student life
programs & services
annual report & operating plan
15-16
We support all graduate and undergraduate students by offering them a diverse range of programs and services to enhance their experience at U of T.

Many of our programs foster student leadership and community involvement, both locally and internationally; others promote individual well-being, resiliency and self-expression.

Student Life helps students to engage with the broader local community through the many co-curricular and service-learning opportunities we offer.

We are also increasingly connected globally. We welcome and support our many international students and build relationships with universities abroad through our exchange programs.

Our many offerings are united by a commitment to helping students flourish, both academically and in life outside the classroom. To this end, we aim to make all of our programs and services engaging, accessible and inclusive, respecting and reflecting the diverse needs of the students we serve.

Student Life operates with four main areas of focus:

» **Student Development, Learning and Engagement**  
Expand opportunities for student learning through experience

» **Health and Well-being**  
Support the physical, emotional, social and spiritual health and well-being of students

» **Divisional and University Support Services**  
Enhance, support and coordinate quality services for students

» **Academic Support**  
Help students to achieve their academic goals
mission

The Division of Student Life brings coherence to complexity and creates opportunities for students to build skills, experience diverse communities, and integrate learning.

We connect life to learning.

vision

Through our work and partnerships, every student will have the opportunity to actively participate in university life; find connection, community and friendship; encounter new ways of thinking and being in the world; and experience leadership, independence and success.
by the numbers

30,394 sets of notes provided by the volunteers using the online note taking service

1,190 recognized campus groups

713 washrooms inventoried for the Washroom Inclusivity Project

28,982 St. George Students and recent grads registered with the Career Centre

20 celebrating 20 years of the Family Care Office

1,975 students used the Roommate Finder Service

2,500 students enrolled in 42 community-engaged courses across 25 academic disciplines

3,307 questions from students at ASKme booths during Orientation

143 exchange partner institutions in 40 countries

121 international students participating in the Step Up pre-orientation program

46,719 students logged into MyRes to apply for residence

55,744 visits to Health & Wellness Clinics

512 students participated in Career Exploration Programs

3,726 work-study positions made available to students

6,237 students connected with 307 employers at 5 fairs

242,459 visits to Life @ U of T Blog

4,300+ students have a unique record on the CCR database with 5,100+ validations

300+ rooms available on the Campus Room Finder searchable database and reservation system

1,042 washrooms inventoried for the Washroom Inclusivity Project

713 recognized campus groups

3,726 work-study positions made available to students
We align our work with the needs and values of the students we serve along with strategic frameworks that help guide our path.

Student involvement is key to our work. We engage students through advisory councils, consultations, focus groups and committees to ensure effective services and programs. Some examples of how students help guide our work include:

- Centre for International Experience Student Advisory Committee (CIESAC)
- First Nations House Student Advisory Committee
- Housing Services Student Advisory Committee
- Semi-Annual Student Faith Leaders Meetings
- Health & Wellness Student Advisory Committee
- Centre for Community Partnerships Student and Alumni Advisory Council
- Accessibility Services Annual Focus Group
- Academic Success Centre Peer Staff
- Committee on the Allocation of Student Activity Space (CASAS)
- Student Initiative Fund Committee
- Ulife Advisory Committee
- Co-Curricular Record Consultations
- Student Life Community Crew

In addition, the strategic frameworks that guide our programs are:

**Student Life Strategic Objectives:**
1. Communicate interactively with students to exchange information that is relevant and delivered at the right time.
2. Engage students in their own academic development and learning.
3. Help students better understand, navigate and access services available.
4. Provide opportunities for students to explore and apply leadership skills, engage in experiential learning, participate in mentorship and connect to learning communities.
5. Support students in making successful transitions to university and through their exploration of opportunities beyond degree completion.
6. Support the unique needs of students involved in international experiences.
7. Expand programs and services to meet the needs of graduate students.

**Presidential Priorities:**
1. Leverage our urban location more fully, for the mutual benefit of university and city.
2. Strengthen and deepen key international partnerships.
3. Re-imagine and re-invent undergraduate education.

**Themes from the Strategic Mandate Agreement:**
1. Jobs Innovation/Economic Development
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Diverse Student Population
4. Research and Graduate Education
5. Program Offerings
6. Institutional Collaboration to Support Student Mobility
International Experiences

We support students developing intercultural competencies and gaining international experiences through programs, study abroad opportunities and services for students from other countries.

