


MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty, Staff, and Students, University of Toronto Scarborough
From: Professor William A. Gough, Vice-Principal Academic & Dean 
Date: 20 December 2023
Re: **Administrative Appointment - Special Advisor, Teaching Stream Faculty Success**
Note: For broad distribution

Following the [call for nominations](#), it is with great pleasure that I write to inform you that Professor Aarthi Ashok has accepted an appointment as Special Advisor on Teaching Stream Faculty Success from 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Professor Aarthi Ashok is Professor, Teaching Stream, in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Toronto Scarborough. She earned her PhD in Cell & Molecular Biology, and Biochemistry at Brown University, USA, and her BSc in Biochemistry and Genetics at the University of Sheffield, UK. She joined the University of Toronto Scarborough in 2009 as Lecturer and was promoted to Professor, Teaching Stream in 2020. Her research interests lie in investigating the impact of curricular design and pedagogical innovations on student learning, campus and classroom experience, metacognitive development, and scientific identity formation.

Professor Ashok is a recognized leader in curriculum development and administration, and a strong advocate for curiosity-driven learning and evidence-based teaching. She has developed community-based, experiential learning opportunities for students, which have expanded from being a biology initiative to a Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) initiative, involving instructors from Environmental Chemistry, Mathematics, and Computer Science. She has produced more than 30 teaching-related manuscripts, workshops, and presentations - many of these with student co-authors. Professor Ashok's use of student-centered learning approaches has been recognized by the University of Toronto President's Teaching Award, the Principal's Faculty Teaching Award as well as the University of Toronto Early Career Teaching Award. She is currently co-leading a Mentorship Initiatives Fund grant, to establish department-wide group discussion sessions for teaching relevant mentoring. She is also a co-applicant for a Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant (PDG) across four institutions to improve equity in university-level science courses.

Professor Ashok has significant experience in advisory roles at the university, including serving as Associate Chair, Undergraduate Affairs, as a member of the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation Academic Advisory committee and the Expert Panel on the Undergraduate Student Educational Experience (USEE) at the University of Toronto. She has also pursued leadership roles beyond the institution including currently serving as co-chair of the Scholarship of Leading Interest Group of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (ISSOTL), and elected Vice-President of the Open Consortium of Undergraduate Biology Educators (oCUBE).

In the Special Advisor role, Professor Ashok will ensure continued focus on the professional and career interests of Teaching Stream faculty, enhance Teaching Stream representation in the Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, ensure the implementation of recommendations in the 2023 Report of the Teaching Stream Faculty Working Group that she co-chaired, and support and advance Teaching Stream faculty contributions to the strategic direction of the University of Toronto Scarborough.

I am very pleased that Professor Aarthi Ashok is willing to serve as the inaugural Special Advisor on Teaching Stream Faculty Success. Her leadership and experience will bring significant benefit to this role and to our campus community. I look forward to working with her in this capacity alongside Professor Jessica Fields, Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity, & Success.