GRADING PROCEDURES

Course Outlines
By the start of the course selection period for the semester in which the course will be offered, instructors will provide a course description for posting to the department website. This course description will include a brief summary of the course topics and requirements, the general format of the course, and the methods of evaluation.

Methods of Evaluation
Departments/schools must keep under continual review their grading procedures and matters that relate to academic standards to make sure the University’s policies are being applied. The Chair/Director should review, prior to the commencement of classes, the manner in which an instructor intends to conduct a course and to determine final grades. If the Chair/Director disagrees with the instructor’s intention or subsequently with the implementation of the stated intentions, the Chair/Director will discuss their concerns with the instructor. If agreement cannot be reached, the matter will be referred to an appropriate department committee which will advise the Chair/Director in reaching a decision. The advice may include a recommendation on examination procedures.

Instructors must use evaluation criteria that measure quality of performance and not merely activity. Unannounced evaluations or surprise assessments may not be used for course assessment purposes or to determine course grades.

Instructors are not permitted to use predetermined, arbitrary distributions in the assignment of grades in individual courses.

Methods and/or timing of evaluation as indicated on the course outline should not be changed after the first class meeting except under strictly adhered to conditions. Notice of proposed change and of the class at which consent is to be sought, must be given at a previously scheduled class. Where the change is supported by the instructor and is consistent with University policies and procedures such change may be enacted with the unanimous consent of students. If unanimous consent of the students has not been obtained, the change may be enacted only with the approval of the Chair/Director and only if alternative and equitable accommodation is available to students opposed to the change.

Feedback to Students
Feedback to students on work completed or in progress is an integral part of teaching and learning in that it allows students to measure their understanding of material and their progress on learning objectives. Feedback often goes beyond grading—an indication of the standard achieved—to include comments on the particular strengths and weaknesses of a student’s performance.

All term tests, assignments, evaluation of oral presentations, etc., should be returned to, or discussed with students, without undue delay and in any case before the last day of the examination period. If the material is necessary for the preparation of the final examination, it must be returned or discussed as soon as possible but no later than three days before the examination.

While the nature and frequency of such feedback will vary with the course, the University of Guelph is committed to providing students with appropriate and timely feedback on their work. Instructors must provide meaningful and constructive feedback, at minimum 20% of the final course grade, prior to the 40th class day. This may include but is not restricted to returning papers, assignments, quizzes, evaluation of oral presentations, or midterm examinations prior to the 40th class day.

In independent study courses, including major research paper or project courses, instructors must provide students with a realistic idea of their performance by discussing progress directly with the student and, if necessary, identify specific areas for improvement. This may include the assessment of a research plan, literature review, annotated bibliography, oral presentation or other assessment tools.