



SENATE BYLAW

Bylaw 55: Graduate Academic Evaluation Procedures

ADOPTED by Senate: 11 Feb 1974

AMENDED by Senate: 16 Jan 1976, 21 Sep 1977, 14 Dec 1978, 14 May 1981, 15 Oct 1981, 17 Mar 1983, 15 Dec 1983, 27 Sep 1984, 13 Dec 1984, 19 Sep 1985, 14 Nov 1985, 18 Jun 1986, 10 Jun 1987, 1 Dec 1987, 20 Oct 1988, 22 Sep 1989, 2 Nov 1989, 27 Jun 1990, 21 Apr 1994, 12 May 2004, 9 June 2005, 12 April 2006, 7 June 2006, 10 May 2007, 9 Dec 2009, 8 Feb 2013, 12 Apr 2013, 10 Apr 2015, 10 June 2016, 26 May 2017, 14 Dec 2018, 8 Feb 2019, 10 May 2019 (revised and renumbered from Bylaw 51), 08 Nov 2019, 13 Dec 2019.

AMENDED Due to Administrative/Organizational/Name Changes: 6 June 2014, 09 October 2015.

Definitions

In this Bylaw,

"Dean" shall mean "Dean or Designate"

"Academic Administrative Unit (AAU) Head" shall mean the Head of a Department, the Director of a School, the Dean of an undepartmentalized Faculty.

"Instructor" shall mean the course instructor.

"Day" shall mean a normal business day for the University, unless specified as "calendar day".

"Final examination(s)" shall mean "any final testing procedure (written test, oral interview, essay, take home test, etc.) that takes place or falls due during the examination period."

1 The following regulations apply to all graduate programs

1.1 By the first day of each course, the Instructor must provide students with a course outline (hard copy or electronic) which includes precise information concerning the following:

1.1.1 all procedures for determining the final grade in a course, including:

- conversion of raw scores into the final grade;
- "curving";
- procedures in which students are evaluated by observers or supervisors rather than by written examinations or submitted assignments; and
- types and formats of evaluations.

1.1.2 the approximate dates for tests, handing in assignments, and all other activities (except unannounced quizzes), which will affect the final course grade, as well as the dates of the final examination period. (The anticipated release of the final examination schedule is given in Schedule A.)

1.1.3 a statement that the Student Evaluation of Teaching forms will be administered, in accordance with Senate policy, in:

- the last two weeks of classes for courses 12-24 weeks in duration
- the last week of classes for courses 6-11 weeks in duration
- the last two days of classes for courses of 5 or fewer weeks in duration

- 1.1.4 the regulations concerning supplemental examination privileges which are in force in that Faculty.
- 1.1.5 information regarding the use of plagiarism prevention software, in accordance with Senate policy.
- 1.1.6 information regarding the University's grading scale, in accordance with Senate policy.
- 1.1.7 information on the last date to voluntarily withdraw from the course
- 1.1.8 information regarding the University's mental health resources.
- 1.1.9 and any other matters mandated by University, Senate, or Faculty Policy.
- 1.2 Alterations in the announced procedure, under 1.1 above, may be made by the instructor with the consent of the majority of the registered class.
- 1.3 No forms of assessment shall be scheduled or made due on days identified as break days such as reading weeks, holidays, or days that the University is officially closed.
- 1.4 Other Evaluative Procedures
 - 1.4.1 A student who has three or more final examinations scheduled or due in consecutive time slots over a 24-hour period or three or more final examinations scheduled or due in one calendar day may apply to have one of their examinations rescheduled on a supplemental examination day. The determination of which examination shall be rescheduled and the date of the supplemental examination (normally the last possible day of the examination period) shall be made by the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies. Where permission has been granted, instructors shall provide an alternate examination at the rescheduled time. Where other arrangements cannot be made, invigilation and administration of final examinations held on the supplemental examination day will be managed by the Office of the Registrar. Applications and notification of decisions shall be made in accordance with the deadlines listed in Appendix A.
 - 1.4.2 A student who has three or more major in-term evaluations scheduled or due within a 24-hour period may apply, no later than end of the first quarter of classes, to seek an appropriate accommodation (such as a due date modification, alternative assignment, or rescheduled test). Such a request shall not be unreasonably denied. In the case where the matter cannot be resolved between the instructor and the student, the final determination will rest with the Head of the Department offering the course, in consultation with the faculty member(s).
- 1.5 Instructors must provide meaningful feedback to students on their in-course performance, constituting a minimum 20% of the final grade, at least two (2) days prior to the voluntary withdrawal deadline (see 1.10 below), with the exception of thesis, major paper, dissertation, internship, and practicum courses. Further exemptions may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, upon recommendation from the AAU Head, in which case the instructor shall provide a statement in the course syllabus explaining why the specific course is excluded.
- 1.6 Courses or situations in which students are evaluated by observers or supervisors rather than by written examinations or submitted assignments would include, among others, field trips, field placements, internships, course participation, practica, internship and individual or group laboratory or performances. While the student may receive advice about progress in an assignment, a written evaluation of some kind shall be provided at an appropriate time or times during the semester. In courses that demand evaluation of a practica, internship or a major performance by a student and where a student's progress is measured by such

