

Myths & Realities: Grading Practices at U of T

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CTSI Tune Into Teaching
Workshop Series

TODAY'S FACILITATORS



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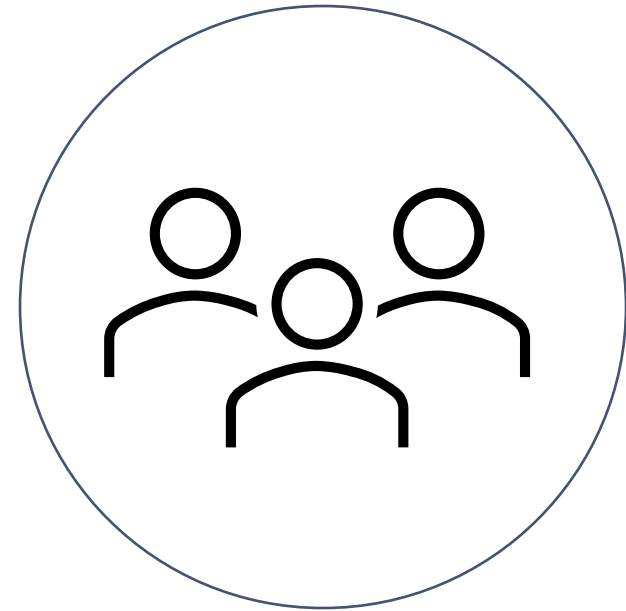
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Who's in the room?

Are you:

- New to U of T?
- Returning instructor?
- Teaching as part of a team (e.g. with TAs)?



Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.





Access Check

We understand access to be a shared responsibility between everyone in this space. We will strive to create an accessible space that reduces the need for you to disclose a disability or impairment for the purposes of gaining an accommodation. In doing this together, we strive to welcome disability, and the changes it brings, into our space.

QUESTIONS:

- Is there anything about the space (light, sound, temperature, layout) that we should address now?
- Are there any other access needs that might effect your participation in the workshop that we could also address?

Agenda

- Key Definitions & Best Practices for Promoting Student Learning
 - ACTIVITY: what promotes student learning?
- Grading as a Learning Tool
- Myths & Realities About Grading at UofT
 1. Policies and practice (range of scenarios)
 2. Grading participation
 3. Technology and grading
 4. Working with your teaching team

Vote with
your
"Myth" and
"Reality"
cards!

Key Terms for Today



Assessment

...gathering information (data) from students that lets you know how and how much they are learning; associated with feedback; is formative



Evaluation

...systematic judging of the merits of a piece of work; is summative



Grading

...assigning values to symbols for the purposes of reporting the level of achievement

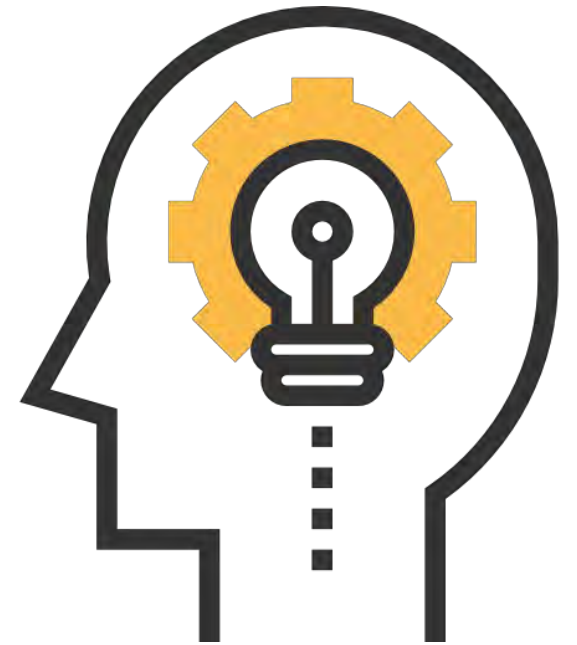
Overall Best Practices

for promoting and measuring student learning



Some overall best practices...

- Balance **assessment** (formative, ongoing) and **evaluation** (summative, episodic)
- Know **what you are measuring** and teach to those criteria/outcomes
- Create opportunities for **students to practice** using concepts or skills prior to being evaluated on them
- Provide **meaningful feedback** on this practice prior to the evaluation



Some overall best practices...



