Carnegie Mellon

Official Final Exam Policy

The Faculty Senate adopted the following policies on the administration of final examinations for all undergraduate courses:

1. All scheduled final examinations are held at the end of the semester during the university's official final examination period. Comprehensive final examinations are not required for each course, but are given at the option of the department or instructor. The reading day and weekend preceding the examination days shall never be used for examination purposes of any kind, unless a student opts to take a self-scheduled examination during this time. Non-comprehensive final examinations or final projects (but not both) are allowed during this final examination period only in courses that do not give a final comprehensive examination.

2. Instructors are expected to return all work assigned no later than the last regular day of classes in courses for which there is a final examination. In cases when this is not possible, an answer key, solution sets or equivalent feedback should be provided unless the final examination will not cover material in work that has not been returned.

3. No other coursework, including laboratory or studio work, will be due during the final examination period unless it is assigned in advance and in lieu of the course's final examination. Regardless of whether there is a final examination in the course, no classes other than review sessions shall be held during the final examination period. Review sessions should be scheduled for optimal attendance, and a serious effort should be made to accommodate students who cannot attend. In appreciation of the time required to prepare for final examinations, no other examinations, portfolio reviews, critiques or juries shall be scheduled for the last class day of a course with a final examination.

4. Instructors shall never exert or submit to pressures to move an examination so that people can leave earlier nor pressure students to take an examination on a reading day or weekend preceding examinations.

5. No student is required to take more than two scheduled examinations that start within a 25-hour period. A student who has more than two examinations scheduled within a 25-hour period or has two examinations scheduled at the same time should first contact the instructors of the courses for assistance in resolving conflicts. If the problem cannot be resolved by that means, the student should contact the associate dean of his or her home college.

6. Take-home final examinations shall be given for any 24-hour period of the student's choosing during the final examination period.

7. Students are expected to present themselves at the place assigned at the start of the examination; late arrival will reduce the total time a student has to complete the examination, unless instructor's course policy indicates otherwise. Instructors reserve the right to require attendance within a specific time period. Students who miss an examination with a reasonable excuse and wish to petition for a make-up final examination should check with the instructor. Instructors are encouraged to include late arrival policy and make-up exam policy in the course syllabus.

8. Any student shall be permitted to review his or her corrected, graded final examination in the presence of an instructor or a teaching assistant. Any controversy arising from this review shall be dealt with in accordance with the university procedure for the appeal of grades and academic actions. A final examination that is not returned to a
student will be kept available for a year for review. In the event that the instructor or teaching assistant is not available for the review, the responsibility shall rest with the department head of the instructor offering the course or his or her designee. Since instructors are expected to return all work assigned before the final examinations, they are not responsible for retaining unclaimed coursework.

9. Concerns related to final examination, complaints about violations of the final examination policy or alterations of the final examination schedule should be directed to the department head of the instructor offering the course or to the associate dean of the student’s home college.

Note: It is assumed that instructors will return all work assigned before the final exam period. Thus, instructors are not responsible for retaining unclaimed coursework.