Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: Vice Provost for Academic Operations

Effective Date: 02/09/2022

Last Revised: Not Applicable

# **Administering Final Exams**

## **Policy Summary**

Final exams are administered according to the schedule published by the Office of the Registrar that minimizes the potential for scheduling conflicts. Limitations apply to the number of final exams students will be asked to complete within a short time period and on other instructional activities and events during end of term and finals weeks that may be detrimental to student success. In the event of an emergency university closure, faculty may select from alternatives that permit the submission of final class grades by established deadlines.

## **Reason For This Policy**

Coordinated final exam practices minimize scheduling conflicts, promote consistency in the student experience across courses, and offer students expanded opportunities to prepare for and succeed in their final exams.

## **Entities Affected By This Policy**

* All colleges and instructional units

## **Who Should Know This Policy**

* All students, faculty, and administrators

## **Definitions**

**Finals week**: For 16-week sessions only, a period during which no instructional activity takes place other than the administration of final exams and other summative assessments.

**End of term week**: the final week of instructional activities immediately prior to finals week for 16-week sessions~~.~~

**Final exam**: a test, or other type of assessment, administered at the end of a course that evaluates student mastery of course learning outcomes.

**Final exam schedule**: published by the Office of the Registrar, a schedule providing standard finals week time periods for administering final exams.

**Grading period**: the period prior to the grades due deadline published by the Office of the Registrar during which faculty may submit final class grades.

## **Policy**

A. Final exams

Final exams, or other types of comprehensive assessments, may be included in courses, as deemed appropriate by the faculty of an academic unit.

B. End of term week instruction and assignments

Instructional activities continue during end of term week and new material may be presented during that time. For 16-week session courses only: With the exception of assignments in lieu of final exams, course assignments must not be due after the last day of the end of term week and assignments that comprise more than one-tenth of the final grade may not be assigned during end of term week.

C. Final exam scheduling

All courses that meet during sessions shorter than 16 weeks may hold final exams during one of the final two regularly scheduled meetings, including synchronous online courses. Final exams for asynchronous online courses without a scheduled meeting pattern will be scheduled at the discretion of the instructor.

Final exams for non-online, 16-week session classes occurring during finals week must be administered according to the final exam schedule. Exceptions may be approved by the overseeing dean of the class’s home academic college no later than three weeks before finals week. Academic unit chairs or directors are responsible for resolving any ensuing student scheduling conflicts and ensuring adherence to all other provisions in this policy.

Final exams cannot be re-scheduled to occur during end of term week, with the exception of individualized instruction classes. Take-home final exams and other summative assessments administered in lieu of a final exam must be due no later than the end of the regularly scheduled final exam time for the class.

Classes with non-standard meeting patterns use the final exam period for the standard meeting pattern with the nearest starting time and academic unit chairs or directors bear the responsibility for resolving any ensuing student scheduling conflicts.

Students are not required, but may elect, to take more than two final exams within a single calendar day. Students must request alternative dates from their faculty no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of finals week, and academic units are responsible for collaborating to identify and offer the most appropriate scheduling alternative as a resolution.

D. Other final exam scheduling conflicts

The following events should not be scheduled during end of term or finals week:

1. Off-campus athletic intercollegiate competitions, with the exception of competitions that are part of approved Big Sky Conference or NCAA tournament or championship scheduling or associated with exceptions granted by the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee;
2. Off-campus competitions involving student organizations or sport clubs, with the exception of competitions scheduled by affiliated regional or national organizations or associated with exceptions granted by the overseeing academic college dean and Vice Provost for Academic Operations;
3. Field trips, with the exception of field trips that serve as a final exam and are scheduled according to the final exam schedule or associated with exceptions granted by the overseeing college dean and Vice Provost for Academic Operations; and
4. Activities scheduled by other University offices, including events that may be scheduled by student groups and organizations, that interfere with students’ ability to prepare for and complete final exams.

E. Final exams and emergency university closures

In the event of an emergency university closure occurring during finals week, faculty of impacted classes are responsible for offering students an alternative pathway for final exam completion that allows for the submission of final grades by the end of the term’s grading period.

Faculty in impacted classes may use one of the following alternatives for students:

1. Students are assigned a class grade based on their average grades on already completed assessments;
2. Students complete a re-scheduled final exam that does not conflict with other scheduled final exams and occurring no later than the end of finals week; or
3. Students may complete an alternative online final exam occurring no later than the end of finals week.

F. Disruptions to student ability to attend and complete final exams

In the event that conditions do not necessitate a university closure but suffice to disrupt students’ ability to attend or otherwise complete their final exams, faculty are expected to be responsive and extend students one of the alternative options outlined in section D.

## **Responsibilities**

**Administrators**: promptly consider and resolve issues associated with or exceptions to final exam scheduling and constraints on event scheduling.

**Faculty**: develop and administer final exams, as appropriate to course learning outcomes; schedule final exams and other class elements in alignment with policy provisions; offer students appropriate alternatives in the event of emergency university closures.

**Office of the Registrar**: develop and publish term grading periods and final exam schedule and assists faculty with scheduling of non-standard meeting patterns.

**Students**: promptly notify faculty of the need to reschedule final exams when more than two final exams are scheduled within a single 24-hour period or if their ability to attend and complete final examinations has been disrupted.

## **Procedures**

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

## **Related Information**

### **Forms or Tools**

There are no forms or tools associated with this policy*.*

### **Cross-References**

There are no cross-references associated with this policy*.*

### **Sources**

There are no external sources associated with this policy*.*

## **Appendix**

None.