- Secured the largest number of internships in Canada for students from Brazil’s Ciência sem Fronteiras (CsF) program (Science Without Borders), placing students in industry or research for 14-16 weeks.
- Developed new programs for international students in the areas of Intercultural Learning and Academic Integrity.
- Expanding opportunities for global experiences including more summer research opportunities for science and engineering students and more opportunities for summer exchanges.

Aboriginal Initiatives

- Hosted Indigenous Education Week reflecting a stronger academic and student development focus with the theme “Connecting Community and Research.” Partners included Aboriginal Studies, Medicine, Nursing, OISE, UTM, UTSC, the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office, and Equity Studies.
- Established a Learning Strategist position focused on the needs of Aboriginal students.

Building Capacity of our Peer Colleagues

Our student staff and volunteers are essential to our connection with the wider student body. Our focus is on training and professional development, recognition of effort and increasing collaboration.

- Piloted a tri-campus student Project Leader Training Retreat including training on facilitation, team-building and community development skills.
- Expanded the Peer Career Advisor Program to include programming, facilitated outreach and leadership and skill development.
- Created a coordinator position for Peer Health Teams throughout the Division and the University to help strengthen the impact of peer initiatives.
- Piloted a coordinated work-study training program throughout Student Life.
- Partnered with Enrolment Services to centralize the position approval process, ensuring all work-study positions are included in the CCR database.
Entrepreneurship

Established Rapid Launch, a program designed to support students in exploring entrepreneurship, cultivating self-confidence and engaging creatively in building their careers. This 5-part program offers students practical hands-on opportunities as they move forward with their business ideas.

Religious Diversity and Interfaith Initiatives

- Provided opportunities for students to cultivate civic responsibility and leadership on issues related to religious diversity through the Religious Diversity Youth Leadership Project.
- Worked with student organizers to host the annual North American Interfaith Network meeting, engaging participants in interfaith dialogue and topics of common interest.

Civic Engagement

We prepare and encourage students to engage in their local, national and global communities.

- Coordinated the tri-campus Community Outreach & Engagement Network, promoting civic engagement and democratic involvement at the local, provincial and national levels.
- Encouraged participation in democratic processes through awareness of issues surrounding the municipal and provincial elections.
- Expanded community partnerships in Aboriginal community agencies.
Student Initiative Fund (SIF)

The Student Initiative Fund provides $100,000 annually to support student activities. Examples of projects funded this year included:

- Toronto Thinks: Global Health Innovations and Solutions
- She’s Got Game: Women’s Cricket Tournament
- After U of T Professional Development Conference
- Chinese Spring Festival Gala
- Comparative Literature Conference
- U of T Undergraduate Science Case Competition

Building the Capacity of Campus Groups

Campus Groups provide opportunities for students to have meaningful relationships and experiences and develop skills. We work to support an environment where student activities can flourish.

- Created the Club Hub model where clubs with similar interests can make meaningful connections, collaborate and find support.
- Provided support for the Hart House Clubs and Committee review.
- Enhanced the Ulead program, including adding workshops about governance and other topics and revised the Student Leadership Conference Series for campus groups.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Mental Health Framework

The Report of the Provostial Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health, released in November 2014, recommends that the University adopt a “systems approach” to student mental well-being.

The Report makes recommendations focusing on five key areas:

- Developing a communication strategy that ensures students are informed of all programs and services available and how and when to access them;
- Expanding strength-based programming to develop positive mental health and resilience that engages students early in order to prevent exacerbation of any problems;
- Developing mental health literacy of students, staff and faculty;
- Coordinating, benchmarking, and assessing the effectiveness of programs and initiatives to ensure they are accessible, sustainable and cohesive;
- Further leveraging external community resources to help meet the full spectrum of health needs of our students.

We will undertake a multi-year process of implementation, including developing a communication strategy to provide regular updates, education and training programs, system navigation tools and performance indicators and metrics to measure progress.

The Report will encourage all members of the University community to have a role in fostering a healthy learning environment and supporting the mental well-being and academic success of our students.

