



[DCD#14, 2012-13]

MEMORANDUM

To: UTSC Department Chairs and Academic Directors

From: John Scherk, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate
William Gough, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education and Program Development

Date: 10 June 2013

Re: **Final Exam Repository**

Instructors have an obligation to make previous years' final examination questions available for undergraduate and graduate courses as specified in Section 2.1. of the *University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy (January 2012)*.¹

2.1. Access to exemplars: For all undergraduate courses and graduate courses where there is a final written examination, all divisions/faculties should provide access to copies of the previous years' final examination papers and other years' papers where feasible. Exemptions may be granted by an appropriate committee of the division or department.

In addition to this requirement, Section V.9 of the UTSC Academic Handbook states the following, "... course instructors must submit a copy of their final exam(s) to the Departmental Office 5 working days prior to the scheduled date of the exam."

We have found that only one UTSC department currently is compliant with this policy, which is in striking contrast to FAS and UTM.

As you may know, the UTSC library has an exam repository, which has password access (UTORid). It is managed by one of our local librarians, Sarah Forbes.² The current system ensures that exam questions remain confidential for six months after the exam (allowing for the deferred exam), after which they become available for student review.

The Academic Handbook sets out a requirement that all instructors must provide a copy of their exams to the departmental office five days in advance of the exam. This provision can make it easy for departments to comply with the University's policy

¹ (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/uniasgpp.htm>)

² <http://utsc.library.utoronto.ca/old-exams-repository>

without imposing an additional administrative burden on instructors. We suggest that the staff member who is responsible for receiving the copies of the final exams also be given responsibility for emailing them to the UTSC library at exams-librepository@utsc.utoronto.ca for processing by library staff.

We recognize that, in some cases, compliance with the University policy and campus directive may necessitate a change in exam setting practices. The re-use or cycling of exam questions is, especially under these circumstances, not a good practice. On the other hand the policy does not tether us to past practice nor restrict us in setting exams of a very different nature should an instructor so choose or if there is a change in instructor.

In some instances a department may wish to exempt some courses from this requirement. A department can exercise this right by creating a committee to consider such an option. In this case the department should have a clearly articulated set of criteria for exempting courses and the appropriate Vice-Dean must be consulted prior to implementing the decision.

In future, the Dean's Office will be monitoring the collection of exam questions in the exam repository, and will work with Chairs and Academic Directors to ensure compliance with policy.