an evaluation, an appropriate record should be made and preserved in the manner in which written examinations are preserved by the Instructor or AAU (See 1.7.2 below).

- 1.7 Unofficial final grades for a course shall be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies no later than seven calendar days after the final examination of the course has been written. In cases where there is no examination slot, unofficial final grades shall be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies no later than seven calendar days after the close of the examination period. In the instance of December final examinations scheduled within the last seven calendar days before the University closes for December recess, unofficial grades shall be submitted no later than the second working day following the December recess.
 - 1.7.1 Under no circumstances shall examinations, essays, lab exercises and other assignments be left in a public place.
 - 1.7.2 Students have the right to review the instructor's marking/answer guide, when available, and to examine their final examination answer papers; such papers shall be kept available in the Instructor's office or, where more appropriate, in the AAU office(s), for a period of not less than twelve months. (It is understood that availability implies the student's right of access to the answer paper, and may even include, in cases where it is obvious or the student confirms in writing that no appeal is contemplated, return of the paper to the student before the expiration of the twelve-month holding period.)
- 1.8 In order to become official, all final grades shall be submitted by the instructor, through the AAU Head, to the Dean of Graduate Studies for authorization. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall review and assign official final grades and shall submit the grades to the Office of the Registrar.
- 1.9 Correction of grades may be initiated only by the Instructor, and requires the signature of the AAU Head and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- 1.10 Students must withdraw from a course or courses within the withdrawal periods as indicated below. The withdrawal will be entered on the student's transcript as VW (Voluntary Withdrawal), which is defined as "Withdrawal in good standing. No academic credit".

Twelve-week course - within nine weeks of beginning of term. (Not including Study Reading Week)

Twenty-four week course - within four weeks of beginning of the second term.

Three-week course - within two weeks of beginning of session.

Six-week course - within four weeks of beginning of session.

Eight-week course - within five weeks of beginning of session.

For all other course lengths – two-thirds into the beginning of the session.

Students are not permitted to withdraw from a course or courses after the appropriate designated withdrawal period. After the voluntary withdrawal period for a course, students remain registered and will be assigned grades as appropriate.

A student who wishes to drop a course or courses after the relevant withdrawal period based on medical or compassionate grounds shall follow the procedure outlined below. (paragraph 1.11)

The status of a student who withdraws from full-time studies is left to the decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies and will be reported to the student through the Office of the Registrar.

