



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Executive Committee of Faculty Council (March 21, 2019)  
Faculty Council (April 11, 2019)

**From:** Professor Daniel Posen  
Chair, Committee on Examinations

**Date:** March 7, 2019

**Re:** **Changes to Restrictions on Composition of Final Marks**

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## 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

Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering (FASE) classifies composition of final marks for course grades into three main categories:

- 1) a final examination;
- 2) independent term work performed under supervision, i.e., session tests or any other work which, in the judgment of the instructor, is a reliable measure of the performance of the student evaluated, and;
- 3) session work not closely supervised.

Current regulations require the final exam count for at least 35% of the course grade, and that “not closely supervised work” shall not exceed a total of 25% of the final mark unless approved by the Committee on Examinations.

Each semester, the Committee on Examinations receives a number of requests from instructors to allow for a greater proportion of the grade to be determined from not closely supervised work, particularly in courses where problem sets or assignments are core components of the course. These requests are generally granted, and so the Committee on Examinations wishes to relax the requirement on not closely supervised work from a maximum of 25% to a maximum of 50% – thus implying that closely supervised work must still account for a majority of the grade

awarded. The current requirement of 25% will become “recommended” practice rather than required practice.

In addition, to ensure relevant student feedback before the final exam and to facilitate the awarding of “assessed marks” in cases where students submit a valid petition regarding a missed final examination (see Report 3516 from December 2016), the Committee on Examinations will now require a minimum of 15% of final marks be derived from closely supervised term work.

## **CONSULTATION**

The proposed amendments to academic regulations regarding the composition of final marks have been discussed and approved by the 2018-2019 Committee on Examinations, and have been discussed with the chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

## **MOTION**

THAT proposed changes be made to section “XI. Grading Policies”, subsection 5, as described in Report 3620.

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### **Proposed changes to “XI. Grading Policies”, subsection 5**

5. The following rules and guidelines apply to the evaluation of student performance in all courses offered within the Faculty. Where appropriate, however, an instructor may apply to the Committee on Examinations for permission to deviate from the rules.

- a) The composition of final marks may be based upon
  - i) a final examination;
  - ii) independent term work performed under supervision, i.e., session tests or any other work which, in the judgment of the instructor, is a reliable measure of the performance of the student evaluated, and;
  - iii) session work not closely supervised.
- b) The dates of session tests should be announced in advance. Unannounced session tests, if used, should not count for more than a minor fraction of the total mark for independent session work, and the value of this fraction should be specified early in the session when the details of the composition of the final course mark are announced in class.
- c) A final examination, conducted under the jurisdiction of the Faculty Council and counting for at least 35% of the final mark shall be held in each lecture course.

**d) Closely supervised term work shall account for at least 15% of the final mark in each course.**

de) No one essay, test, examination, etc. should have a value of more than 80% of the final grade.

ef) A component of the final course marks must be derived from session work, and the final examination must not count for all of the final mark, unless the Committee on Examinations approves other arrangements on an annual basis.

fg) The portion of marks for lecture courses which is derived from not closely supervised work shall not exceed a total of ~~25~~50% of the final mark in a course unless the Committee on Examinations approves other arrangements; recommended practice is that not-closely supervised work be limited to 25% or less of the final mark in a course. Work included in this category shall normally be accompanied by a sign-off statement attesting to the fact that the work being submitted either by an individual student or a group of students is their own work. The proportion of marks which can be derived without a sign-off statement, where students are free and encouraged to work together, is to be limited to 5% of the final course mark.

gh) Each instructor must specify on session test and final examination papers the type of calculator permitted (see X (2) (c) above).

hi) The only aids which a candidate may bring to the final examination and use, other than those which may be provided by the examiner or specified on the examination paper, are pen and pencil, a bilingual dictionary (for students having difficulty with the English language) if presented to the presiding examiner for inspection and approval prior to each examination at which its use is proposed, and drafting instruments without their carrying cases.

ij) The following five types of final examination papers are approved for use in examinations conducted under Council's jurisdiction. The relative value of each part of the examination must be indicated on all final examination papers. Further, unless otherwise specified, the only aids permitted are those outlined in Regulation X-2.