- Enable students to demonstrate what they've learned in a variety of ways (multi-modal assessment)
- Communicate criteria being used to evaluate student performance as clearly as possible prior to the evaluation (and again afterwards as possible/appropriate)
- Communicate to your students *your* understanding of what grades mean in the context of your course/discipline

Some overall best practices...

- As possible, **provide exemplars** of completed tasks
- Describe/demonstrate **what constitutes “original work”** and show how to use appropriate **disciplinary citation**

Adapted from Walvoord, B.E. & Anderson, V.J. (2010). 2nd edition. *Effective Grading: A tool for learning and assessment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



ACTIVITY: TABLE TALK

At your table
(groups of 3-4)

What **assessment** and
evaluation strategies will
you use to
promote/motivate
student learning?

Generate a list!

ACTIVITY: TABLE TALK



Let's hear from you!

Each table to share **one**
evaluation or assessment
strategy that can
promote/motivate student
learning!

Best Practices for Grading as a Learning Tool

- Opportunities for peer feedback to improve an assignment BEFORE your final grade
- Extra credit possibilities allow students to dig deeper into an aspect of course content that seems interesting
- Credit for course engagement examples:
 - Low stakes writing activities throughout lecture for submission
 - Incorporate feedback into final submissions
 - Active listening and commenting in class; participate fully in collaborative or online work









SOURCE: Adapted from Weimer, M. (2015). Using grading policies to promote learning. *Faculty Focus*.
<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/educational-assessment/using-grading-policies-to-promote-learning/>



1. Policies & Practice: Some Scenarios

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020>

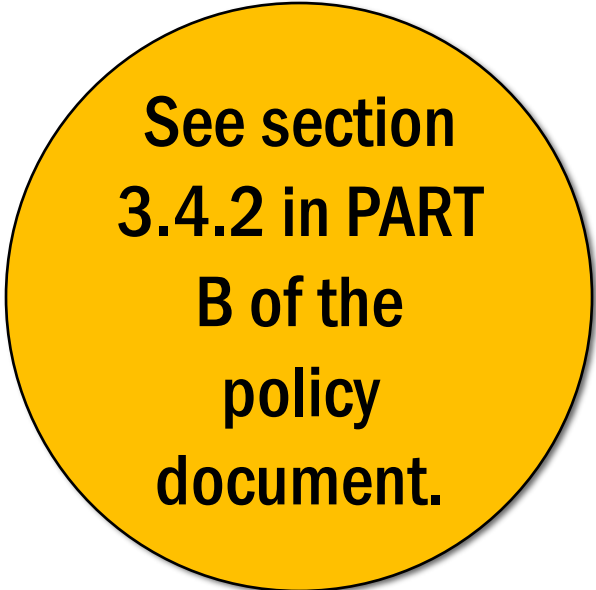
Policies & Practice

Student Name	Secondary ID	Term Paper Out of 100	Essay Thesis Out of 100	Essay Paper Out of 100	Assignments	Total
 Calla, Lilly	stu01	92	93	91	92%	92%
 Cosburn, Ben	stu02	86	85	84	85%	85%
 Fender, Peter	stu03	93	85	95	91%	91%
 Harper, Fred	stu04	84	90	93	89%	89%
 Jones, Bob	stu05	94	91	97	94%	94%
 Oak, Leesa	stu06	98	97	96	97%	97%

Policies & Practice

The University of Toronto limits the number of “A’s” that can be awarded in any given course.

Myth but...

A yellow circular callout with a black border and a subtle drop shadow, containing text about the policy document.

See section
3.4.2 in PART
B of the
policy
document.