- 1.11 Considerations for Health, Bereavement, or Extenuating Circumstances

- 1.11.1 Informal Request: A student who wishes to receive consideration on matters affecting or shown to affect academic performance based on medical or compassionate grounds, such as, bereavement, or serious mental or physical health circumstances, or unanticipated extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student (e.g., jury duty, caring for an ill family member, labour disputes, etc.), should communicate with the Instructor as soon as possible, prior to, during, and subsequent to the examination period, or at the time when a student's performance is evaluated for the purpose of assigning a grade, taking into account the severity of the illness, bereavement, or other extenuating circumstance. The instructor may choose to handle the matter informally. Whether or not informal resolution is obtained, a formal request is also possible in accordance with paragraph 1.11.2.
- 1.11.2 Formal Request: A student who wishes to receive consideration on matters affecting or shown to affect academic performance based on medical or compassionate grounds, such as, bereavement, or serious mental or physical health circumstances, or unanticipated extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student (e.g., jury duty, caring for an ill family member, labour disputes, etc.), should communicate with the Head of the AAU offering the course and the Faculty of Graduate Studies as soon as possible, prior to, during, and subsequent to the examination period, or at the time when a student's performance is evaluated for the purpose of assigning a grade, taking into account the severity of the illness, bereavement, or other extenuating circumstance. A letter of rationale, requesting alternate evaluation or accommodation, and supporting documents (e.g., a completed medical note from a regulated health care professional (see Policy on Medical Notes from Regulated Health Care Professionals), the call to jury duty) must be submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies forthwith and will be forwarded to the Head of the AAU offering the course. The Head of the AAU offering the course shall consult with the instructor and make a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies. If the Dean of Graduate Studies approves the recommendation, the Head of the AAU offering the course shall make appropriate arrangements for the alternate evaluation or accommodation. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall inform the student and the Office of the Registrar of the approved alternate evaluation or accommodation.
- 1.11.2.1 Stays: Following receipt of the letter of rationale and supporting documents, and until the Dean of Graduate Studies has communicated a decision to the Office of the Registrar, a stay on all decisions affecting a student's standing in a program or eligibility to proceed with a course of study, shall be in effect until a final decision has been reached. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall communicate the decision to the Office of the Registrar within four weeks of receipt of the letter of rationale and supporting documents.
- 1.11.3 In the cases outlined in 1.11.1-1.11.2 above, the Instructor may grant an "aegrotat" grade on the basis of term work or assign an "incomplete" grade indicating what further work is required and the deadline by which such work must be completed. The instructor's response will be forwarded by the Head of the AAU offering the course to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall inform the Office of the Registrar using the procedure followed for submitting final grades.

1.12 Graduate Appeals

To provide for the variety of appeals characteristic of the Graduate program, a distinction has been made between grade appeals and those involving decisions regarding other aspects of graduate education. In order to ensure an expeditious treatment of appeals, students are encouraged to file complaints as soon after decisions have been made as possible, but no later than three weeks after the grade or decision is released by the Office of the Registrar.

1.12.1 Informal Review of Grades

When a student wishes to review a grade awarded for assigned work at any time during the term in which the course is being taught, and up to the time the marks are officially submitted to the Office of the Registrar, an informal inquiry can be made to the Instructor. Assigned work includes mid-terms, tests, seminars, essays, final examination, and all other academic exercises that will be used in calculating a final grade. The purpose of the inquiry is to review the work submitted, and to allow for adjustment of the grade in question where that change is found to be appropriate by the Instructor. This may be done within a time limit established by the Instructor, but not later than ten working days after the release or publication of the grade. This review does not preclude the student from appealing the final grade to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Where the purpose of reviewing work for which a grade has been assigned is not to request a grade change, requests may be made to review the graded work up to six months after the close of the term in which the course was taught, upon reasonable notice to the instructor.

1.12.2 Formal Grade Appeals

1.12.2.1 Any formal grade appeal must be accompanied by \$20.00 fee which will be refunded to the student if the grade is raised.

1.12.2.2 Where the student is contemplating a formal appeal, the student shall have the right to review the work for which a grade has been assigned, upon reasonable notice to the instructor.

1.12.2.3 Where an individual Instructor's grade is in question, a formal letter of appeal, including reasons for the appeal and any factual information bearing on the appeal, shall be addressed to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Appeals must be received no later than three weeks after the final mark has been released by the Office of the Registrar. The Dean of Graduate Studies will then contact the AAU Head of the academic unit offering the course and request an academic investigation into the appeal. The AAU Head concerned will consult the Instructor involved and at least one other faculty member of the AAU in evaluating the appeal; if the AAU Head is the Instructor, the Dean of Graduate Studies will assign a designate. After the AAU Head submits a report to the Dean of Graduate Studies, the appeal will be submitted to the Graduate Executive Committee for a decision.

1.12.2.4 Where a committee's grade (e.g., a major paper, thesis or dissertation committee) is in question, a formal letter of appeal, including reasons for the appeal and any factual information bearing on the appeal, shall be addressed to the Dean of Graduate Studies who will convoke the Graduate Executive Committee. The Graduate Executive Committee shall invite a submission from the committee involved in the case. If the Graduate Executive Committee finds serious grounds, such as procedural irregularities, for believing the grade has not been fairly assessed, it may then order a reassessment. The re-assessment may be by the original committee or by a restructured committee as determined by the Graduate Executive Committee.

