

Who to ask at the DSR: 2021-2022 - A Guide for Grad Students

Your handy guide to people who have many answers, or will at least know where to guide you for answers.

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|  | <p>Graduate Administrator – Fereshteh Hashemi</p> <p>Fereshteh is your first point of contact for most questions. She is responsible for administrative aspects of the graduate program including program requirements, course enrollment, scheduling general exams and final oral exams, scheduling language exams, your funding package, awards, program extensions, coursework extensions, registration issues. She also organizes Tea at Two, a casual drop-in for all students and faculty, which will relaunch once we are back in in-person. Fereshteh can also point you to other resources available at SGS, including writing workshops, community building, and mental health supports.</p> <p>✉ religion.grad@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-3057</p> |
|  | <p>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) – Bart Scott</p> <p>Bart meets with all entering grad students in their first month of study, and after that he is available for one-on-one consultations with grad students, either in office hours or by appointment. He is responsible for most academic aspects of the graduate program including helping you to design your personal program of study, including course selection, planning general exams, putting together a committee, meeting degree requirements, and joining collaborative programs. He is happy to meet to discuss any concerns you might have about satisfactory progress, supervisory questions, or simply to touch base or to hear your suggestions for how to further improve our graduate program.</p> <p>✉ barton.scott@utoronto.ca 📞 905-569-4336</p> |
|  | <p>Chair of Department and Graduate Chair – Pamela Klassen</p> <p>Pamela is happy to hear directly from students about their news, questions, or concerns. As Chair, she is responsible for the overall direction of the department, which includes the budget, faculty hiring, tenure, and promotion, and encouraging research excellence. As the Graduate Chair, she is responsible for the graduate budget and long-term academic planning, working closely with the DGS and the Faculty of Arts & Science on enrolment planning, improving student funding, and recruitment and alumni initiatives. The Graduate Chair is also ultimately responsible for administering the University's Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters related to graduate affairs. Together with the DGS, she meets regularly with the President and Vice-President of the Graduate Students' Association.</p> <p>✉ chair.religion@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-0877</p> |

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|  | <p>Department Manager – Michael Twamley Michael is the manager of the DSR staff, and works closely with each of them to ensure the smooth and responsive operation of the DSR. His responsibilities include strategic management of the departmental budget, workplace health and safety matters (including COVID-19 re-entry plans), operating issues, and providing leadership of department strategic initiatives, such as the upcoming renovations. He is the keeper of the DSR SharePoint site, and is happy to hear from you about accessing documents or other questions or concerns you might have about the operations of the DSR.</p> <p>✉ manager.religion@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-7438</p> |
|  | <p>Undergraduate Assistant – Phoebe To Phoebe is the first point of contact for St. George undergraduate students in the DSR, and assists with the hiring of TAs, Course Instructors, and Sessional Instructors. Phoebe troubleshoots timetabling and room booking conflicts related to the undergraduate program, so feel free to reach out to her for issues related to TA space needs or contract questions on the St. George campus.</p> <p>✉ phoebe.to@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-2395</p> |
|  | <p>Assistant to the Chair and Office Administrator – Tanya Proulx Tanya is your first point of contact for general inquiries about day-to-day running of the department. She can help with office supplies, facilitates room and equipment access and maintenance, and issues copy and printing codes, keys, and fobs. She works closely with the Chair on faculty matters such as appointments, tenure and promotions, and coordinates and schedules departmental and other meetings. You can also reach out to her to book a meeting with the Chair.</p> <p>✉ tanya.proulx@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-0967</p> |
|  | <p>Communications Officer – Siri Hansen Siri is always eager to hear from you about your news and events. She is responsible for the design, development and dissemination of the department's communications and marketing materials including website, social media, and print materials. She works with the Chair to assemble the Weekly Update, including news of your publications and fellowships etc. She also writes news stories about the research and teaching of faculty and students. Together with Fereshteh, Bart, and Pamela, Siri is revising the Graduate Handbook, so stay tuned for its launch.</p> <p>✉ religion.comms@utoronto.ca 📞 416-946-3603</p> |

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|  | <p>Financial Officer – Octavio Gonzalez Octavio is your first point of contact if you have questions regarding student pay contracts (research assistant, teaching assistant, research trainee and work study), as well as all honoraria and expense reimbursements. He monitors and administers grant and operating funds for all faculty (PI's), and also administers the operating funds for the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Centre for Buddhist Studies.</p> <p>✉ religion.officer@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-1376</p> |
|  | <p>Associate Chair Undergraduate – Simon Coleman Simon coordinates the St. George undergraduate Religion program, connects with graduate students with respect to TA training and selecting Teaching Fellows at the St. George campus. He also provides advice to students on issues arising from their teaching roles in the DSR St. George program.</p> <p>✉ simon.coleman@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-4788</p> |
|  | <p>TA Coordinator – John Marshall John is your first point of contact for any questions related to your TA contracts or assignments at all three campuses. He is involved in the logistical planning for tri-campus TA appointments for DSR grad students, and finalizes TA assignments in consultation with the DSR Associate Chair, the UTM History of Religions Program Director, and the UTSC Historical and Cultural Studies Associate Chair**, as well as the undergraduate administrators at all three campuses.</p> <p>✉ john.marshall@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-6667</p> |
|  | <p>Undergraduate and Digital Teaching Liaison – Jennifer Harris Jennifer is available for consultation on any aspect of undergraduate teaching, and has developed expertise in online teaching. She provides technical help for all DSR instructors and TAs, and edits the DSR Teaching Resources Quercus page. She is always happy to hear from students about their teaching experiences and ideas.</p> <p>✉ jennifer.harris@utoronto.ca 📞 416-978-5939</p> |

