

UTM Frequently Asked Course-Related Questions during the COVID 19 Course Interruptions

GENERAL COURSE QUESTIONS for UTM (please note these policies are specifically for UTM)

1. Everyone keeps talking about Q & A on the Teach Anywhere site – why I can't I see this?

Make sure you are going into Quercus to access the UTM Teach Anywhere course, not just the publicly posted website; then you can see the Discussion Board and additional, updated resources as they are developed. This site is available to anyone currently teaching at UTM; it is not public nor open to students, as it is intended for specific instructor-related questions for current courses under the present extraordinary situation.

2. Can I have assignments that are due during the exam period?

Yes. We are relaxing the policy on having assignments due during the exam period. However, please note that any assignments must be due no later than your originally scheduled exam date. Also, when setting a specific time for an assignment to be due, please set the time as 5pm EST (rather than 11:59pm which is commonly used). It is easier to respond to student concerns about submission with a 5pm deadline and is also better from a student wellness perspective. Remember that some students may be in a different time zone when you are judging lateness.

3. Do I need to get approval from the UTM Office of the Dean to change my grading scheme?

If there will be removal of course evaluation methods, such as an exam, for amounts over 25%, then decanal approval is required. Where re-weightings of more than 25% are requested, the Chairs should include an explanation of why alternative assessment methods are not possible, so we have these changes on record for cases of student petitions. Please do not take such heavy re-weighting options for a student vote before receiving decanal approval. Please work with your Chair, and your Chair will send any requests that cannot be resolved without re-weighting to vdteachlearn.utm@utoronto.ca for consultation.

- For removal of course evaluation methods for amounts of 25% or less, resulting in re-weighting of the grading scheme, the Chair/Director of the academic unit has been delegated approval authority. If part or all of the removed work is replaced by other work, so that the total amount reweighted is not more than 25%, decanal approval is not needed.

4. Can I use Turnitin for assignments added as part of Academic Continuity changes?

Yes, you can use Turnitin if its use was outlined on your original syllabus. You can also use it if it was not (as confirmed by the Vice-Provost's office on March 16). If you did not include a Turnitin statement on your syllabus and:

- **you are not required to have a course vote** (see chart at end to determine): Incorporate the full Turnitin text and opt-out on your Announcement or other Quercus posting AND on the assignment or assessment itself.
- **you are having a class vote**: Please try to mention the use of Turnitin in the description of the assignment for any class vote, if possible. **Be sure** to [incorporate the full standard Turnitin text](#) (including the opt-out options) into the revised syllabus, as part of the assignment or assessment description. Also both (1) post the revised syllabus to your Quercus site AND (2) submit it for approval to your Chair through CISS, so it is added to the UTM Timetable as the official course syllabus for petitions and other purposes.

5. Will my students have access to the library? Will they have access to computers?

Please note that, at this time, one library is open on each campus (including the UTM Library), specifically for students in the area who are worried about home computer access, either due to equipment or internet concerns. These are set up with full social distancing and cleaning. **Students should check the [Library website](#) for current hours of access, which are limited.** You will still have issues with students farther away or dependent on the shuttle or Brampton transit to UTM (both suspended as of March 18), but please make sure students know they can access these libraries if that is an option for them.

If you are concerned about student access to computers for a test, especially one held outside Library hours, please contact [Anita Srinivasan](#) in advance to arrange computer lab access. During the Exam period, the UTM Registrar's office will be helping to reserve special spaces for exams, so please let the Registrar know by emailing scheduling.utm@utoronto.ca if you expect students to come to campus once they begin their Exam information collection process. Instructions from the Registrar regarding recording revised syllabi for courses which had final exams will be sent by March 20, 2020.

These tests and exams will not be proctored any differently from online exams at home.

6. What do I do if my students have issues with internet access?

Instructors should work with their Chairs in relation to any academic policies, but the UTM Dean's Office is encouraging everyone to treat student issues with internet access like any other accommodation and/or illness – deal with them on an individual basis, if at all possible. Documentation may be difficult, but we will defer to the departments' decisions on this. As with an illness, you could have a “make-up” alternative for these students that is somewhat different in format (e.g., short answer, essay), but just run it at the same time. OR as with accessibility accommodation, you could give the individuals more time on the test (if that's possible for your format; remember there may be conflicts with other classes) or an alternative type of test, or even an assignment. Please plan on working with students individually in this situation and making arrangements. In your messaging with students about this issue, please emphasize that you will be keeping their individual identities private.

