

MEMORANDUM, DCD #1, 2023-2024

To: Chairs, University of Toronto Scarborough
Cc: Chairs' Assistants, Departmental Business Officers,
Undergraduate Coordinators & Departmental Assistants
From: Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean and Office of the Registrar
Date: 21 July 2023
Re: Exam Practices Working Group Update and Absence Declaration Changes
Note: For broad distribution to course instructors and administrative staff

A) Course Information System Updates

Since 2021, the Exam Practices Working Group has been working on a series of recommendations for exam administration and enhancements to the Course Information System (CIS). Previous changes implemented in CIS include:

- Earlier deadlines for syllabus and examination details submission of evaluation to facilitate earlier release of the exam schedule.
- Chair approval of proposed methods of evaluation.
- Expansion of the definition of "final examination" to include different modalities.
- Exemption requests for exams worth less than 33%, so that they can be included in the exam schedule.
- Addition of term test information collection.
- Uploading of two final exam copies to facilitate deferred exam administration. Instructors who decline uploading two copies are advised that they may only receive very limited notification about needing an alternate deferred exam version (e.g., Less than five days). Where there is no second version uploaded or received prior to a deferred exam, the original version uploaded will be used. Instructors of classes where enrolment is above 75 students are encouraged to upload two exam copies, as the likelihood of a deferred exam request is high.

Additional enhancements will be launched soon:

- A new syllabus builder (launching in July for Fall term courses)

Approval for submitted exam copy (or a suitable exemplar) to be shared with the exam repository. The [University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy](#) requires that samples of previous exams be available to students. We highly encourage all Departmental Chairs, Instructors and Administrators to use the Course Information System (CIS) for creating and submitting course syllabi, submitting term test and exam details and the final exam for printing. This will assist with efficiency, effectiveness and secure delivery of our services to students. Please let us know if we can assist in any way.

Questions related to enhancements of the Course Information System (CIS) can be directed to Naureen Nizam, Associate Registrar and Director of Systems & Operations at naureen.nizam@utoronto.ca.

B) Absence Declaration Changes

At the onset of the pandemic, the University introduced broad use of an absence declaration allowing students to indicate absence from their academic obligations in ACORN without supporting documentation. As we enter the post-pandemic period, the University convened a tri-campus working group which has recommended that the use of the absence declaration be contained to one-time use per term for a maximum of seven days. These new limits on the absence declaration will come into effect for Fall 2023.

Additional guidance for instructors about the use of the absence declaration and how to address absences outside the declaration is available in the Student Absences document. Over the summer, information will be posted on the Registrar's Office website and will be communicated to instructors and departments through email.

Questions related to the Absence Declaration can be directed to Shelby Verboven, Registrar & Assistant Dean, Strategic Enrolment Management at shelby.verboven@utoronto.ca