Credit/No Credit Policy – University of Toronto Mississauga

Current Policy: Credit/No Credit (From the Academic Calendar 2011-12)

Effective beginning the 2011-12 Fall-Winter Session, degree students at University of Toronto, Mississauga may select up to 1.0 full-course equivalents of their degree credits to be assessed on a Credit/ No Credit basis. Students must choose this mode of assessment no later than the last day to enrol in the relevant course. Once the deadline has passed, students may not under any circumstances reverse this decision.

To achieve a status of CR (Credit), a student must achieve a final mark of at least 50%. Marks below that will be assessed as NCR (No Credit). Courses with a final status of CR will count as degree credits but will have no effect on the student’s GPA. They will count as Distribution Requirements and degree credits, but cannot be used to satisfy Subject POS requirements.

Courses with a final status of NCR will not count as degree credits but will not count as failures, and will also not be included in the GPA calculation.

Students may exercise this option to a total of 1.0 full-course equivalents within the total number of credits required for a degree. The choice is not restricted as to year or level of course. This option is not available to non-degree students or to students from other faculties/divisions of the University of Toronto.

Proposal for Changes to CR/NCR

Background:

479 UTM students took advantage of the Credit/ No Credit policy in the 2011-12 academic year. In the fall term alone, of the 107 students using this option in 68 different fall half credit courses, 101 received credit, 4 received NCR, and two students have outstanding SDF scheduled to be written during reading week. In our winter term 350 students have exercised the option over 119 courses.

Generally the three campuses have found that students find this option very helpful in reducing the risk of venturing into unfamiliar subject areas. However, it is recommended that we give students more time to thoughtfully consider the Credit/No Credit option by allowing them to opt-in by the last day of classes in a particular course, the same day they face the LWD deadline. In this way we will save some students from losing credit in a successfully completed course, when they may have otherwise used the LWD option for a low mark which is not representative of their other scholastic accomplishments. Furthermore, when the deadline for CR/NCR is set early in the term, they could be sacrificing a good mark on their transcript.
Proposed Change 1

Move the deadline to declare to the last day to drop without academic penalty in the course so that students have some idea as to how they are doing in the course before having to finalize their decision.

Background:

When the Faculty of Arts and Science first introduced their Credit/No Credit Policy, four years ago, they limited the option to 1.0 FCEs, with the intention of monitoring the implementation of the policy and then moving to a maximum of 2.0 FCEs. The Faculty of Arts and Science Registrar has advised that they are bringing forward to their Faculty Council a recommendation to increase the maximum to 2.0 FCE in the Credit/No Credit option in summer 2012.

Proposed Change 2

It is recommended that UTM increase our Credit/No Credit option to 2.0 FCE beginning in summer 2012, which is consistent with the planned changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Diane Crocker
Registrar and Director of Enrolment Management

February 16, 2012

Approved by the Academic Affairs Committee on February 28, 2012
Submission to Academic Affairs Committee:

Proposal to Set a Maximum Limit on Term Course Loads:

*Background:* The University of Toronto Mississauga’s policy regulating a limit on a student’s maximum course load is published in section 7.3 in the Academic Calendar and states:

“The maximum credit load in the Fall-Winter sessions combined is 6.0 credits and in the Summer session it is 2.0 credits. Enrolment in credits over the maximum must be approved prior to registration.”

This is considered the maximum course load which is manageable for a student to undertake. Exceptions to this course load may be approved by petition through the Committee on Standing in which exceptional circumstances are warranted.

At this time, there is no regulation that extends this sessional limit to each of the academic terms (e.g., Fall term-September to December, Winter term-January to April). Students are permitted to enrol in a combination of courses that does not exceed the sessional maximum, even if in one term, a student enrols in an unmanageable course load. For example, a student can enrol in 1 Y course in the Fall term and remain in this 1 Y course and enrol in 10 S-term courses in the Winter term.

There is concern that students cannot successfully complete these unrealistic, unbalanced course loads. By enrolling in more than 6 courses per academic term, students inevitably drop, fail or petition for exceptions (deferred exams, extensions of time) to manage this overwhelming academic burden; thereby hampering their academic success and stalling their progress towards graduation.

*Current Issues:* In this current session (i.e., Fall 2011-Winter 2012 as of February 15, 2012) the following students are enrolled in more than 6 courses per academic term:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Load</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Winter 2012</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>187</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table demonstrates that 224 U of T Mississauga students have enrolled in more than 6 courses in either the Fall or Winter term. In addition 37 students are enrolled in 8 courses or more in one academic term.

