

**McGill****MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE:** 8 April 2010

**TO:** Enrolment and Student Affairs Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Subcommittee on Academic Integrity

**SUBJECT:** *Policy concerning multiple choice examinations*

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On September 28, 2009, an announcement regarding the *Policy concerning multiple-choice examinations* was transmitted to instructors on behalf of the Office of the Dean of Students (attached). The Subcommittee on Academic Integrity monitors adherence to the *Policy* and reports to the faculties when multiple versions of multiple choice examinations are not used. We thought ESAAC would be interested in recent results.

In March 2010, a fall semester report was generated and four faculties were contacted about possible issues with adherence to the *Policy* (attached). For those faculties, the section of the memo entitled "Courses in your faculty requiring follow-up" listed the course number, instructor, number of students and date(s) of the multiple choice examination(s) that had only one or two versions. At this time only courses with  $\geq 75$  students writing a multiple-choice examination provided in only one version or  $\geq 100$  students writing an exam with two versions have been reported to faculties.

The Subcommittee recognizes that multiple versions of multiple choice examinations are equally important in smaller classes held in small rooms. We will report all cases of non-adherence to the faculties in 2010-2011. This will give one academic year of standard distribution of the reminder memo before we request that smaller classes be investigated, and it will allow time to develop an efficient information grouping approach to decrease the office burden in generating individual reports to faculties.

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## Report to the Faculties

### Exam Security Monitoring System and Multiple Choice Exams

The Senate regulation on the use of Multiple Versions of Multiple Choice Examinations ([www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/publications](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/publications)) tells us that multiple versions of multiple choice exams are required and that a seating plan shall be kept. Multiple choice examinations that are graded electronically are also submitted to the Exam Security Monitoring System which identifies pairs of students with similar error patterns. Some faculties received those reports during the fall and winter semester last year.

I just received the information on the number of versions of multiple choice exams that were used in the fall semester (2009). Associate Deans (Student Affairs) and the Directors are asked to follow up with those instructors who used a single or two versions of a multiple choice exam to be sure instructors are aware of the policy and to see, perhaps, if their class was considered small and the classroom allowed for sufficient seating so that more versions were not made. We are required to monitor application of the Senate policy and to investigate why the policy may not have been followed.

#### Overall Results

<b>Versions</b>	<b>Number of Courses</b>	<b>Class Size</b>
1	72	13-282
2	110	10-366
3	11	33-138
4	188	42-597
5+	15	103-335

#### Courses in your Faculty Requiring Follow-up

The following **announcement** is transmitted to you from the Academic Personnel Office on behalf of **Office of the Dean of Students**.

*Please note that replies posted to this listserve email account will not be answered.*

Please give this information the widest distribution possible to all non-tenure-stream teaching staff not covered by this listserve distribution, as noted at the end of this email.

Thank you.

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LISTSERVE distribution information can be found at the end of this email.  
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### **TEXT of the announcement**

This announcement is sent to you for your information.

At its meeting of 12 March 2008, the Senate Committee on Student Affairs (CSA) emphasized the importance of communicating the following to instructors at McGill:

University policy stipulates that multiple versions of multiple-choice examinations are required for mid-term and final examinations.

**All instructors are required to abide by this policy.**

Instructors are reminded that multiple versions of examinations can be generated by scrambling the order of questions and/or answers. Some scrambling software, such as Respondus, is free for McGill faculty and staff ([www.mcgill.ca/cio/procurement/license](http://www.mcgill.ca/cio/procurement/license)). Click on the Software Licensing website link, enter the product name (Respondus) and follow the links to access. Instructors are reminded that minimal changes to the order of a block of questions do not scramble questions adequately. The Associate Dean (Student Affairs) of your Faculty can provide additional information and guidance.

Please note that examination integrity is enhanced by random seating and a seating plan. The 1990 Senate Regulations on Examination Security state that "A random seating chart shall be utilized by the instructor for every mid-term examination held in a classroom." Many classrooms have labelled seating ([www.mcgill.ca/pia/plans/exam](http://www.mcgill.ca/pia/plans/exam)); this makes it easier to assign students to random seating. The plan can be posted 10-15 minutes before the examination room is opened to students. Once students are seated, the invigilators use copies of the plan to verify that students are in their assigned seats.

See also guidance for instructors at [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

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**LISTSERVE distribution information**

This message was sent to the following listserves:

**ACADEMIC STAFF**

- Tenure-track and tenured professorial and librarian staff
- Full-time Faculty Lecturers and non-tenure-stream Assistant Librarians

**SENIOR ADMIN STAFF**

- Deans & Director of Libraries, Assoc Deans & Assoc Directors of Libraries, Chairs, and Academic Directors.
- To see a listing of who these people are: <http://www.mcgill.ca/apo/administrators/listings/all/>

**ADMIN SUPPORT STAFF**

- SECRETARIES to Deans & Director of Libraries, Assoc Deans & Assoc Directors of Libraries, Chairs, and Academic Directors.
  - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS to Deans & Director of Libraries, Chairs, and Academic Directors.
  - SECRETARIES / ASSISTANTS to the Principal, Secretary-General, Provost, Deputy-Provost, VPs, Assoc VPs, Assoc Provosts.
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