1.12.2.5 Stays

During the course of any appeal procedure described throughout paragraph 1.12.2, a stay on all lower decisions affecting a student's standing in a program or eligibility to proceed with a course of study shall be in effect until a final decision has been reached.

The stay shall also be in effect if the matter is being considered by the Committee on Procedures and Discrimination, under Bylaw 32. In the event that a decision adverse to the

student is reached by the Committee on Procedures and Discrimination, the student will receive the original grade assigned or the grade assigned on appeal, as the case may be.

- 1.12.2.6 In cases where the assigned grade prevents the student from achieving the requirements for promotion, the requirements as defined by the Faculty will be applied.

1.12.3 Other Appeals

- 1.12.3.1 Appeals, under 1.12.3.2-1.12.3.3 below, must be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies no later than two weeks after the official communication of an academic decision made by an Instructor, Research Advisor, or committee, concerning matters other than a grade.
- 1.12.3.2 Where an academic decision made by an Instructor or Research Advisor concerning matters other than a grade is contested, the appeal must be made informally to the individual responsible for the initial decision. If this informal review is unsuccessful, the appellant may then file a formal appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies who will convoke the Graduate Executive Committee. All such appeals are to be made in writing with full explanation of the pertinent circumstances and should include relevant documentary evidence. The Graduate Executive Committee shall invite a submission from the Instructor or Research Advisor involved in the case.
- 1.12.3.3 Where an academic decision made by a committee concerning matters other than a grade is contested, there shall be no informal review stage, but the appellant may file a formal appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies who will convoke the Graduate Executive Committee. All such appeals are to be made in writing with full explanation of the pertinent circumstances and should include relevant documentary evidence. The Graduate Executive Committee shall invite a submission from the committee involved in the case.
- 1.12.3.4 Where an academic appeal, under sections 1.12.3.1-1.12.3.3 above, is denied by the Graduate Executive Committee, the appellant may petition the Graduate Executive Committee for reconsideration on the grounds of exceptional circumstances when there is substantive new information which was not available to the Graduate Executive Committee (e.g., procedural irregularity relating to the review conducted prior to the review by the Graduate Executive Committee). The Graduate Executive Committee shall determine whether to reconsider the matter.

1.12.4 Petitions to the Subcommittee on Procedures and Discrimination

Where a student alleges discrimination, bias, sexual or other forms of harassment, or procedural irregularities with respect to academic instruction, evaluation or appeals, a petition may be filed by the student in accordance with Senate Bylaw 32. In such cases, a stay on all lower decisions affecting a student's standing in a program or eligibility to proceed with a course of study shall be in effect until a final decision has been reached by the Committee on Procedures and Discrimination.

1.13 **Alternative Examinations**

Students who are unable to write a final examination during the regularly scheduled time slot due to a conflict arising from a religious observance shall be given the opportunity to write an alternative examination during another time slot within the regularly scheduled examination period.

Students must submit an application for an alternative examination to the Office of the Registrar in accordance with the deadlines listed in Appendix A.

The Office of the Registrar is required to contact the instructors involved for the preparation of an alternative examination, to reschedule the examination in another time slot within the regularly scheduled examination period, and to notify students of their new examination schedule in accordance with the deadlines listed in Appendix A.

Appendix A

Deadlines for Alternative Examinations Pursuant to Bylaw 55: 1.4.1 and 1.13

TERM	Posted Exam Schedule	Application Deadline	Notification of Decision Deadline
Fall Semester (12 weeks)	October 15	October 31	November 15
Winter Semester (12 weeks)	February 15	February 28	March 15
Summer Semester (12 weeks)	June 15	June 30	July 15
Fall-Winter Semesters (24 weeks) (2 term course)	February 15	February 28	March 15
Winter-Summer Semesters (24 weeks) (2 term course)	June 15	June 30	July 15
Summer-Fall Semesters (24 weeks) (2 term course)	October 15	October 31	November 15
Inter-Session (3 weeks)	May 8	May 12	May 16
Inter-Session (6 weeks)	May 15	May 30	June 5
Inter-Session (8 weeks)	May 15	May 30	June 5
Summer Session (3 weeks)	June 28	July 2	July 6
Summer Session (6 weeks)	July 5	July 20	July 26
Summer Session (8 Weeks)	July 5	July 20	July 26
For all other courses	By the end of the first quarter of the course	By the end of the second quarter (halfway through the course)	By the end of the third quarter of the course