



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

June 1, 2026

Professor Nick Rule
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

RE: Interim Monitoring Report on UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Mathematics

Dear Prof. Rule,

I write in response to your letter of September 12, 2025, requesting an Interim Monitoring Report on April 12 and April 14, 2023 UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Mathematics and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement. As you note, under section 6.9.1.4 of the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process, a brief status report on the implementation of plans outlined in the Dean's administrative response is due midway between the year of the last and next UTQAP cyclical review site visits.

I am pleased to send you this status report in the attached Table, where the Implementation Plan recommendations have been addressed with updates from the unit and from the Dean's office on progress made to date.

The reviewers' comments and recommendations continue to help inform the future priorities of the Department of Mathematics and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,

Stephen Wright
Interim Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada
Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca • www.artsci.utoronto.ca

cc.

Robert Gerrard, Chair, Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science

Ebba Kurz, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science

Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Governance, Academic Planning & Reviews, Faculty of Arts
& Science

Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and
Science

UTQAP Cyclical Review Interim Monitoring Report

As required under [UTQAP section 6.9.1.4](#), the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs (VPAP) will request the Interim Monitoring Report from the Dean midway between the review and year of the next site visit.

Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Arts & Science
UTQAP Cyclical Review: April 12 & April 14, 2022 (conducted remotely)
Review Reported to Governance: October 23, 2023

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Dean’s Implementation Plan Update <i>The status of the implementation of plans outlined in the Dean’s administrative response (e.g., are these proceeding within the original timeframe, have adjustments to the plan been necessary, have any unexpected challenges emerged, etc.?)</i>
The reviewers observed that the Specialist program is very rigorous and offers limited flexibility for students to develop their interests, which severely limits “inclusion across multiple axes of diverse talent”. They also noted concerns that “the bulk of faculty attention and possibly also other resources, is focused on the Specialist program.” They recommended that the department conduct a review of curriculum and program administration with an eye to addressing structural issues identified in the Specialist; meeting the needs of undergraduates outside of the Specialist; and addressing broad student desire for better integration of curriculum with topics relevant to their post graduation plans.	1	“With the many changes in the student populations of the department it would be appropriate to do a review of curriculum and how the programs are administered. Related to this is a desire expressed by many students to have better integration of the curriculum with related fields relevant to students’ post-graduation plans. Rather than have mathematicians teach such applications, it would make sense to consider how courses offered by other departments might be integrated into the program (and given the large amount of service teaching done by the department a strong case could be made for flexibility on enrollment restrictions).”	To provide greater flexibility for students, the department: • In 2025-26, successfully piloted splitting MAT135H (which used to have close to 3000 students) into 2 courses: MAT130H and MAT135H. Each has about 1500 students, with MAT130H focussed on life sciences. Planning is completed, and changes are now in place for the 2026-27 academic year to similarly split: • MAT137Y into two H courses: MAT148H and MAT149H • MAT157Y into two H courses: MAT158H and MAT159H To expand its offerings for math majors, the department has added one course: MAT370H, Introduction to Mathematical Probability.

