



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council

From: Professor Peter Herman
Chair, Committee on Examinations

Date: March 6, 2014 for April 7, 2014, Faculty Council Meeting

Re: Deferred Examinations Fee

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.

RECOMMENDATION

Beginning with the 2014 Fall Session, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering students will be charged a non-refundable sitting fee of \$70 per deferred exam to a maximum of \$140 per session.

BACKGROUND

In 2011, the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering introduced deferred exams for students who missed their final exams and fit specific criteria (see attached appendix). The Faculty's Committee on Examinations and the Office of the Registrar propose the reinstatement of sitting fees to recover the administrative costs of offering deferred exams, bringing us in line with the rest of the University. This would also act to discourage students from missing their regularly scheduled exams, and, in particular, to discourage students from missing deferred exams.

In other Faculties at the University of Toronto, including Arts & Science, students are charged a non-refundable fee of \$70 for each deferred exam they write up to a maximum of \$140 per session. It should be noted, however, that the Engineering Society's Executive Committee, in discussions with the Committee on Examinations, offered a recommendation against the implementation of deferred exam fees, and such fees are not currently being charged.

Every academic session, the Office of the Registrar requires approximately 35 hours of staff time (\$35 per hour) and ten hours of TA time (\$42 per hour) to administer deferred exams. Total costs (excluding professors' time and overhead) are approximately \$1,500 per session. In the 2013 Fall Session, 96 grades were assessed, and 35 exams from 24 different Engineering courses were deferred. During regular exams, the absentee rate is less than one per cent; for deferred exams, the absentee rate is closer to 20 per cent. Five out of 26 deferred exams were missed in 2013 Winter Session.

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

The Committee on Examinations is composed of representatives from each undergraduate program; the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate Studies; the Chair, First Year; and the Office of the Registrar. The Committee is responsible for the administration and implementation of the University Grading Practices Policy, Faculty Grading Policies and oversight of the general consistency of grading procedures within the Faculty. The Committee is also responsible for all administrative matters – and policy review thereof – related to the academic promotion of undergraduate students within the Faculty.

PROGRAM

All programs are involved in these changes.

PROPOSAL/MOTION

For information.

APPENDIX: GUIDELINES FOR GRANTING A DEFERRED EXAMINATION (SDF)

Amended as per Faculty Council: April 28, 2011

When a petition regarding a missed final examination has been accepted as valid and properly documented, assessment of a course grade based on closely supervised term work remains the preferred method of granting relief. In some situations, alternatives to an assessed grade may be preferable. A deferred examination will be **considered** when a student meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The student has a minimum of two previous terms with at least one assessed mark in each term, for example: 2008-9: 1 to 3 assessed grades + 2010-1: 1 assessed grade.
2. The assessed grade would result in failure of the course (unless failure would result regardless of the mark on the final examination).
3. The student has completed an insufficient amount of supervised term work to allow a valid assessment/calculation of an assessed grade. This is most appropriate when the student had valid reasons for missing supervised term work (a major test) and final examination. The Committee, in making its final decision, may take into consideration any additional comments provided on the Term Work Report from the Course Instructor regarding the student's ability.
4. If deferred exams are being considered for more than two courses as a result of missed final exams and insufficient term work, a grade of aegrotat (AEG) for those courses or a retroactive withdrawal from the term may be accommodations that are more appropriate. A retroactive withdrawal (WDR) from a single course would be considered only in exceptional circumstances.
5. The assessed grade results in a term average that places the student near the cutoff ranges (depending on previous academic status) of 53-54.4 or 57-59.4 for academic probation (PRO1/PRO2) or permanent suspension (RFRG).

Timetable misread: Current practice for the first instance of a student missing a final examination due to misreading the timetable is to assess a course grade based on closely supervised term work, and then to apply a penalty of 10%. If application of the above guidelines leads to the granting of a deferred examination, the same penalty of 10% will be applied.

GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR FIRST DEFERRED EXAMINATION

Once a student has been granted a deferred examination (SDF), the following activities will occur:

1. The Examinations Committee will recommend one of the following types of deferred examinations:
 - (a) a regular deferred examination, to be given the next time the course is offered, or
 - (b) a special deferred examination, to be given as soon as possible after the missed examination.

2. The student's current grade (DNW – Did Not Write) will be changed to SDF (Deferred Examination) on ROSI
3. A deferred examination period will be set by the Registrar's Office (OFR) and the Committee on Examinations
4. OFR will notify the student, Course Instructor and the student's Counsellor
5. Course Instructor to submit a NEW examination to the OFR by a stated deadline
6. The OFR will notify the student of the time, date, and location of the deferred examination
7. If the examination is NOT written and no new petition is submitted by the student, the OFR will insert the original earned course mark from the Term Work Report
8. If a new petition is submitted regarding the missed deferred examination, the Committee on Examinations will decide on the new best course of action (see Second Deferral Procedure below)

SECOND DEFERRAL PROCEDURE

The Faculty will not normally offer a student a third chance to write their missed examination. The student will be required to submit a new petition for special consideration for their missed deferred examination and the Faculty will decide on the most appropriate course of action. The Faculty may ask the student to repeat the course or write the regularly scheduled examination when the course is next offered.

In the event that the student missed their deferred examination, the original earned grade will be inserted to replace the SDF grade and the student's academic standing will be re-assessed based on the original earned grade. Should that result in the student failing the term (PRO2/RFRG), the Committee on Examinations will decide on the most appropriate course of action.

RE-WRITE OR SUPPLEMENTAL EXAMINATION PROCEDURE

Students who wrote their original scheduled examination would not normally be considered for a supplementary examination. The Faculty will try not to penalize any students for trying their best to write the examination under sub-optimal conditions (mild-illness, distracted) but the Committee on Examinations will only consider granting a supplementary examination in very special situations. It would be reasonable for the Faculty to not provide any relief after the final examination when the student's performance in the final examination is consistent with term tests/quizzes or general performance in previous terms. When appropriate, the Faculty will take the student's entire academic performance into consideration.