



[DCD #5 2015-16]

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Chairs and Academic Directors

**From:** Professor William Gough, Vice-Principal Academic & Dean (Interim) *WAG*

**Date:** 30 November 2015

**Re:** Final Examinations Repository

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Instructors have an obligation to make available previous years' final examination for undergraduate and graduate courses as indicated in the *University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy (January 2012)*:<sup>1</sup>

**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".

Two UTSC departments are currently compliant and a couple of others are working towards compliance with this policy in striking contrast to FAS and UTM.

Note that the library at UTSC has set up an exam repository with password access (UTORid), and one of our local librarians, Sarah Forbes, manages the repository.<sup>2</sup> Exam questions remain confidential for at least six months and usually about a year after the exam (allowing for deferred exams), then they become available for student review. At present exams are posted for a three period.

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

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

The requirement set out in the Academic Handbook can make it easy for departments to comply with the University's policy without imposing an additional administrative burden on instructors. We suggest that once the final exams have been submitted to a staff member in the department, this staff member should email the exams to [exams-librepository@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:exams-librepository@utsc.utoronto.ca) for processing by library staff.

In some cases, compliance with the University policy and campus directive may lead to 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 practice. A department can exercise this right by creating a committee to consider such requests. In this case the department should have a clearly articulated set of criteria for exempting courses and the Dean's Office must be consulted prior to implementing the decision.