			Work remains to be done on a review of the curriculum, particularly with respect to consideration of enrolment restrictions and other applied courses that might count towards programs; this will be undertaken shortly, with the support of the Dean's Office.
	2	"Perhaps these [learning] outcomes could be revised, for the relatively few students who read such things"	Course-level learning outcomes are reviewed regularly by instructors, and the department is instituting a plan for more systematic review by the department's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.
	3	"Some voices were heard complaining that the specialist programs got rather more attention, with the majors program being left to the teaching faculty. While this is difficult to confirm, care should be taken to associate tenure-track faculty to all of the programs of the University, as is appropriate for any leading university."	The department's faculty complement has increased (from 37.5 tenure stream and 12.7 teaching stream, total FTE 48.02 in 2021-22) to 45.2 tenure stream and 11.0 teaching stream, total FTE 56.52. In addition, 3.0 FTE new hires have been made, with 2 new faculty members beginning July 1, 2026, and the third new faculty member beginning in January 2027. This increase in tenure stream faculty has facilitated the department currently piloting a model where very large sections of math major courses are taught by tenure-stream faculty: this is currently being tested in MAT344H.
	4	"These issues [with 'growing pains' in the major program, with student advising supports, and with the lack of explicit support for underrepresented groups] are closely connected to the issue of understaffing and addressing them should be part of the department's hiring plan tying the research and teaching mission, in particular the majors mission, firmly together. And of course, then deliver."	There is a consensus within the department that understaffing needs to be addressed, and the right balance of tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty is an issue to which the department devotes significant attention. The department has also worked with the Director, Academic Human Resources, to successfully address more diversity in new hires since the review.
The reviewers observed enormous growth in the undergraduate program over past decade, fueled by enrolment caps in related majors; and noted that the huge numbers and varied interests of students put significant pressure on the department's teaching mission. They recommended developing a strategic faculty complement plan, and prioritizing the hiring of	5	"Develop a plan for faculty growth. It is clear that the department needs to grow its faculty to meet the student demand. Most competing top math departments in North America have a 1-1 teaching load or equivalent, so the only way to meet the student demand is to increase the number of faculty. We also note that much of the increased student demand is in advanced math courses. The review committee therefore feels that the bulk of the increase should be in the form of tenure stream faculty. The review committee recommends developing a coherent plan for this	As noted above, #3, the unit has increased its faculty complement with the support of the A&S Dean's office. The current department workload policy remains in effect through June 30, 2027, and, with this increase in tenure track faculty, the department has begun discussions on the possibility of reducing the teaching load for tenure-stream faculty from 1.5 FCE per year to 1.25 FCE per year.

tenure-stream faculty when opportunities permit, while also considering the role of teaching-stream faculty and postdoctoral fellows in program delivery, aligned with support for program learning outcomes.		increase linking it to the major's program. Such a plan should also include the role of teaching stream faculty and teaching post-doctoral fellows."	The department is also considering decreasing the number of low-enrolment special topics courses, especially at the graduate level, which would also help free up teaching resources. The department has expanded its teaching postdoc complement from 2 to 3, which it maintains is the limit of its current capacity for providing first-rate mentorship.
	6	"As indicated previously, the enormous student demand necessitates growing the faculty, and one of our principal recommendations is to develop a coherent plan doing so. Of course, such a plan would necessarily be adjusted with time, but a vision for a sustainable steady state would be helpful. Some things to consider in such a plan include (but is not limited to):	The Dean's office has commissioned a 5-year Unit-Level Plan (ULP), which the department presented to the Dean and the senior leadership team in May 2026. The complement planning portion considers the points identified in recommendations #7-14, below.
	7	Establishing a realistic rate of hiring. Hiring at the very high level of the department is challenging and growth of the faculty will have to be a long-term effort.	The department has a consistent policy of only making offers to outstanding candidates. This preserves its very high level of hiring, but it also means that positions are sometimes unfilled for multiple years. In this way the department achieves a realistic rate of hiring organically. Nonetheless, the faculty complement has increased since the review; see above, #3.
	8	Determining areas for scientific growth in the department. There appear to be opportunities for growth in applied mathematics and in connections with the new School of Computational and Data Science.	Over the past few years, the department has consistently tried to hire in areas that would strengthen connections to data science and machine learning, but the department has indicated that it has experienced challenges in hiring top candidates in these fields.
	9	The appropriate or optimal balance between tenure stream faculty and teaching stream faculty.	The department is attending to this balance, as well as the appropriate or optimal balance between full-time and part-time / CLTA faculty.
	10	Connections between the suburban campuses and the St. George campus may offer some opportunities, especially in the context of space constraints.	Hiring at UTM and UTSC has great benefits for the strength of the STG department, but the department maintains that it does not help meet teaching obligations while living within space constraints. In fact, although faculty at UTM/UTSC do some graduate teaching, their ratio of (teaching contributions)/(NASMs of office space) office is much lower than for A&S faculty.
	11	The needs of the major programs, including questions of staffing the courses as well more broadly the appropriate level of engagement of faculty"	The unit's increase in faculty complement to date will benefit the major program. See above, #3.