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|  | <p>Graduate Teaching Liaison – Naomi Seidman Naomi is available to consult with graduate students about their teaching goals and development, including discussing their TA and course evaluations. She works with the DSR faculty administrators to ensure graduate students have equity of access to teaching opportunities that benefit their professional development, including by participating in the process of assigning TF appointments, together with the Associate Chair.</p> <p>✉ naomi.seidman@utoronto.ca 📞 416-946-7623</p> |
|  | <p>Undergraduate First Year Liaison – Laura Beth Bugg The First Year Liaison works closely with the Associate Chair, Undergraduate, to support and enhance undergraduate teaching in DSR programs and courses. The role includes: organizing and moderating regular meetings of all instructors of first-year courses to discuss goals for student engagement, the implementation of program learning outcomes, and interaction with curricular recommendations of the ADE Action Plan. Serving as the faculty lead for the DSR FLC program. Working collaboratively with the Associate Chair Undergraduate, the Undergraduate Administrator, and the RUSA executive to plan events for first-year students to introduce them to DSR programs of study, both within first-year classes and at departmentally-hosted events. Attending and/or leading pedagogy events as appropriate.</p> <p>✉ laura.bugg@utoronto.ca 📞 416-946-5010</p> |
|  | <p>UTM History of Religions Program Director – Kyle Smith Kyle coordinates the UTM undergraduate History of Religions program, and works with graduate students who are appointed as TAs at UTM. In addition to participating in the tri-campus TA assignment process, he also facilitates the committee that selects and mentors Course Instructors at UTM.</p> <p>✉ kr.smith@utoronto.ca 📞 416-946-3493</p> |
|  | <p>UTM Historical Studies Academic Counsellor – Sharon Marjadsingh Sharon administers all TA contracts at UTM and works with graduate students who fulfill their TA appointments there.</p> <p>✉ sharon.marjadsingh@utoronto.ca 📞 905-569-4914</p> |

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|   | <p>Anti-Racism, Decolonization, and Equity Committee Co-Chairs – Amira Mittermaier and Amin Mansouri</p> <p>The role of this committee is to: provide guidance and assess annually the progress of ongoing implementation and adaptation of the DSR ADE action plan; to link with other DSR committees to encourage connections with the ADE Action Plan; to provide advice and consultation for the DGS, Associate Chair, and Chair on specific issues related to the ADE Action Plan; to research and build connections with wider faculty and university EDI resources.</p> |
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Members of the DSR Graduate Student Association (GSA):

what's going on in the department, your union updates, the difference between the GSU and CUPE, how to get involved in the student life of the department, graduate student conference in April....

DSR GSA Representatives for 2021-2022: Email: ut.dsrgsa@gmail.com

President: **Janani Mandayam Comar**

Vice President Academic: **Anusha Sudindra Rao**

Treasurer and Secretary: **Rachel Al Rubai**

Graduate Students Association rep: **Anna Cwikla** (help with navigating your multiple health care benefits, accessing GSA initiatives on campus).

CUPE 3902 rep: **Sloane Geddes** (your TA union rep, helps you understand your rights under the collective agreement)

Communication Pathways in the DSR

In addition to the guide above, here are some principles and navigational aids for communication in the DSR. No matter what your question is, you should always feel free to reach out to a staff member or to a member of the DSR Executive (Chair, Associate Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, Department Manager). If they can't answer your question themselves, they can help to point you in the right direction.

Regular, cyclical pathways of communication between faculty and students

- The Chair and Associate Chair meet twice a term with the RUSA executive
- The Chair and DGS meet twice a term with the GSA executive
- GSA Town Halls are held at least twice a year
- RUSA Town Halls are held at least twice a year
- GSA and RUSA representatives attend the DSR Department Meeting.
- Every year, graduate and undergraduate students are invited to nominate themselves or others to participate on DSR committees with student representation.
- The Chair, DGS, Associate Chair, TA Coordinator, Graduate Teaching Liaison, and Undergraduate Teaching Liaison are available for individual meetings with students as needed.

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- DSR staff are a key resource for student questions and welcome their inquiries.
- The Chair and the Communications Officer send out a Weekly Update and a bi-annual newsletter
- Specific DSR Committees may have their own communication pathways. You can find the list of 2021-22 Committee Membership at this [SharePoint link](#).

DSR SharePoint Site

- [The DSR SharePoint site](#) is a one-stop resource for governance and policy documents and many of the forms you need in your role as student or faculty. Everyone should have access to the SharePoint site according to your role (undergrad, grad student, faculty, staff, etc.); if you experience any troubles, please be in touch with Department Manager, Michael Twamley, manager.religion@utoronto.ca.

Resources for Graduate Students & Graduate Faculty

- [Centre for Graduate Mentoring and Supervision](#)
- School of Graduate Studies [website](#)
- Also consult the [DSR Best Practices in Graduate Supervision Guidelines](#) document

Other Important Numbers

- Campus Facilities and Services - 416-978-3000 for **after hours** support (e.g. locked out of building or office, heat or electrical issues, etc.)
- Campus Safety – 416-978-2222
- Housekeeping **after hours** – 647-381-9539