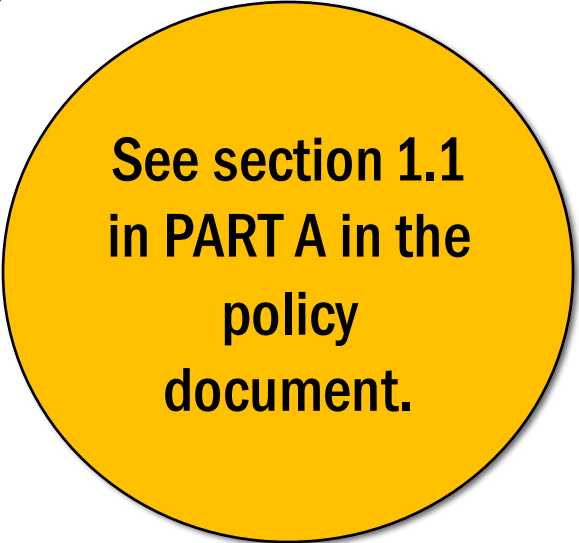
Policies & Practice

Average grades assigned at the University of Toronto are lower than those at other institutions (i.e. University of Toronto instructors mark harder than those at other institutions).

Myth?

Reality?

We don't know

A yellow circle with a black outline, containing text. It is positioned on the right side of the slide, overlapping the 'Reality?' and 'We don't know' text.


See section 1.1
in PART A in the
policy
document.


Policies & Practice

As the instructor, if I suspect a student has cheated on a test or plagiarized an assignment I can address the matter on my own.

Myth AND Reality

Academic Offence: Key Consequences *

ASSIGNMENTS WORTH 10% OR LESS OF THE OVERALL MARK 	
Who can impose the sanction?	Chair or head of the unit who may work with instructor
When?	Upon admission of guilt
No admission of guilt?	Forwarded to Dean

ASSIGNMENTS WORTH 10% OR MORE OF THE OVERALL MARK 	
Who can impose the sanction?	Dean
When?	Upon admission of guilt
No admission of guilt?	Charges laid by Provost

*Instructors are not permitted to apply sanctions

Penalties and offences under the Code found at <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/key-consequences/>: C.i.(b) Divisional Sanctions

Policies & Practice

A useful academic integrity statement on a course syllabus should include:

- A comment on why academic integrity is important
- A list, in clear language, of the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct
- A reminder that not knowing the rules is not an excuse, and that students are expected to know and follow the rules of the University

<https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resources/sample-statements-for-your-course-syllabi/>

Library Resources for Teaching

Elizabeth O'Brien

Liaison Librarian & Makerspace Librarian

U of T Scarborough Library

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARIES

Leveraging the Library – Course Readings

[Syllabus Service & Course Reading](#): Use the Course Reserves and Syllabus Service! Our staff will provide durable links, retrieve and scan your readings, even purchase eBooks if available. <https://uoft.me/5M1>



Leveraging the Library – Liaison Librarians & Instruction

Take advantage of your Liaison Librarian

<https://uoft.me/5M4>

- Locate ideas for course readings
- Add their name and contact information on the syllabi for student support
- Consider scheduling a time in the syllabi for a library workshop(s)
 - Library orientation
 - Curriculum integrated instruction (including [information literacy](#) assignment support & design)
- Add a link to the [course specific guide](#)



Leveraging the Library

Curriculum embedded

- *Collaboratively developed*
- *Assignment specific*
- *Can include information literacy assignment support and design*

Specialist training

- *Research Data Management*
- *Data Visualization*
- *Research Dissemination & Copyright*
- *Entrepreneurship*

Open Workshops

- *3D Printing*
- *Citation management (EndNote, RefWorks, Zotero)*
- *Searching for systematic reviews*
- *Nvivo*
- *iOS App development*
- *Patents research*

Policies & Practice

As the instructor I can post student grades outside of the lecture hall immediately before and/or immediately after the lecture.

Reality but...

See “Q & A’s for Instructors - FIPPA”:

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/q-instructors-fippa>

Policies & Practice

As the instructor I can post student grades outside of the lecture hall immediately before and/or immediately after the lecture.

