



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (January 18, 2016)
Faculty Council (February 29, 2016)

From: Professor Pierre Sullivan
Chair, Examinations Committee

Date: December 9, 2015

Re: **Change to Probation Policy**

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a major policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for endorsing and forwarding to Faculty Council for vote as a regular motion (requiring a simple majority of members present and voting to carry).

BACKGROUND

Probation, and probation status, has been an ongoing issue of appeal for this committee. The committee is sympathetic to these students; however, it is not fair to assist a small subset. To remove probation, students with “two successive sessions (excluding summer sessions) with a weighted Session Average of 70% or greater, none of which is a repeated session, will have their status improved by one step.”¹ Upon graduation, probation status is automatically lifted. Based on a review of students on repeat probation, there has been very limited success in removing probation status. (Typically, less than ~10% of students placed on repeat probation have their status lifted prior to graduation, and only about 50% of such students ultimately graduate.) Our current practice also seems to be detrimental to the academic success of our students.²

Arts and Science, UTM and UTSC allow students to transfer to good standing with a C- (1.7) annual fall + winter, or summer sessional average once their cumulative GPA climbs back to 1.5 (flow chart attached). Engineering programs at other universities, *e.g.*, Queen’s, Waterloo and Alberta require a single term above a threshold mark (1.6 (C-) at Queen’s and 2.0 (C) at Alberta). Allowing our students a similar mechanism of removing probation status would remove an unnecessary stress as they advance in their program.

¹ Academic regulations VIII.1 http://www.apsc.utoronto.ca/Calendars/Current/Academic_Regulations.html#Note103

² Lindo, J. M., Sanders, N. J., & Oreopoulos, P. (2010). Ability, Gender, and Performance Standards: Evidence from Academic Probation. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2(2), 95–117. doi:10.1257/app.2.2.95

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

The motion was discussed at the November 4 and 25, 2015 Examinations Committee meetings and discussions were held with the Registrar's office on implementation and impact.

PROPOSAL/MOTION

THAT, beginning in the Winter 2016 term, Academic Regulation VIII.1 will be changed to:

1. Removing Probation:

A full-time student who has a non-repeated session with a weighted Session Average of ~~70%~~ 60% or greater **while maintaining a minimum 1.50 cumulative GPA will have their academic standing improved by one step.** For example: a student who has an academic standing of "Repeat Probation" after one session with a weighted Session Average of ~~70%~~ 60% or better **and a CGPA of 1.50** will have a new academic standing of "Proceed On Probation."

A part-time student will have their academic standing improved by one step after having completed the minimum number of sessions required to have grades registered in four or more non-repeated courses with a weighted average of 60% or greater and a CGPA of 1.50.

Note: A student is considered full-time when they are enrolled in four or more courses in a session, and part-time when they are enrolled in three or less courses in a session.

An academic standing of Proceed on Probation, or On Repeat Probation will be removed and changed to Pass (or Honours if applicable) at the conclusion of the final session during which all requirements for graduation are satisfied.