7. I have to accommodate an Accessibility request and I don't know how

If you require pedagogical support on alternative assignments please feel free to reach out to Ann Gagné, Educational Developer, ann.gagne@utoronto.ca

If you have questions about a student's accommodations, please contact their Accessibility Advisor. The Advisor's name is located on the student's Letter of Accommodation you received earlier in the academic session.

ONLINE LECTURES

8. Where can I get help for putting lectures online?

Here is the [UTM Library's Teach Anywhere](#) webpage. From here, please access the Teach Anywhere Quercus Discussion Board – there are many resources outlined on this board, along with advice from professors with experience teaching online. Also, Barb Murck in Geography has shared a [video](#) on “How to Move your Lectures Online.”

9. How do I get access to Zoom?

For a Zoom account, the current process is to create a UTM ticket - <http://uoft.service-now.com/utm/> More information is provided in the UTM Teach Anywhere Quercus course.

10. My large class is over the Zoom / Blackboard Collaborate capacity – what do I do?

Contact I&ITS and [create a ticket](#). They will be able to look at your course capacity and provide support. Another option is to move to asynchronous options for your activities, content, and assessments. Asynchronous options may be more accessible for students who may not have consistent or reliable Internet or technology.

11. What is some general advice for teaching online?

Here is a [guide](#) on advice for online teaching from The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Here are [10 strategies for online learning during COVID](#).

Here is the Association of College and University Educators [Online Toolkit](#).

12. What advice do you have for holding online office hours?

You can hold office hours online using Zoom. Zoom has a [Waiting Room functionality](#) that allows you to have discussions with students one at a time. In order to ensure accessibility of your office hours you can use a few tools to have live captioning while you are using Zoom. This [UDL video](#) outlines one way you may do this.

13. Do I need to record a full hour lecture and post it to Quercus? Or shorter videos?

You may want to consider creating a series of shorter recordings (e.g., 10 - 15 minutes) to cover the lecture content instead of meeting synchronously. This might make it easier for students, as their lives are likely disrupted as well. In addition, this approach could be used to lay out the information in ways that better support student learning; several studies have shown that students learn better from 10 - 12 minute mini lectures. Shorter videos are easier for students to view and for the system to deliver. More information about recording lectures is provided on the Record Lectures page - <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/156158/pages/record-lectures>.

This will allow students who have poor Internet connection the ability to access your content. Following [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) practices, you should also have this information available in text format. Students should have multiple means for accessing your content. AODA stipulates that all videos need to be captioned. There are a few ways of doing this depending on the software and technology you are using. Please refer to the Quercus Teach Anywhere discussion board for tips. A solution that is less technology-dependent is to add what you would say in a lecture in the Notes section of PowerPoint.

FINAL EXAMS - GENERAL QUESTIONS

14. If we hold a student vote and change the weighting of the final exam, do I need to submit a revised syllabus?

Yes, if you have a vote, you need to submit a revised syllabus, through your department and the CISS system; the revised syllabus will appear on the UTM Timetable. Instructions on submitting the revised syllabi to the Office of the Registrar will be sent by March 20, 2020.

15. If only the format of the exam changes, to move it online, do I need to submit a revised syllabus?

If nothing else is changing, but the format of the final exam is such that it is no longer being administered by the UTM Registrar, please submit a revised syllabus. More instructions on process around cancelled or changed Final Exams will be coming from the UTM Registrar by March 20, 2020.

ONLINE FINAL EXAMS

16. What should the timing of online exams be?

All time-limited online exams need to stick to the UTM Exam Schedule and be held in the previously scheduled time slot. You cannot extend the time of the exam as it may conflict with another exam.

17. I'm concerned about Academic Integrity and my online Final Exam. How do I minimize cheating?

There has been a lot of information on this posted to the UTM Quercus Teach Anywhere site. We have summarized some of the suggestions below:

- Talk to your students openly about academic integrity and what this means in the context of an online final exam.
- Be very clear on what is and isn't allowed during the online final exam.
- Consider the types of questions you are asking. Recall and knowledge questions are more easily "google-able" than application and synthesis type questions. Ensure that the questions on the exams are addressing the upper levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, such as apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.
- Barb Murck has shared an extensive list of strategies on the UTM Quercus Teach Anywhere page. We suggest you explore this list.

If you do use a Quercus Quiz to replace your final exam, be sure it is released at the start of the scheduled exam time slot for this class and due by the end of the scheduled exam time slot. Some options to assist with academic integrity are:

- On Quercus, you can randomize the question order.
- On Quercus, you can establish a question bank, with a selection of questions being delivered to each student.
- You could show questions one at a time on the Quercus Quiz, without the option of returning to previous questions (no backtracking).