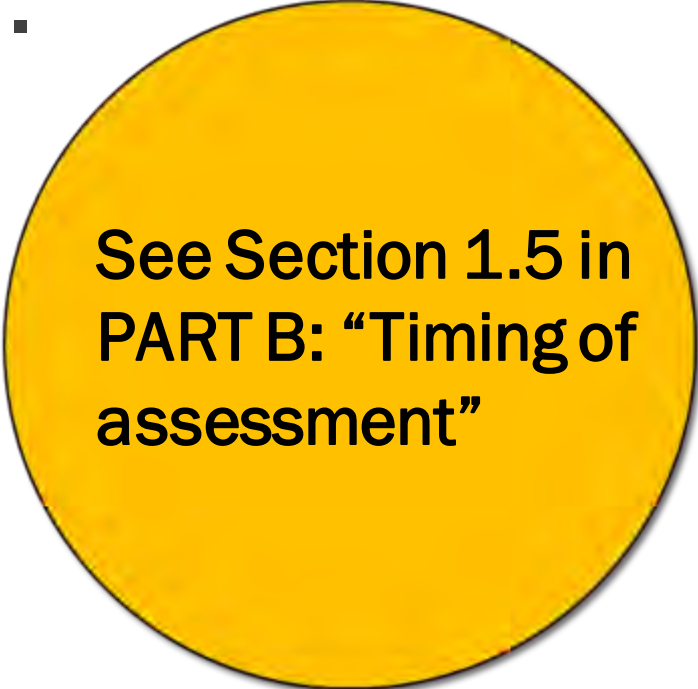
<https://youtu.be/uXheTjtLbUM>

See the “TATP Short” video at the link below prepared by the [Teaching Assistants’ Training Program](#) on FIPPA-related teaching policies & practices

Policies & Practice

Instructors are free to set deadlines for assignments.

Reality – within defined parameters

A yellow circle with a black outline and a slight drop shadow, containing text.

See Section 1.5 in
PART B: “Timing of
assessment”

Policies & Practice

Students give higher course evaluation ratings to instructors who award higher marks and/or require less difficult work.

Myth!

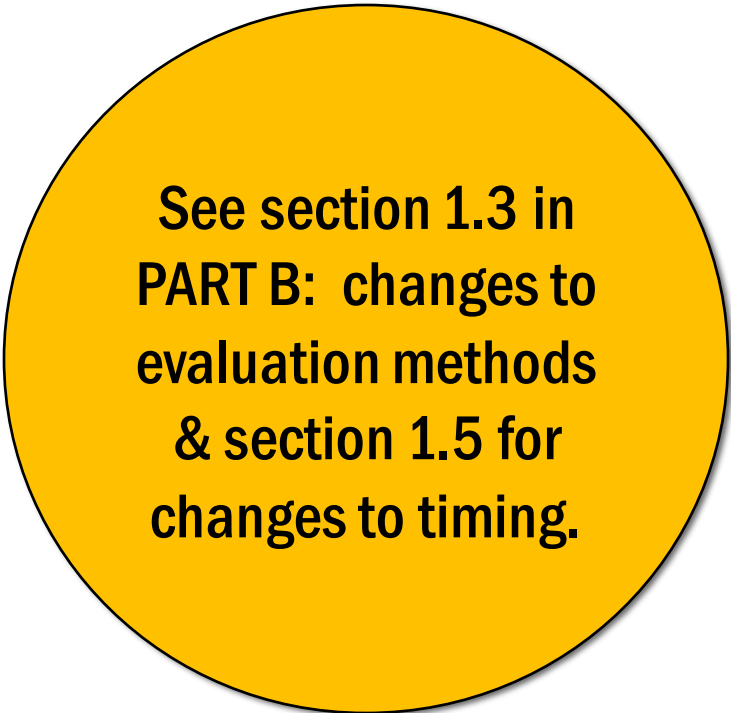
See Hativa, N. (2014). *Student ratings of instruction: Recognizing effective teaching*.

https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/14bjeso/alma991106475485206196

Policies & Practice

As an instructor, I can change the methods of evaluation at any time during the course.

Reality but...



See section 1.3 in PART B: changes to evaluation methods & section 1.5 for changes to timing.

Policies & Practice

100% - Final Examination (to be held during Faculty exam period)

The exam will cover all topics from week 1-12 of the course and involve short answer and short essay questions.