	12	“Given their expertise and experience, there appear to be many opportunities to integrate [teaching stream faculty] into the teaching leadership of the undergraduate programs. Of course, this would require rebalancing their workload accordingly. Given the recent institutional changes to support promotion and retention of teaching faculty, this appears to be the ideal time to consider a variety of possibilities.”	A teaching stream faculty member has been Associate Chair, Undergraduate since summer 2023 and will continue through June 30, 2027.
	13	“There are excellent examples from the department’s peers (e.g., UBC and others) of how to optimize the cooperation of teaching and research faculty in these areas, which may be valuable for exploration.”	The chair of the department held a series of meetings with math department chairs at McGill and UBC in the 2023-24 academic year to share best practices and insight into these topics.
	14	“... the department is competing with top universities for faculty, and is somewhat disadvantaged in terms of the teaching load and the financial compensation it can provide. It has been very successful in identifying outstanding candidates with a particular attraction to Toronto. It is important to maintain this flexibility in hiring. That said, the review committee wonders if incorporating some priority areas into the hiring process may be beneficial (this may already be occurring informally).”	The department designates some searches under the category “Applied Mathematics.” These searches are guided by a vision of areas of applied math that are most vibrant and most relevant to the department (for example, areas of math related to machine learning), reflecting a consensus developed over some years by broad-based discussion within the tenure-stream faculty.
The reviewers recommended exploring ways to enhance and coordinate supports and advising for graduate students throughout the duration of their programs.	15	“Mentorship at multiple levels. Within the informal structure there were various gaps in mentorship, particular for grad students and faculty in their first several years in the department. This is a critical time during which access to mentorship is key. Likewise, as there was no meeting scheduled with the postdocs, it would be good to review their mentorship structure.”	The unit has made significant efforts to improve the quality of mentorship for incoming graduate students. These include: • A new mentorship program for first-year graduate students, whereby every incoming student is paired with both a faculty member and a more senior grad student who both serve as mentors. • A new not-for-credit professional development course for graduate students, covering a range of topics, including a grant-writing boot camp, panels on applying for academic and non-academic jobs, sessions on preparing a CV, on conflicts and difficult conversations, PhD milestones. • Increasing efforts to encourage grad students to apply for fellowships and supporting them in their applications. • Providing financial support to a Directed Reading Program initiated by the Math Grad Students Association, in which grad students mentor undergrad students in advanced math topics.
	16	“The department should ensure that graduate students are mentored at all stages of their program, also as TA’s. In addition, while graduate students	See above, #15.

		noted the excellent support of department staff members, more points of access and capacity for support of graduate students would be helpful.”	The unit has systematized and solidified an earlier program whereby senior TAs mentor the junior TAs. TA training is also provided by the department for new TAs, and many coordinators of large courses provide additional TA training as well as one-on-one mentorship. The number of staff on the Math Graduate Team has increased from 2 to 3: the Graduate Administrator, and two Graduate Assistants who report to her. The Administrator is responsible for the overall running of the grad office and oversees graduate student funding. The assistants oversee tasks such as events, scheduling, issues connected to grad courses, PhD thesis defences, correspondence, etc. All three roles are involved in admissions
The reviewers noted a relatively informal departmental organizational structure, as well as some disconnect between its various faculty groups. They recommended exploring approaches to strengthen the cohesiveness of the department, observing opportunities to enhance departmental communications, and to encourage the participation of all faculty groups in departmental activities and administration.	17	“Administrative structure. As noted, the current situation is an informal one, with everything basically being delegated from the chair. This has functioned, by and large, but complaints were made about lack of communication, and this in turn can lead to alienation. While we do not advocate burdening the faculty with excessive faculty meetings, and understand that while a faculty meeting takes place each term, more could be done to improve communication flows. There is apparently an elected Advisory group in the Department’s constitution that has been dormant for a while. Perhaps this could be revived.”	Starting in the 2025-6 academic year, the unit instituted “Communication and Consultation” meetings, intended for all interested faculty members, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows. In the first year of operation, there were 3 meetings in the fall term and 4 in the winter term. These were preceded by several well-attended Town Hall Meetings on topics such as the new budget model in the 2024-25 academic year. Department Council continues to meet once per term to discuss departmental updates and initiatives.
	18	“A few committee reports would at least keep people on the same page, generate more input on important topics such as curriculum, the undergraduate and graduate programs, hiring, and EDI, and facilitate smoother transitions when key roles are reassigned. The department’s constitution already has an elected representative council; perhaps it could be revived.”	Committee reports are presented at Department Council. The department has started making meeting minutes of important departmental committees available to faculty members.
	19	“Take steps to form a more integrated faculty. The contributions of the teaching stream faculty are manifold. The review committee perceived a disconnect between the teaching stream and tenure stream faculties. Part of this has to do with space: Informal interactions in the hallways would obviously help. But the department would do well to recognize the contributions of the teaching stream faculty and to provide opportunities to engage with department efforts more fully. Though we note that the	As noted above, #12, a teaching stream faculty member is currently the Undergraduate Chair. Where possible, the unit assigns teaching stream faculty to courses that they identify as helpful for their professional development. For example:

		workload of the teaching stream faculty seems heavy so additional duties would have to be considered in the overall expectations. Such opportunities could include access to more specialized courses, and involvement with the running of the programs.”	• This year, one faculty member is teaching a course on Feminist Mathematics in the Women & Gender Studies Institute (WGS333H). This is expected to continue next year. • Several other faculty members, at their request, have arranged to teach a class (MAT188H) next year that facilitates their involvement in a pedagogical research project they are undertaking, centered around the introduction of standards-based grading in this class. The department’s administration has also provided support to several grass-roots initiatives intended to foster a greater sense of community. These include weekly brown-bag lunches for faculty and an annual grad student-faculty social event organized by the Math Grad Students’ Association with financial support from the department. Finally, the planned move to a new space (33 Ursula Franklin, planned for May 2027) will consolidate faculty, staff, graduate students and postdocs who are currently spread around 3 smaller sites, bringing teaching stream and tenure stream faculty into greater proximity and helping cultivate a sense of cohesion.
	20	“Given the talent in the department across the board, investment in communications is well worth it.”	As noted in the Implementation Plan, during the 2022-23 academic year, the Department created (with the support of the Dean’s office) and filled a Communications Officer position. The new Communications Officer has since undertaken numerous projects including updating the departmental website and close managing of it, running the department’s new newsletter, and organizing alumni events.
	21	“The problem with the turnover in the student services staff appears to stem from the fact that the position needs to be reclassified - this should be a priority for the new manager. Also, adding additional support for undergraduate teaching may be appropriate.”	From 2021-22 to 2025-26, the unit increased its Undergraduate Team from 5.0 FTE (including 1 Instructor Support Assistant) to 9.0 FTE (including 3 ISAs and an ISA Supervisor).
The reviewers observed that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion was a topic of great interest in their discussions with students and some	22	“Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). There seemed to be a lack of process in some critical areas such as hiring of new faculty and recruitment of graduate students. The processes to make sure EDI is covered not only can	As noted in the Administrative Response, the department follows A&S and U of T processes and guidance in faculty recruitment, including the Vice-Provost Faculty & Academic Life’s <i>Strategies for</i>

other department members; however that EDI received little attention in the self-study and in meetings with leadership. They urged the department to explore strategies to strengthen its EDI efforts and processes, particularly in relation to faculty hiring and graduate student recruitment.		lead to better results but can also protect the Department in an area in which it appears rather vulnerable.”	<i>Recruiting an Excellent and Diverse Faculty Complement.</i> Academic HR. The department chair also worked closely with the Director, Academic HR, to address these staffing issues.
	23	“The leadership of the department would do well to engage with [EDI] more visibly - this seems to be a potential weakness. As a first step, the department should at least gather data (the administration likely already has a lot of information) to understand this issue better. The department should recognize the work of department members on this issue and continue to support groups such as the AWM chapter.”	In the 2022-23 academic year, the Dean’s office, with the support of department leadership, commissioned a Climate and Culture Assessment, the results of which were delivered in fall 2023. This represented a major commitment to “gather[ing] data ... to understand this issue better.” The Assessment did not focus exclusively on EDI, but almost all the recommendations were relevant to EDI issues. Since receiving the report, the unit has begun to implement its recommendations. One of the recommendations was “clarifying the role and purpose of the [department’s EDI] committee by preparing a clear and concise definition of the committee’s role that is available to all department members.” Following this recommendation, the unit paused and restarted the committee, with its initial charge being to formulate Terms of Reference. This remains a work in progress. Tableau dashboards available for unit leadership also present data on the gender composition of the student population and faculty complement. The next department chair (starting July 1, 2026) will be a woman, providing visible female leadership. The department holds an institutional membership with the AWM and provides significant financial support to its Gender Minorities in Mathematics group.
The reviewers noted opportunities to enhance connections with cognate units; in particular, with colleagues in computational and data science.	24	“Relations with other departments. Some regularly scheduled get togethers might be beneficial. For example, informal conversations around curriculum would make sense given the changing landscape of undergraduate teaching.”	The department chair regularly attends events such as Science Chair lunches and hosted such a lunch in December 2025. The Associate Chair Undergraduate has frequent discussions with counterparts from other departments.
	25	“The School of Computational and Data Science is one opportunity that the department should not miss. The intellectual connections between data science and mathematics are strong, and it would be mutually beneficial to maintain strong and vibrant ties”	Discussions around the creation of such a School are not active at this time.