Out of the 224 students who are currently registered in more than 6 courses per academic term, only 62 were granted a course overload petition for the Fall 2011-Winter 2012 academic terms.
Proposal: That U of T Mississauga students be limited to a course load of 6 courses per academic term in the Fall/Winter session and 2 courses per academic term in the Summer session, effective Summer 2012. The Committee on Standing may approve an exception, by petition, to this limit where circumstances warrant.

Implementation: If approved, the term course load limit would be put into the next edition of the U of T Mississauga Calendar and be effective as of the Summer 2012 academic term.

While ROSI currently monitors and enforces the sessional course load limit, the new regulation limiting courses per academic term would be published in the Academic Calendar and enforced by the Office of the Registrar. Publishing the new regulation will achieve compliance and regular diagnostics and notification to students above the limit will manage the remainder.

Conclusion: This proposal may impose a restriction on the student’s course choice but will aid in the successful completion of the courses they register in. This will also free up space in courses that have previously been taken by students who were enrolled in more than 6 courses, our proposed term maximum. Students who have exceptional circumstances and wish to take a course overload continue to have the option to petition for this request.

Diane Crocker
Registrar and Director of Enrolment Management

February 15, 2012

Approved by the Academic Affairs Committee on February 28, 2012
University of Toronto Fast Track Three-Year Degree

The University of Toronto already has excellent undergraduate programs in place that support high-achieving students in the arts and sciences – our newly expanded First Year Foundational programs (the ‘One’ programs), Research Opportunity Projects, the ‘Summer Scholars’ programs, being but a few.

The deans of the three arts and science divisions – the Faculty of Arts and Science on the St. George campus, University of Toronto Mississauga, and University of Toronto Scarborough – propose to mount a new program that will be systematically responsive to students who have the desire and ability to fast-track their studies. The University of Toronto Fast Track Degree is currently in discussion with chairs, with further work soon to be done at the departmental level. A pilot project will be in place for the fall of 2012, for domestic students only in this first instance.

The Fast Track degree is intended for students who excel in their motivation and secondary school preparation. It will be as robust as the traditional four-year degree – a 20 credit degree with additional flexibility and enhancement of curricular and co-curricular offerings. We will provide individual academic counseling to ensure enhanced ease of degree navigation within a curriculum that is carefully tailored to suit these students’ academic goals and career aspirations.

Students in the Fast Track will enter with excellent marks from high school – a minimum expectation of 90 per cent, with most students eligible for the President’s Entrance Scholarship. We are confident in our ability to raise additional scholarship monies for this program.

Each student will be guaranteed a supervised research experience and/or an international experience and will be provided with a faculty supervisor. We are in the process of designing customized online foundation and/or capstone courses to be offered collaboratively to this distinctive cohort. We also will offer a pre-university foundation and orientation session (2-4 weeks long) that fosters small-cohort communities. These cohorts would continue on through at least first year.

With the program fee already in place in the Faculty of Arts and Science, The University of Toronto Fast Track Degree will offer students in this faculty significant financial savings. They will typically take 6 courses a semester over three years, in addition to summer courses, if they elect to do them. Online courses can be taken in addition to the 6 in-class courses or as part of the 6 courses per term. The degree will be manageable for many students without taking summer session courses, but we expect there to be considerable summer-session activity.

At UTSC and UTM, where there is no program fee, the financial savings for students will be the substantial benefit of graduating into the workforce or further study a year early and the more modest living expenses associated with a three-year, as opposed to a four-year degree.
UTSC, like FAS, has a substantial summer program - the summer session is a regular trimester in which a full range of courses is offered, especially required courses at second year level. UTM students who might not find as many summer courses in their particular area of study on that campus, can take advantage, when desirable, of the courses in on the other campuses.

Some students will come into the Fast Track with advanced standing (e.g., AP, IB or A-level credits). These students will need to take fewer courses per year to complete their degrees. But some students will choose to waive these credits, as these excellent high school courses do not always equate to first year university courses, especially in the sciences.

Each student will be allowed to take at least one full course on a credit/non-credit basis, with considerable flexibility about the timing of the declared intention to use this mechanism. These credits can be applied to those optional courses that are not required for a student’s particular program of study.