18. I have concerns about Academic Integrity for my Final Exam. Are there things I can do instead of tests/exams?

Since proctored exams are not available for most courses, consider some of these options:

- Quercus assignment that is released to students by the end of classes and then must be submitted by the end of the scheduled Exam time slot for this class.
- Quercus reflection paper assignment that is due by the end of the scheduled exam time slot for this class.

- Exam assignment, which is released at the start of the scheduled exam time slot for this class and due by the end of the scheduled exam time slot. If the exam assignment is submitted through Quercus, then it can be set up so that student submissions are run through Turnitin. (See above for questions about Turnitin use.)
- An **alternative option** is for students to provide a video or audio file that must be submitted in Quercus by the end of the scheduled exam time slot for this class. (Note: one page of 12 point Times New Roman, double-spaced with 1" margins = 2 minutes of audio/video.) This is NOT recommended as a general full-class assignment, due to issues with student tech and instructor familiarity with assessing, but possible for some accommodation situations.

19. Is there a statement I should put on my exam about Academic Integrity?

Instructors can use the optional text below on their online exams. This could be set up as the first question on the quiz or test as a zero-weight question with an “agree/disagree” response. “In submitting this quiz, I confirm that my conduct during this quiz adheres to the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. I confirm that I did NOT act in such a way that would constitute cheating, misrepresentation, or unfairness, including but not limited to, using unauthorized aids and assistance, impersonating another person, and committing plagiarism.”

20. What concerns around accessibility do I need to be aware of for online exams? How do I address these concerns?

Some of your students may need extra time for exams or quizzes. Quercus allows you to assign extra time to a student who may have Accessibility accommodations. [This page](#) provides instructions on how to add extra time and extra attempts to an exam or quiz for your student. Please ensure that your exam script is provided in an accessible manner. Use sans-serif fonts (like Calibri or Arial) and at least 12 point font. You can upload your exam script as a pdf but first ensure that the Word (or Pages) document you are converting is accessible by using [Microsoft accessibility tools](#). Microsoft Accessibility Checker will also provide suggestions on how to make your document more accessible.

If you are teaching in Visual Studies or in any program with a lot of image sharing please make sure you provide alt-text descriptions of any image you use. This is rather straightforward to do in [Microsoft products](#).

If you have questions about a student’s testing accommodations, please contact their Accessibility Advisor. The Advisor’s name is located on the student’s Letter of Accommodation you received earlier in the academic session.

TAKE HOME FINAL EXAMS

21. Are there restrictions around the timing of take-home final exams?

Take-home final exams should be assigned by the last day of classes, and be due at the time of the final exam as scheduled in the UTM Registrar’s exam timetable.

22. How should students submit take home exams?

We recommend that all take-home exams be submitted via Quercus. Note you cannot require students to come to campus to submit paper-based versions.

VOTING

23. When exactly do we need to hold a student vote?

Please see the expanded table on the next page for detailed examples. Briefly, in terms of voting, votes must be taken if:

- there is re-weighting of methods of evaluation (e.g., multiple smaller quizzes or assignments are added to replace a single test)
- there are major changes to the methods of evaluation (e.g., test changed to assignment)
- the date of an evaluation (test, assignment) is rescheduled to another date

24. If the exam shifts from in-person to online do I need a vote for this?

Simple changes from in-person to online tests should only need a vote if the mode of delivery was specified in the official syllabus on the Timetable (e.g., the syllabus said "the final test will be an in-class essay"). If the syllabus said a final test was going to be multiple choice, and it changes to a short-answer take-home test, you also need a vote - this would be true whether the test was held online or held in person.

25. Can class votes be held online? How?

If a vote is needed, this can be conducted online; it does not need to be anonymous (as it is not anonymous when taken in class), but it can be if so desired. Instructors may give advance notice through a Quercus Announcement then just have the vote open for the class, through Quercus Quizzes, during the usual class time. Alternatively, you may Announce through Quercus that the vote is open and leave it open for a week; either method would fit the parameters.

Please be sure that you provide clear options in your votes, and the exact wording is posted to the Announcement page and sent out through the course email. Instructors may wish to consult Chairs on exact wording of voting options for tricky cases.

Voting online can be done through Quercus in different ways, as desired by the instructor:

<https://utm.library.utoronto.ca/faculty/canvas/quizzesandsurveys>.

26. If my Chair needs to approve my student vote, what do I send the Chair?

Please follow your departmental instructions on class votes, and when they require Chair or Associate Chair approval. Please be sure to send your Chair/Associate Chair the exact text you plan to take for a vote; this will make it much easier for the Chair to understand exactly what you plan to do.

