



University Policy: Final Exams

Policy Category: Academic

Subject: Final Exams

Office Responsible for Review of this Policy: Office of the Provost

Procedures: As Stated Below

Related University Policies: Undergraduate Academic Regulations; Graduate Academic Regulations.

I. SCOPE

The Office of the University Registrar, under the overall direction of the Provost, is responsible for coordinating the final exam period. A final examination is an important part of the evaluation of each student's work and is expected in all courses except colloquia, studio, or writing courses where final examinations may be unnecessary or inappropriate. These policies represent an understanding between faculty and students concerning an important but often stressful period, especially at the conclusion of each academic term. The student should anticipate the demands of the exam schedule, plan accordingly and in a timely manner, and be prepared. The faculty should recognize that the student is encumbered with many tightly orchestrated and intensive obligations during this period over which the student has no control: expectations should be consistent with the number of credits for the class and should be made known to the student well in advance of the final examination period, preferably as part of the course syllabus.

II. DEFINITIONS

Common Final Exam

An examination offered at the same time and place for a course that offers many different sections. Students registered into any section of the course offering a Common Final in a given term are required to take the exam at a common time and place. Students registered in an online section of a course with a Common Final are not required or expected to take the final exam in person.

Final Exam

An examination administered at the end of an academic class that may be comprehensive in nature or limited to specific topics taught throughout the duration of the class offering. The examination may be offered in many forms and administered as an in-person exam or as a take home exam.

Final Exam Period

American University offers a final exam period at the end of the Fall and Spring Semesters. The final exam period dates are published on the academic calendar. The final exam period is included in the university's calculation of the contact hours required to award the class' designated number of credits. During the final exam period, activity in academic space is limited to final exams in order to facilitate an environment conducive for student success. The only exception is for classes that do not follow the standard term dates for that term and have their regular class meeting during the final exam period. There is no final exam period at the end of any summer sessions.

Study Days

American University offers study days at the end of the Fall and Spring Semesters. Designated study days are published on the academic calendar. Activity on a designated Study Day is limited to review sessions and for classes that do not follow the standard term dates for that semester and have their regular class meeting on a designated Study Day. Makeup classes and/or makeup exams may not be administered on Study Days. New course material introduced and/or discussed on Study Days may not be tested on the final exam.

Take Home Exam

A take home exam is a final exam that is assigned or distributed by the instructor to the students in the class who are not bound to a specific time or location during the writing of the examination.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

The Office of the University Registrar is responsible for scheduling final exams. Students are expected to take their final exams on the dates and at the times indicated on the schedule. The final exam period dates are published on the academic calendar, and the final exam schedule for full-term standard sections is published on the Office of the University Registrar's website prior to priority registration for the fall and spring semesters. The final exam schedule for non-standard sections (those sections that do not follow the full-term meeting dates) will be published on the Office of the University Registrar's website following the end of the Add/Drop period in fall and spring semesters.

Faculty are not allowed to move their final exams to the last day of class in fall or spring semesters. No final exams may be administered during a designated study day. Take-home exams must be distributed in a timely fashion and be due no earlier than the regularly scheduled examination date. All exams must be submitted by the end of the final exam period.

The final exam period is included in the university's calculation of the contact hours required to award the class' designated number of credits. All classes following the regularly scheduled term dates are expected to use all 15 weeks of the semester in support of the learning outcomes articulated in the course syllabus in one of the following ways: an in-person final exam, an in-person meeting at the time of the scheduled final exam; a take home final exam; other significant assignment due at the time of the final exam. Faculty offering a take home exam in lieu of offering a final in-class exam, presentation, etc. during the final

exam date and time for that class are required to notify the Office of the University Registrar, so that the classroom space can be released and redistributed for other final exam scheduling purposes.

Courses that meet off-campus and/or online are not scheduled for an on-campus final exam but are required to develop instructional content to support the contact hours required for that course.

Final grade implications for missing the final exam, such as receiving a failing grade in the course, will follow the policies outlined in the course syllabus. Make-up examinations are at the discretion of the instructor as outlined in the course syllabus.

IV. PROCEDURES:

Conflict Resolution

1. Students with two exams scheduled for the same time or students with three or more final exams on a given day should contact the instructors of the sections with conflicting exams to request an alternate exam time.
2. If an agreement cannot be reached by the student and the instructors of the affected classes, the student should e-mail their academic advisor to direct the student to the appropriate individual within the dean's office of the academic unit associated with the student's primary program of study.
3. A representative from the dean's office will contact all affected instructors to see if an agreement for an alternate exam time can be reached. If that effort fails, the exam from the class with the lowest enrollment will be rescheduled for the student with the conflict.
4. The student must submit the request for an alternate exam time via email no later than November 1 in the fall semester and April 1 in the spring semester.
5. All rescheduled exams must occur during the final exam period.

Common Final Exams

1. Common Finals are scheduled by request of the course offering department and are subject to approval and availability of space by The Office of the University Registrar.
2. Courses are eligible for a Common Final if there are four or more sections regularly offered in the Fall and Spring terms or where the combined enrollment for that course has 60 or more students enrolled in a given term. Courses that do not meet these requirements may request a Common Final, but approval and scheduling is subject to availability.
3. Common Finals are approved at the course level. All faculty teaching an in-person section of a course that has a Common Final are expected to adhere to the Common Final examination date and time.
4. Common Finals must be requested a minimum of one month prior to the priority registration period for the Fall semester.
5. Courses approved for a Common Final will be scheduled for a Common Final in the Fall and Spring terms of that academic year.

6. Common Finals are scheduled on the Saturday within the university's final exam period and/or in the evenings to limit the possibility of final exam conflicts for students.

Students Requiring Accommodations

1. Students registered with the Academic Support and Access Center (ASAC) with disability-related exam accommodations will have their final exams scheduled through the ASAC.
2. Registered ASAC students must request exam accommodations through the online system at least three weeks prior to the start of the final exam period.
3. For students with pre-existing conditions who are not registered with the ASAC, accommodation requests must be received at least four weeks in advance of the final exam period.
4. Accommodated exams are not guaranteed to take place simultaneously with the exam date and time as scheduled by the Office of the University Registrar.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE: November 12, 2018

V. SIGNATURE, TITLE, AND DATE OF APPROVAL

Approved: Mary L. Clark, November 9, 2018