

# Prevention in Exams

- 1. Minimize the likelihood/ease of cheating by copying from other students' papers
  - Use question formats where copying is difficult (essay style, for example)
  - Alter the sequence of questions and / or copy (different versions of exams) on differently coloured paper
  - For short-answer / numerical answer questions:
    - scramble the order of answers
    - Alter numerical values used in the computation of answers. Make sure that your exam does not become known in advance.
- 2. Reduce / eliminate the use of old questions / exams.
- 3. Have students stand up and check themselves head to toe to ensure they have no unauthorized materials on them or on the desk. All materials should be stored in closed backpack or other bags.
- 4. Ask students to sign an Academic Honesty statement before taking the exam (e.g., on the exam's cover sheet).
- 5. Ensure that you / your secretary do not accidentally provide an opportunity for students to see electronic or hard copy versions of the exam (chain of custody). Ensure proper invigilation of exams
  - University regulations dictate at least 1 invigilator for each 25 students — the first invigilator is the course instructor or, in exceptional cases, a faculty colleague (not TA).
  - If your examination is assigned to two classrooms, use an invigilator in each, plus yourself, moving between the locations to deal with any discretion-based issues [e.g., clarifying instructions].
- 6. Ensure that TA invigilators do their job well
  - Thoroughly instruct them of their responsibilities in advance (checklists and invigilator report forms are attached).
  - Ensure that TA invigilators are actively involved in their task — this is a professional environment and should be treated as such. One useful mechanism is to station one invigilator in the front of the classroom, one in the back, and move around occasionally.
- 7. Make sure you know who actually wrote the test or examination.
  - If you are not sure that you actually know all the students in your class (e.g. through photo class lists), use a formal sign-in for tests and exams that include an ID requirement. E.g., have students put out their ID on the desk, then walk

through and compare the name and picture on the ID with the student's face and name on the exam, before the exam formally starts.

- Check off the student's name on your class list.

8. Classroom procedures communicated to students (clearly establish expectations of students who are writing tests or exams):

- Make sure that you can account for all examination booklets ... mark or number them in some way (e.g., with an exotic ink colour) that makes 'pre-prepared' exam booklets difficult to substitute for work that is to be done at the examination. No exam booklets should be left in students' hands or in the examination room. Students should not be permitted to tear pages from their exam books.
- Insist on clear desks. All items (including coats, etc.) brought to the classroom other than those items that you allow to be used in writing the exam should be placed against a wall (front of class, usually), completely away from students. Students should be told in advance specifically what kinds of materials, including calculators, may be used.
- If you allow sheets with formulas, it would be best if you provided that sheet (if your intent is to have a closed-book examination).
- Spread students out in the room, using alternate seating.
- Do not allow students to have phones, PDAs, pagers or the like; such items should be left elsewhere or placed elsewhere in the room along with coats and other personal items.
- Absolutely no talking or other communication among students is permissible once examination materials have been distributed.
- Students should be told that coffee and rest-room breaks are not permitted (except under duress). If a student must absent themselves from the room during the exam, the exam paper should be picked up and a notation made on it, returning the paper to the student upon their return.
- If you permit students to leave the exam when they are finished (i.e., before the end of the exam period), please give clear directions to them as to how to turn in their materials, and remind them not to communicate with or disrupt other students as they leave. It is generally advisable to have a 'no-departures' period during the last portion of the exam, to avoid disruptions and also to assure that materials are gathered in an orderly fashion.
- Use strict protocols in starting and ending the examination. Distribute materials once students are in place, and insist that they do not begin until instructed to do so. Make sure that all students are bound by a definite end-of-examination time. It is recommended that some warning be given at (say) 10 minutes remaining and 2 minutes remaining. However, when it is over, all students should be required to put their pens down without delay.
- Actively invigilate the exams (and, as indicated in point 4, above make sure that those who are assisting you do the same). An invigilator's report has been designed and it provides a checklist of some of the essential elements involved in assuring examination integrity. This means paying active attention to what is

going on in the room, re-positioning yourself in the room from time to time and immediately responding to any disturbance or inappropriate behaviour.