



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (March 22, 2016)
Faculty Council (April 12, 2016)

From: Professor Pierre Sullivan
Chair, Examinations Committee

Date: March 22, 2016

Re: New Coats and Jackets Examination 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

Arts and Science, UTM and UTSC have recently (September 2015) introduced a new coat, jacket and bag policy for examination rooms. The reasoning provided by Deborah Robinson, Faculty Registrar and Director of Undergraduate Academic Services, Arts and Science was:

“This will be our first exam session under this new rule. I'll let you know how it goes.

We decided to change our approach for two reasons:

1. We really aren't able to safeguard students' possessions. We had a number of thefts from exam rooms last year. On two occasions students finished their exams to find that ALL their possessions were gone – backpack (including laptop, cellphone, wallet and/or purse) and coat, and both of these happened during evening exams and in winter. On one other occasion a student had her backpack and wallet taken and this ultimately led to identity theft. I had the police in my office on several occasions investigating thefts from exam rooms. In one of these cases, and on the advice of university counsel – we had to compensate a student for the loss of her possessions.

2. As a result of these thefts – and rumours of thefts – students reported that they were distracted during exams trying both to answer questions and keep an eye on their stuff. Since there is no easy way for us to guard students possessions we decided on this new approach. We'll let you know how it goes. So far there's been a positive reception.”

The Examination Committee expressed concern that our students may be in compliance with one Faculty’s regulation and not the other’s, resulting in an inadvertent academic offense, and proposes adopting the policy recently put in place in Arts and Science.

In addition, a number of universities, including UNSW¹, Latrobe University and Kyoto University, have recently begun to ban all watches from examination rooms as smart watch technology has advanced as to be indistinguishable from traditional watches. Our policy has likewise been modified to require removal of all watches. The committee has contacted Deborah Robinson to share the modification to the policy regarding watches and timepieces in Arts and Science.

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

The motion was discussed at the November 25, 2015 Examination Committee meeting. Further discussions were held on December 15, 2015 through e-mail. Additional discussion occurred at the Executive Council meeting of January 18, 2016.

RECOMMENDATION AND MOTION FOR FACULTY COUNCIL

THAT, beginning in the Fall 2016 term, the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering will change Regulation X.2.e to:

All coats and jackets should be placed on the back of each candidate's chair. All notes and books, pencil cases, turned-off cell phones, laptops, purses and other unauthorized aids should be stored inside a candidate's knapsack or large bag, which should then be closed securely and placed under candidate's chair. Candidates are required to place their watches or timepieces on the desk throughout the examination. Material placed on the desk may be inspected by invigilators. Candidates are NOT allowed to have a pencil case on their desk and any pencil cases found on desks will be searched. Candidates are not allowed to touch their knapsack or bag or the contents until the exam is over. Candidates are not allowed to reach into the pockets or any part of their coat or jacket until the exam is over.²

¹ UNSW Australia Exam Rules and Policy – <https://goo.gl/8cFmoL>

² Copied from http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html (Rules for the Conduct of Examinations)