Recovering From Head Injuries

Students with concussions or head injuries have distinct needs. We are involved in a partnership with UTM, UTSC, Medicine and Kinesiology & Physical Education to support these students in their recovery and academic success. The Head Injury Committee serves students more effectively and educates them about concussions and head injuries.

Washroom Inclusivity Project

The Washroom Inclusivity Project on the St. George campus was a unique collaboration of students and staff across equity offices and campus services with the goal of providing clear and updated information about the range of current washroom facilities and fostering a safe and inclusive campus community. The project addressed four specific areas of interest: physical accessibility, single-use washrooms for broader gender inclusivity, baby changing stations, and ablution facilities for students who wash before prayer. The results from the project are now visible on the updated campus map.
DIVISIONAL AND UNIVERSITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Enhancements to Residence Admissions

We continue to make enhancements to the processes for students applying to residence and increase efficiencies.

- Developed and implemented a new financial interface between ROSI and the StarRez residence management system, allowing for streamlined processing of residence financial information, improving the timeliness and accuracy of charges.
- Reviewed the MyRes residence application gateway and implemented improvements for the new admissions cycle.

Helping Navigate U of T

The ASKme program was expanded to include a physical location on campus. At the ASKme Information Hub in the Koffler Student Services Centre, students can get answers along with online access and registration to many Student Life programs and services. Complementing the ASKme Information Hub, the ASKme Online answer tool now contains answers to more than 600 student questions and continues to grow daily.

Communicating Interactively with Students

Guiding students through the complexity of university life requires timely and clear communication. Improvements to our student communications this year include:

- Created a new format for the Just in Time Slides in Convocation hall and digital screens throughout campus.
- Developed a new publication for second-entry professional faculty students.
- Initiated the development of a divisional social media strategy.
- Expanded student-run social media projects.
- Streamlined systems and processes to create more engaging and consistent e-newsletters in several areas including Arts & Science, School of Graduate Studies, and international students.
- Launched two new video series featuring the Community Crew (start.utoronto.ca/hello) and the Co-Curricular Record (ccr.utoronto.ca).
- Engaged in a process to redevelop the complex student-focused web spaces at the institutional and divisional levels.
Orientation and Transition

Transitioning into university is an important part of the student experience. We have provided leadership in the following areas:

- Coordinated the work of the Council on Student Experience Working Group on Orientation and Transition to University Life. The group explores and implements recommendations from “A Sense of Community,” [uoft.me/senseofcommunity](http://uoft.me/senseofcommunity) including developing a set of shared principles, programming, events, and social and academic preparation.
- Launched Step Up, a Pre-Orientation Program for international students providing an intensive orientation in advance of their faculty or college transition programs.
- Partnered with Arts & Science and many colleges and student societies to pilot PRE U of T, an orientation program linking new students to future programs of interest.

Career Learning Network (CLN)

The Career Learning Network ([cln.utoronto.ca](http://cln.utoronto.ca)) is the new tri-campus portal for job listings, employer information sessions, employer interviews, events, workshops and appointment registrations, and career exploration programs and services. The CLN is a community that brings together students and recent graduates with faculty, staff, employers, alumni, industry professionals and other partners interested in their career success.

Assessment

We regularly evaluate and assess our work and provide support for institution-level surveys and initiatives. Notable recent assessment projects include:

- The 5th National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). With a strong response rate of 35%, we will present findings throughout 2015.
- National College Health Assessment (NCHA) and the Health and Wellness usage survey.
- Survey on the transportation needs between the St. George and Scarborough campuses.
- Aboriginal Awareness Survey, measuring first-year student awareness of Aboriginal communities in Canada.
- Institutional-wide focus groups related to the Mental Health Framework. Thirty-two focus groups involving 250 students were conducted.
Efficient Student Access to Services

- Made technical enhancements to the administration of the University Health Insurance Policy (UHIP) to streamline the registration process and reduce institutional liability.
- Streamlined access to services within Health & Wellness.
- Established Counseline, an online counselling service in partnership with the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Arts & Science.
- Introduced technological supports in Accessibility Services, including online registration and eLearning modules.
- Sponsored the TCard Photo Storage project connecting to the residence photo database, reducing the number of photos students need to take.
- Expanded the U of T Interactive Campus Map (map.utoronto.ca) to include UTM and UTSC and added new features, including a path tool at UTSC.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Peer Engagement in Academic Development

Students rely on support provided by other students. We have increased the number of opportunities for students to provide peer support.

