



Academic Skills Development A Guide for Faculty and Staff

2020–21

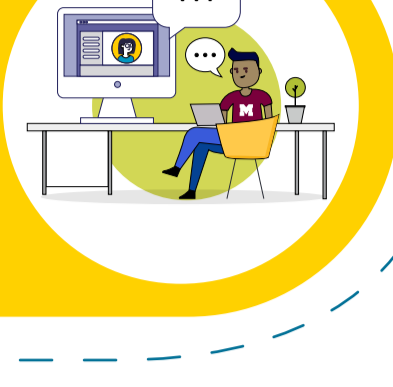


[Visit Academic Skills](#)

Academic Skills

SSC Academic Skills supports student success at McMaster by developing and facilitating a range of skills-based programming and academic services that complement course-specific knowledge. Our aim is to help students develop transferrable skills and leverage existing strengths to achieve their academic goals.

Note: All 2020–21 programming will be online.



Special Events

In addition to ongoing programming, SSC Academic Skills hosts targeted events that align with the academic calendar to provide additional support and promote resource-seeking behaviour.

Events include:

- First-Year Transition Programs (July and August)
- Welcome Week Academic Skills Workshop Series
- Writing Contest
- Academic Reboot for At-Risk Students
- Virtual Study Sessions (General and Course-Specific)
- Late-Night Virtual Study Sessions



Faculty Requests and Collaborations

The Academic Skills Team is available by request to provide customized academic skills workshops and resource development for in-course delivery. Contact us at skills@mcmaster.ca to discuss or complete the [online request form](#) to let us know.



Featured Programming

Writing Support

The Writing Centre offers more than 20 hours per week of writing support to undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines. Professionally trained writing advisors educate student writers on inquiry, composition, organization and error diagnostics using student-centred pedagogy, including Socratic questioning and instructional tasks.

The Writing Centre maintains that writing is a skill that is never mastered but continuously developed and honed. Thus, we support writers at all levels, from emerging to advanced. Students are encouraged to seek support at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to revision. Writing advisors encourage students to move away from transactional, product-driven notions of composition towards an understanding of writing as an avenue for disciplinary learning, idea creation and personal growth.

Learn more about SSC writing support services on the [SSC website](#).

Writing advisors do not fix, edit or correct student work. Instead, they guide students through the writing and revision process to help students develop as writers.

Note: All Writing Centre appointments are online for the 2020–21 academic year. Students can attend up to 10 appointments per term. Appointment booking is available on [OSCARplus \(Student Success Centre > Appointments > Academic Skills\)](#).

Academic Coaching

Academic coaches support students in their academic and personal management skills development. Areas of focus include study and test-taking strategies, procrastination and scheduling. These upper-year volunteers are trained using the Appreciative Advising Model, which uses open-ended questions to help students achieve academic and personal success. Coaches and students collaborate to create measurable goals and monitor progress throughout the academic year.

Learn more about academic coaching on the [SSC website](#).

Note: All academic coaching appointments are online for the 2020–21 academic year. Appointment booking is available on [OSCARplus \(Student Success Centre > Appointments > Academic Skills\)](#).

Academic Skills Development Workshops

SSC Academic Skills facilitates student-centered workshops for skills-specific topics that are associated with academic success and course completion. Regularly-scheduled workshops will take place online throughout the 2020–21 academic year. Custom workshops for Faculties, departments or courses are also available by request.

Workshop topics include:

- Effective Study and Test-Taking Strategies
- Procrastination and Time Management
- Note-Taking
- Goal Setting
- Academic Integrity and Citation
- Essay Writing
- Source Integration
- Online Learning

Students can register for workshops on [OSCARplus \(Student Success Centre > Events\)](#).

Course-Specific Peer Tutoring

The Undergrad Peer Tutoring Network (UPTN) connects undergraduate students who require course content support with qualified McMaster peer tutors. Tutors must demonstrate subject-area proficiency by earning an A- or higher in the course(s) they intend to tutor.

Access the [Undergrad Peer Tutoring Network](#).

Learn more about peer tutoring on the [SSC website](#).

One-on-One Meetings with Academic Skills Staff (by referral)

Students who may benefit from additional support can be referred to one of the academic skills staff members for one-on-one appointments. Our team takes a working partnership approach that focuses on the process of learning. These appointments focus on enhancing work habits, identifying barriers to success and developing strategies for achieving goals. We follow-up with students to create individualized action plans. Students can schedule follow-up appointments to monitor their progress and get support to stay on track.

For additional information, please email skills@mcmaster.ca.

Meet the Academic Skills Team

Jenna Storey, Academic Skills Program Coordinator

Jenna is passionate about helping students envision their best selves and finding resilience through programming and one-on-one consultations. Jenna oversees the Undergrad Peer Tutoring Network (UPTN) and academic coaches. Before joining McMaster, Jenna was a secondary school English teacher for 12 years in the Peel District School Board. Outside of the SSC, Jenna is an animal rights advocate who promotes pet adoption.

Contact: jenna.storey@mcmaster.ca



Mary McCaffery, Academic Skills Program Coordinator (on leave)

After teaching overseas for several years, Mary completed her master's degree in education (2013). She became an advocate for practical and straightforward writing instruction while teaching English for academic purposes at Yukon College. When she began working at McMaster, she had been working on curriculum projects as a consultant in the private sector and for Yukon College. Mary manages the Writing Centre, facilitates events and delivers workshops. She began her PhD in higher education with the University of Toronto in January, 2019.

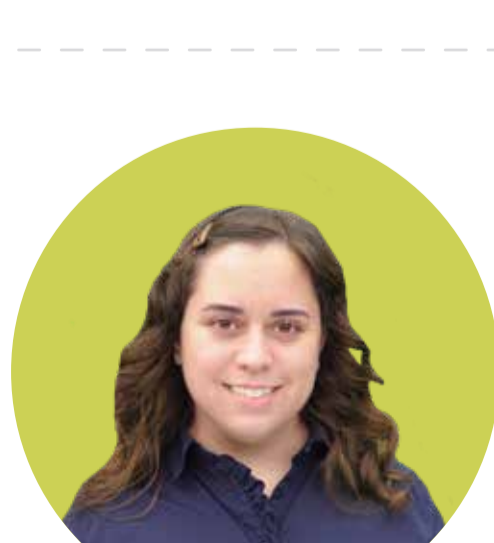
Contact: mccafm1@mcmaster.ca



Holly Corbett, Program Development Specialist

Holly has a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in education. Her master's program focused on literature and composition education and was informed by the principles of critical, student-centred pedagogy. Holly's master's thesis examined the relationship between personal, narrative writing and academic text comprehension. Holly is currently a PhD candidate in the McMaster department of English and Cultural Studies. Prior to taking on the role of program development specialist, Holly worked for two years as a writing advisor at McMaster's Writing Centre, which she currently supervises. In addition to her work with the Writing Centre, Holly designs and delivers workshops and programs.

Contact: writing@mcmaster.ca



The Academic Skills Animated Series introduces students to tips and strategies that can help all students improve the skills they need to succeed academically.

[Watch The Series](#)

Resources

Academic Skills LibGuide: Skills development tip sheets, term workshop schedules and additional resources

Online Learning Support: A comprehensive resource for successful online learning

Student Success Centre Academic Skills: An overview of SSC academic programs and services