Myth AND Reality

**See Section 1.4
in PART B:
“Multiple
assessments”**

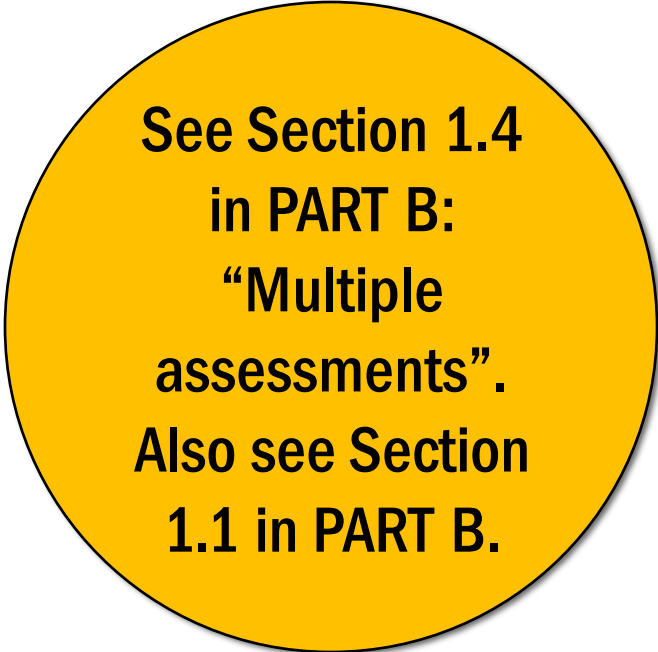


2. Grading Participation

Grading Participation

I can assign 30% of the final grade for participation marks.

Reality, but...



See Section 1.4
in PART B:
“Multiple
assessments”.
Also see Section
1.1 in PART B.

Best Practices for Grading Participation

Outline for students what meaningful academic discourse looks like and sounds like. Develop clear criteria, that might include:

- be respectful of others' viewpoints (critique the response, not the person)
- be willing to put own ideas forward
- build on other students' comments without dominating or denigrating
- provide rationale for your response beyond simple opinion



Adapted from Chapnick, A. (2005). A participation rubric. *The Teaching Professor*, 19(3), 4-5.

Best practices for grading participation (cont'd)



Consider multiple
formats/modes of
participation!

- in commenting or asking for clarification, show that you have actively listened to what has already been reviewed/discussed
- be able to demonstrate through your contributions that you prepared effectively
- your contributions help improve the learning of others in the class



3. Technology & Grading

Technology & Grading

Student Name	Secondary ID	Reading Experiences Out of 100	Essay Tests Out of 100	Extra Points Out of 100	Assignments	Total
Calks, Lily	10401	92	93	91	92%	92%
Combs, Ben	10402	86	85	84	85%	85%
Fowles, Peter	10403	93	85	93	91%	91%
Harper, Fred	10404	84	90	93	89%	89%
Jones, Bob	10405	94	91	97	94%	94%
Oak, James	10406	98	97	96	97%	97%
Smith, Sarah	10407	90	96	86	90.67%	90.67%
Uris, Emily	10408	86	94	82	87.33%	87.33%
Walpole, Daniel	10409	93	87	89	89.67%	89.67%
Warren, Susan	10410	95	98	87	93.33%	93.33%
Student, Test	10411					

Final / Official grades
can be posted in
Quercus (Canvas)
courses for students to
view.

Myth

Technology & Grading

Students have the right to opt-out of
the use of plagiarism
deterrence/textual similarity software.

Reality

Technology & Grading

The plagiarism detection tool can be enabled at the time that you set up an assignment. The option will appear in the assignment settings.

Tool Guide: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/tool-guides/plagiarism-review-ouriginal/>

Terms and conditions for use of the tool must be indicated in your course syllabus:

<https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resources/plagiarism-detection/>

Technology & Grading

Students can assign official grades to other students' work.

Myth



4. Working With Your Teaching Team

Working With Your Teaching Team

The University of Toronto limits how much of the grading in a course may be completed by teaching assistants.

Myth

Working With Your Teaching Team

In a course with multiple teaching assistants, instructors must ensure that grades in each TA section are equivalent.