- Expanded role of Academic Success Peer Mentors, including development and delivery of academic success workshops for students in the colleges and residences.
- Established the Write Now peer mentoring program, facilitating reflection through writing, with support from the Poet in Community and Hart House.
- Created student staff positions for the peer mentoring program at Accessibility Services and enhanced the training model for these students in leadership development and ongoing support.

Embedded Learning Strategists

Access to student services is key to student success. In addition to the embedded supports provided in the faculties and colleges around campus, two new positions were established:

- A Learning Strategist in First Nations House to support Aboriginal students.
- A Learning Strategist in the Centre for International Experience to support international students.

Enhanced Learning Support

- Undertook a Division-wide curriculum review of programs and services to maximize student learning and provide clear paths for students to take.
- Developed a Divisional strategy for online learning supports and services.
- Enhanced programming across the Division, including an increase to the number of workshops and developed more diverse topics (e.g., critical thinking).


THE CO-CURRICULAR RECORD (CCR) allows students to search for activities suited to them, attach competencies to their involvement, gain unique experiences, customize their co-curricular participation and receive recognition for their learning.

60 REPRESENTATIVES FROM 43 COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED THE 2014 CCR SUMMIT

UNIVERSITY PARTICIPATION

31 UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO UNITS

U of T Mississauga
U of T Scarborough
Applied Science & Engineering
Architecture, Landscape & Design
Arts & Science
Central Administration
Chestnut Residence
Dentistry
Division of Student Life
Graduate House
Hart House
Information Studies
Innis College
Interprofessional Education
Kinesiology & Physical Education
Libraries

Medicine
Music
New College
Nursing
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Pharmacy
Public Policy & Governance
School of Graduate Studies
Social Work
St. Michael’s College
Student Family Housing
Trinity College
University College
Victoria College
Woodsworth College

4100+ Opportunities in the database

4300+ Students with a CCR

5508 Validations of CCR programs

4100+

1100+

RECOGNIZED STUDENT GROUPS HAVE APPLIED TO HAVE THEIR ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED

1552 WORK-STUDY POSITIONS ADDED TO THE CCR

See the four CCR videos: ccr.utoronto.ca

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measuring our success

We regularly assess and evaluate our programs and services to ensure that:

1. Students demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through writing, speaking or artistic expression
2. Students demonstrate the ability to problem solve and connect appropriately with campus and community resources
3. Students are able to work across differences - identifying opportunities and negotiating challenges
4. Students identify how they can make a positive difference in their local, national and global communities
5. Students demonstrate an understanding of how to achieve balance between education, work and leisure time

92 percent of students who participated in Rapid Launch were able to recognize and prioritize the roles that small business owners must play to be successful.
87 percent of students who met with an International Transition Advisor developed a plan to address challenges they are experiencing.

91 percent of students participating in Alternative Reading Week were able to identify ways in which they can make a positive difference in their local, national and/or global community.

93 percent of students who attended an Explore Off-Campus Workshop were better prepared to develop an action plan and find suitable housing.

81 percent of students who participated in Learning to Lead were more prepared for a peer leadership or mentorship role on campus.

“This program has been incredible. I felt a connection with every single person who came and realized that I am not alone. There are coping strategies and tools that can help me improve.”

“This experience was really meaningful for me. As an international student this was my first time joining a Canadian community. It’s amazing to meet all of the wonderful friends and working with the community. The experience is hands on... it was a huge help and has spurred my career search forward.”

“I learned how to lead appropriately and develop strategies for handling difficult situations.”
Meeting students where they are in the community.

Through our partnerships in all corners of the campus, we improve student access to our services by embedding staff in key locations.

- **LS** Academic Learning Strategist
- **CE** Career Educator
- **TA** International Transition Advisor
- **FC** Family Care Office Advisor
- **AH** Aboriginal Learning Strategist
- **WC** Health and Wellness Counsellor
- **HS** Housing Services
- **MF** Mindfulness Workshops
Front: U of T students signing “Hello.”

studentlife.utoronto.ca