



## A beginner's guide to taxes

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*Taxes—the one word that can inspire feelings of terror in almost every UTM student.*

**W**ho needs to file taxes? Pretty much everyone. Yes, even if you're not working.

"[Every] Canadian resident needs to file taxes," says Nausheen Adam, services manager at UTMSU and manager of UTMSU's Tax Clinic. "International students who go to school here also need to file taxes."

"If you do not file your taxes, you are losing out on your tuition credits," Adam notes.

The Tax Clinic is staffed by eight supervisors and 40 UTM student volunteers, who have completed online training provided by the CRA. The free clinic is offered to any student, whether or not they go to UTM or U of T.

"Some people live in Mississauga, but they go somewhere else to study," Adam says. "These individuals can also bring in their tax forms to the clinic."

The forms students need to bring with them can vary depending on a student's situation. It's a good idea to bring along a void cheque or a copy of a direct deposit slip from your bank. This allows for direct deposit to your bank account, which makes for faster returns, including any GST/HST rebates, the Ontario Trillium Benefit, and any other funds you may get when you file your taxes.

All students should bring their T2202A form (Tuition, Education, and Textbook Amounts Certificate). If students have received a scholarship, then a T4A form (Statement of Pension, Retirement, Annuity, and Other Income) will also be needed. Both the T2202A and T4A forms can be downloaded from ACORN.

Another aspect to consider are tuition credits. If you have tuition credits from last year, then you should bring along your 2014/15 Notice of Assessment. If you worked, even for a short time, bring any T4 slips (Statement of Remuneration Paid). If you have investment income, you will need your T5 slip (Statement of Investment Income) and any receipts for charitable donations.

Many students aren't sure about what they're allowed to claim. For instance, you may not realize that you can claim a portion of your rent, so bring your rent receipts if you have them, or a letter from your landlord that confirms where you lived and how much you paid in rent. The Tax Clinic doesn't necessarily need this letter, but it's good to have it on file just in case you're ever audited. Got any transit receipts for monthly bus or train passes? These can be claimed as well.

According to Adam, not many international students are aware of the service provided by the clinic. She says that it's a good idea for international students to start filing taxes now if they plan to live and work in Canada after graduation.

Additionally, international students need to have a Social Insurance Number or an Individual Tax Number. Forms to obtain the latter can be found on the UTMSU Tax Clinic webpage and must be sent to the Canadian Revenue Agency prior to filing. The Tax Clinic

can't file your taxes without it.

The UTMSU Tax Clinic will run from March 14 to April 15 and will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Student Centre. Appointments can also be made through the UTMSU Info Booth. While it's a good idea to book an appointment—especially in April—they also accept walk-ins.



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