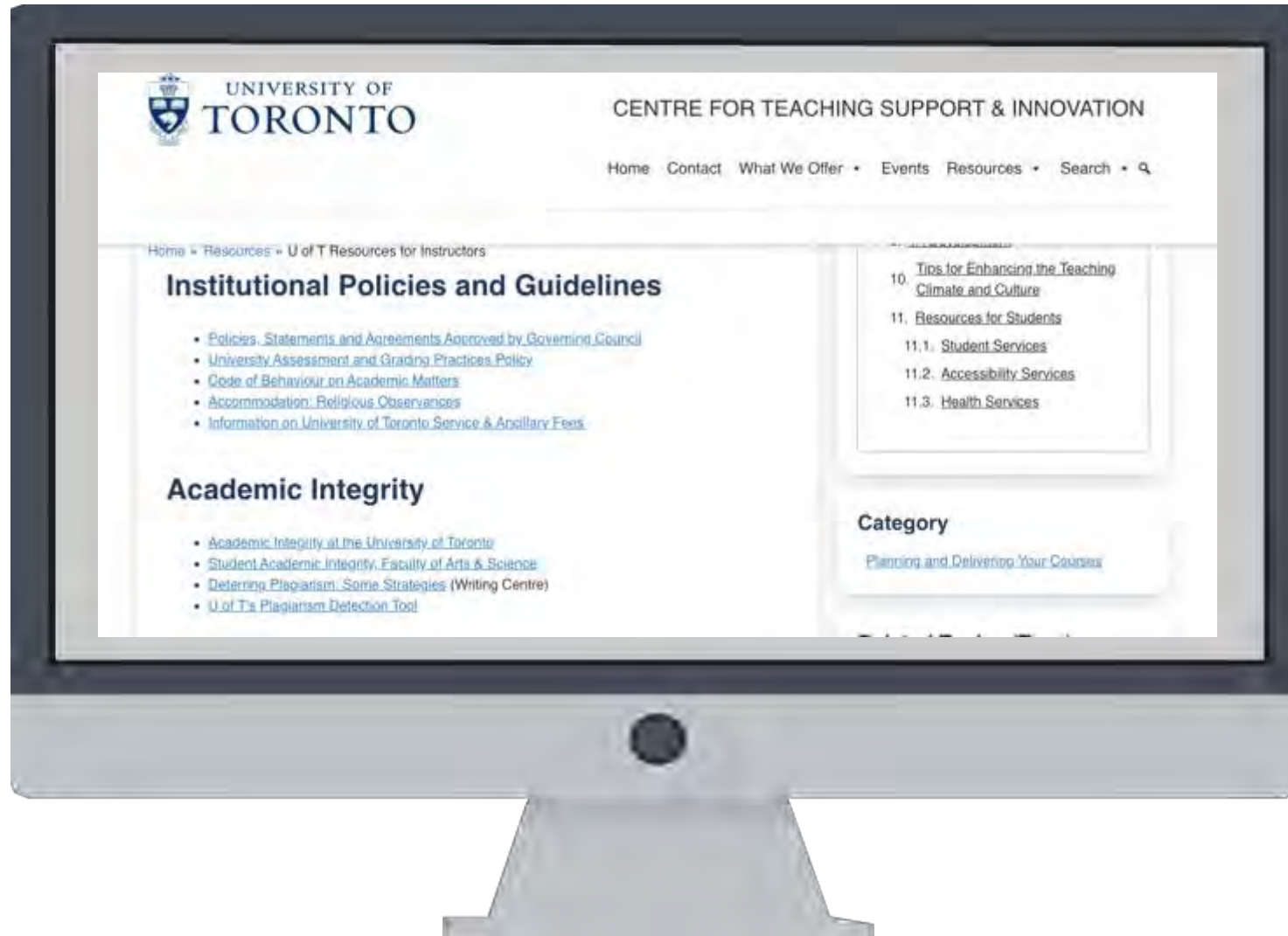
Myth, but good practice

Working With Your Teaching Team

Cases of suspected plagiarism can be passed on to teaching assistants for resolution.

Myth!

<https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resources/u-of-t-resources-for-instructors/>





THANK YOU!
HAVE A GREAT YEAR!

MAIL: ctsi.teaching@utoronto.ca
WEB: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/>



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