



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (November 2, 2015)
Faculty Council (December 8, 2015)

From: Professor Pierre Sullivan
Chair, Examinations Committee

Date: October 16, 2015

Re: Examinations Committee Goals for 2015-2017

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a routine or minor policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for approving and forwarding to Faculty Council for information.

BACKGROUND

The committee goals for 2015-2017 were created collaboratively by all members of the Examinations Committee, who were also given the opportunity to consult with individuals and groups from their respective offices and departments within the Faculty. The committee voted to approve the goals on September 29, 2015.

COMMITTEE GOALS

In addition to routine issues, the committee has identified the following priorities for 2015-2017:

1. **Creation of a Chief Presiding Officer for final exam administration**

Several divisions, including Arts and Science, UTM and UTSC, use a [Chief Presiding Officer \(CPO\)](#)¹ to ensure the uniform and competent administration of all Faculty final examinations by enforcing the same rules and procedures no matter where they write. The CPO is responsible for setting up the exam (collecting papers and preparing the room), assisting with the running of the exam, and confirming collection of all exam papers. Professors and, potentially, TAs invigilate the examination and answer students' questions.

¹ See <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/exams/rules>

Potential benefits of the CPO to the Faculty:

- a) Better student experience
- b) Better crisis management with well-trained CPOs
- c) Time saving (no longer necessary to have 250 profs and 600 TAs waiting in the distribution room)
- d) Financial saving

2. Grades management guidelines for instructors and grade inflation detection strategy and management

Several divisions, including Arts and Science, UTM and UTSC, provide their instructors with guidelines ([Marks Guidelines and Review Processes](#))² regarding historical mark distributions and mark expectations (not requirements). The committee is reviewing this (as well as similar policies at other universities) to see whether it is possible to provide our instructors with comparable information. It is hoped this would give guidance and reasons for the Examination Committee to make inquiries and request modification to course marks.

3. Academic promotion: probation lifting policy

The Examinations Committee regularly receives appeals from students concerned that they have been on PRO1 or PRO2 status throughout their undergraduate program. Upon graduation, probation status is automatically lifted. The committee is sympathetic to these students; however, it is not reasonable to assist a small subset. Other universities, e.g., Queen's and Alberta require a single term above a threshold mark (1.6 (C-) at Queen's and 2.0 (C) at Alberta). Our Faculty requires a 70% (B-) average for two subsequent (non-repeated) terms. The committee is working to determine the number of student who have successfully lifted probation and also to study whether the current policy should be modified to allow greater mobility into and out of probation.

4. COFM exemptions/exceptions database

The committee is asked to approve modification of the Composition of Final Marks for particular courses; however, there is no database to assist members of the committee in determining the reason for these exemptions. A trackable database with this information is being developed.

PROPOSAL/MOTION

For information.

² See http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/dean/sites/files/dean/public/shared/pdfs/MarksGuidelinesandReview_000.pdf