're teaching, learning, or researching remotely, The Library Remote Support Hub has been designed to help educators with information needs. This resource provides remote access to books online and connections to electronic resources and allows educators to request a research consultation and seek media creation support.

To learn more, visit: <https://library.mcmaster.ca/remotesupport>

CUPE 3906 Unit 1

The CUPE 3906 Unit 1 website has a wealth of important resources and reference documents to assist TAs in understanding their role at McMaster, including details about the current Collective Agreement, the Employee Family Assistant Program, as well as Dental and Health Care information. To learn more, visit: <https://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/>

Courses

The Teaching and Learning Certificates of Completion Program

The MacPherson Institute offers a collection of educational development courses for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Individuals may earn one, or both, of the **Teaching and Learning Foundations Certificate of Completion** and the **Teaching and Learning Scholar Certificate of Completion**. For more information about required courses, visit the [Program Details page](#) on the MacPherson Institute website at:

<https://mi.mcmaster.ca/whoweworkwith/students/teaching-learning-certificates-of-completion-program/#tab-content-program-details>

All courses are free, zero-unit, pass/fail, graduate-level courses. Graduate students register in Mosaic, postdoctoral fellows by emailing gibbond@mcmaster.ca and requesting that their name be added to a class list.

****EDUCATN 600, 650, and 750/751 are already full for the Fall term, but will be offered again in the Winter 2021 term. Registration for the Winter term will open December 1, 2020 and is first come, first served. No waitlists are maintained for the courses.*

Technology Support

Avenue to Learn Support & Resources

Avenue to Learn is McMaster's Learning Management System (LMS). It provides a secure, online space where instructors can share learning resources, administer quizzes, conduct online discussions and collect assignment submissions. It serves as the online hub for a course.

If you are new to Avenue to Learn, there are a few resources that will help you get started.

- The [Avenue to Learn Knowledge Base](#) is a useful resource that provides tutorials, FAQs, update notifications and other helpful tools.
- Essential guides to help you get started with Avenue to Learn:
 - **What Can Avenue Do?**
<https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/what-can-avenue-to-learn-do/>
 - **Where Do I Start?**
<https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/avenue-to-learn-fundamentals-workshop/>
- An asynchronous online workshop entitled "An Introduction to Avenue to Learn," accessed via the [Teaching & Learning Forum](#)
- In response to the shift to online learning, hours of support have been extended
 - Monday – Thursday: 8:00am – 8:00pm
 - Friday: 8:30am – 4:30pm

If you encounter issues with Avenue, you can submit a [Support Ticket Request](#). Standard response time is usually within 24 hours or less.

University Technology Services

University Technology Services (UTS) provides central IT services and technical support for the McMaster community, including faculty, staff and students. Your [Faculty or department](#), however, may also support additional IT tools and services required for your work.

UTS provides support for a range of services, including:

- Email, MacID, password management and troubleshooting
- General log in assistance to Mosaic, library, and Avenue to Learn
- [Microsoft 365 access](#)
- Software assistance

If you need assistance with any of these tools or services, you can contact UTS through:

- [UTS Website](#)
- Telephone: 905-525-9140 ext. 24357
- Create a Support Ticket: <https://servicedesk.mcmaster.ca>
- uts@mcmaster.ca

Remote teaching also presents an increased risk of malware attacks. Curated resources are also available on the [McMaster Cyber Security Resources: Working from Home](#) webpage at: <https://cto.mcmaster.ca/it-updates/mcmaster-cyber-security-resources-working-from-home/>.