*** See the next pages for a chart of when a change requires a class vote, and when it doesn't. ***
(CTSI is also posting examples to their Academic Continuity website)

Please note that all changes requiring a vote ALSO require that the changes be clearly marked on the course syllabus, and resubmitted to the Chair for approval via UTM's CISS (Course Information Submission System), so that the revised syllabus is posted to the UTM Timetable and preserved for student petitions or future questions.

UTM Advice on When to Take a Class Vote during the COVID 19 interruptions

If I . . .	No student vote	Student vote needed	Comment
Adjust delivery format of remaining classes/labs/tutorials	x		E.g., Moving to online discussions or lectures. Assumes adjustment is only to content and not to assignments/assessments.
Adjust submission mechanisms of remaining assignments	x		E.g., Moving to online assignment submission. Assumes adjustment is only to content and not to assignments/assessments.
Adjust content of remaining classes/labs/tutorials to cover key concepts within the remaining time	x		Assumes adjustment is only to content and not to assignments/assessments.
Assign all students 100% for an assignment that has not been completed	x		This has the effect of inflating the final grade somewhat for all students (compared to adjusting the marking scheme to remove the assessment). Carefully consider the proportion of the final grade that would be treated in this fashion.
Change test or exam: e.g., shorten (e.g., 2 hours instead of 3); change to an open book exam	[x]	[x]*	Depends on the specificity of the marking scheme in the official syllabus on the UTM Timetable. If the details to be changed were not listed on the syllabus, no vote needed. *If the method of evaluation changes from that specified on the original syllabus, requires a vote.
Assign presentations in lieu of an essay		x	This changes the marking scheme and therefore requires a student vote.
Assign a written paper in lieu of in-class coursework		x	This adds an assignment, which changes the marking scheme and therefore requires a student vote.
Cancel or make a test/exam or an assignment optional		x**	Change to the original marking scheme on the syllabus; requires a vote **Cancellations or reweightings over 25% require decanal approval. See note at end.
Move an in-person test/exam to online test/exam	[x]	[x]*	Depends on the specificity of the marking scheme in the official syllabus on the UTM Timetable. If there is no specific language about the exam type in the syllabus, AND if the online exam will largely mimic the in-person exam, then no vote needs to take place to move an exam to an online format. *If the details of the exam type as above were on the original syllabus, requires a vote.

Change a final assessment from Exam to other assessment (e.g. take-home test; final assignment; etc.)		x	This changes the marking scheme and therefore requires a student vote.
Change the weighting of assignments/assessments including participation marks		x**	This could include changing the scheme to account for missed tutorials or labs that cannot be made up. Requires a vote. <i>**Cancellations or reweightings over 25% require decanal approval. See note at end.</i>
Remove an assignment/assessment from the marking scheme		x**	May be done where an assignment has been missed, or to reduce burden on returning students. Requires a vote. <i>**Cancellations or reweightings over 25% require decanal approval. See note at end.</i>
Design additional assignments to replace missed tutorials, labs or in-class participation that are in the marking scheme.		x	Requires a student vote. Please consider the effect on students when making choices in this category, as student workloads are high at this time.
Include in the calculation of the final grades only those elements completed by all students		x**	This effectively changes the weighting, and so requires a student vote. <i>**Cancellations or reweightings over 25% require decanal approval. See note at end.</i>
Assign a course grade based on work completed and graded where it is less than 100% of the work in the marking scheme		x**	This effectively changes the weighting, and so requires a student vote. <i>**Cancellations or reweightings over 25% require decanal approval. See note at end.</i>

(Adapted from: PDAD&C Memo #50)

**** NOTE:** *Class votes should not be conducted and Chairs should not approve the re-weighting of a course involving removal of course evaluation methods for amounts over 25% without UTM decanal approval. Where re-weightings of more than 25% are requested, the Chairs should include an explanation of why alternative assessment methods are not possible, so we have these changes on record for cases of student petitions. Chairs should submit requests that cannot be resolved without re-weighting to vdteachlearn.utm@utoronto.ca for consultation.*

Please note that all changes requiring a vote ALSO require that the changes be clearly marked on the course syllabus, and resubmitted to the Chair for approval via UTM's CISS (Course Information Submission System), so that the revised syllabus is posted to the UTM Timetable and preserved for student petitions or future questions.

OTHER RESOURCES ON COVID-19: [Canada Public Health on COVID-19 Travel Restrictions from Canada](#)