



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (October 5, 2020)
Faculty Council (October 23, 2020)

From: Professor Daniel Posen
Chair, Committee on Examinations

Date: September 15, 2020

Re: **Changes to Rules for Undergraduate Course Assessments during Remote Course Delivery Due to COVID-19**

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.

RATIONALE AND PROPOSED POLICIES

The COVID-19 situation has introduced much uncertainty regarding how assessments will be performed in Fall 2020. The report details several changes to course assessments, proposed by the Standing Committee on Examinations.

- 1. Details of the final summative assessment:** Existing regulations require that instructors announce their exam type prior to the final date to add or substitute courses. The traditional exam types do not apply well for remote assessments, and instructors may need more time to finalize their assessment plans.

Proposed Changes

- a. For Fall 2020, final assessment details should be communicated as early as possible, but no later than 1 week before the course drop deadline (**i.e., by November 2nd**). These include any technical expectations beyond minimum university requirements.
- 2. Multiple choice questions on final:** Existing regulations require approval by the Standing Committee on Examinations if the value of multiple choice questions will exceed 25% on any Examination. Increased flexibility will allow instructors to design assessments that best suit their course, and may facilitate the use of rotating question banks on exams.

Proposed Changes

- a. For courses delivered remotely due to COVID-19, the Examination Committee grants automatic approval that multiple-choice questions may account for up to 50% of the value of the final summative assessment.
- 3. Time zone support:** Student are located around the world, which could cause difficulty for synchronous timed exams. Existing rules provide no guidance for exams written outside of Eastern Time as almost all exams were historically written on campus.

Proposed Policy

- a. For courses delivered remotely due to COVID-19, students are encouraged to write synchronous assessments at the scheduled time, but accommodations will be granted in extreme cases. In particular, if any portion of a timed synchronous assessment is scheduled to take place after midnight or before 6am (local time for the student), then the student will be granted an accommodation upon timely submission of a [Term Work Petition](#). Follow standard practice, the Academic Advisor will determine the validity of the petition, and the instructor will select an accommodation.
- b. For accommodations related to the final summative assessment, a Term Work Petition must be submitted no later than the course drop deadline (e.g., November 9 in the case of Fall 2020).
- c. Instructors are encouraged to discuss potential accommodations with affected students, but ultimately the instructor has discretion to choose the accommodation. Reasonable accommodations may include:
 - i. Offering a different time slot for the timed assessment
 - ii. Creating an equivalent substitute assessment (e.g., oral exam, take-home exam)
 - iii. Transferring the weight of the assessment to other course deliverables
 - iv. Requesting that the Exam Committee assign a deferred exam for the student (typically offered during the following term)

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

The rules in this proposal were approved by the Standing Committee on Examinations, in consultation with the Assessment Working Group of the Associate Chairs Committee.

RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL

For information.