	26	“Regular discussions around curriculum [with cognate units] seem appropriate given the overlapping interests of the students served.”	The department conducts consultations with other departments around curricular issues when appropriate, following standard procedures. A Math-Engineering Liaison Committee was formed in the 2024-25 academic year to ensure regular, clear channels of communication about curriculum and operational issues regarding the many math classes that are taught in the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering.
The reviewers noted the potential impact of departmental space concerns in a number of areas, including instruction, faculty research and hiring processes, and the department’s overall global competitiveness. They recommended that the department work with the Dean’s office to strategically examine space concerns and address as appropriate.	27	“Address the space issue. This is, perhaps, a recommendation more appropriately addressed to the Dean’s office or higher-level administration, and its solution will necessarily involve intricate knowledge of the University, so this committee is not in a position to be prescriptive. We do note, however, that space issues are limiting hiring, affecting the work of the staff, contributing to a lack of cohesiveness of the faculty, and conditions for graduate students that are inferior to those of other top graduate programs, just one sign that the space issues are affecting the competitiveness of the department. We also agree with the need expressed by the suburban campus faculty for office space on the St. George campus. We note that many of the pressures on the department are created by taking on the broader service mission of teaching students excluded from other majors, most notably Statistics and Computer Science, yet those other departments do not seem to have the same space constraints.”	As noted above (#19), the Dean’s office is supporting the department’s move to a new space at 33 Ursula Franklin in Spring 2027, consolidating its space into two locations rather than five. The new space will increase the department’s footprint, with the largest increase going to the Mathematics Learning Centre, a resource for undergraduates. However, the unit continues to explore the acquisition of additional space for graduate students. Possibilities include renting space from the Anthropology Department, across the street from 33 Ursula Franklin, and converting the space currently occupied by the Mathematics Library to departmental space.
	28	“Improved space would certainly have a positive impact on graduate student research.”	See above, # 27.
	29	“This is a problem [space accommodations for personnel] that cannot be solved by the department and requires work of the administration.”	See above, #27.
	30	“The interactions between the campuses appears healthy, and a key component of this is the fact that the faculty from the suburban campuses have office space at the downtown campus. This is crucial. Exploring further opportunities to integrate the suburban campuses in the research environment may also be fruitful in thinking about the space issues.”	The department reiterates that colleagues at UTM and UTSC continue to be fully integrated in the research environment.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	31	“One issue noted is the relatively low number (a fraction of what is the case at several other Canadian universities) of NSERC summer undergraduate research awards taken up by department students. Some systematic effort at recruitment would be warranted, as undergraduate	To address the demand, the department has introduced a program of Math Department Research Awards, supported by department funds (60%) as well as faculty grants (40%), in 2023-24. This has had the effect of roughly doubling the number of funded summer

		research is now an important feature of specialist-type programs across the continent, and indeed provides a strong leg-up for admission to graduate school.”	research projects supported by the unit: for summer 2026, there are approximately 23 funded projects, with approximately 10 of these externally funded (UTEA, USRA).
Findings of assessments of program effectiveness, conducted as outlined in the self-study (<i>see section 3.4 of the self-study template for more information</i>)		<i>Unit: Here, add information about internal curriculum committees or processes that oversee continual improvement in program quality.</i>	Regular meetings of the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees provide oversight of curricular matters.
The status of any additional items discussed at the AP&P meeting as captured in the FAR/IP		N/A; no follow-up report required.	N/A
A statement of who was consulted in developing this brief report and (where applicable) a statement of how the Faculty/division has monitored the implementation of review recommendations (<i>e.g., through annual meetings between the dean and chairs; through annual reports to Faculty governance, etc.</i>).		<i>Unit: Indicate with whom you consulted internally to produce this update.</i>	The Dean’s office consulted with the department Chair, who also consulted with the Associate Chairs, Undergraduate and Graduate, and the Associate Chair Research. Senior leadership in the A&S Dean’s office was also consulted as relevant to produce this report.