Academic Regulations Related to Assignments, Tests, and Final Exams

Overview
Academic regulations related to assignments, tests, and final exams are as indicated below. This information is available as a PDF in the PDF Files section of this Calendar. These regulations are Senate approved and apply except where Senate grants specific exemptions.

Academic Regulations Related to Assignments, Tests, and Final Exams
The following regulations are intended to provide transparency to instructors, students, and proctors regarding expectations and conduct for graded course elements. These regulations support academic integrity by clarifying expectations and procedures. Assignments refer to assessments that are intended to provide opportunities for students to implement or apply concepts, skills, and/or judgments taught in a course over an extended period of time usually outside of the class meeting times. Tests are assessments of knowledge, skills, and/or judgment in a controlled environment; examinations are tests that are scheduled during the University’s final examination period.

The Formal Lecture Period
The Final Examination Period
Study Days
The Formal Lecture Period

Each term, the formal period during which lectures take place is defined by the Calendar of Events and Academic Deadlines published in this Calendar. The normal teaching day at the University of Waterloo extends from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Student assignments and tests – assessments of knowledge, skills, and/or judgment – may be scheduled by instructors throughout the formal lecture period except that major term tests may not be held in the last five teaching days of this period. Major term tests are those which account for more than twenty-five percent of the final course grade. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the instructor's Department Chair and the Associate Dean (Undergraduate) of the Faculty concerned.

Note

Senate approval has been given to the Faculty of Science to hold final examinations during the latter part of the Formal Lecture Period in laboratory courses which may require laboratory facilities.

The Final Examination Period

Final examinations are scheduled during a period of days following the formal lecture period, defined by the Calendar of Events and Academic Deadlines. Final examinations normally cover all or a substantial portion of the course material. Students require sufficient opportunity to prepare for the final assessment of their courses. Normally, the final examination period is reserved for preparation and sitting for the final.

Courses with final exams may not have other course assignments due during the final examination period. Courses without a final exam may have an assignment equivalent in scope and value to a final exam due during the final examination period. No assignments are to be due during the period between the end of lectures and the beginning of examinations.

Instructors are expected to be available for reasonable consultation (office hours, online discussion boards, etc.) with students from the end of lectures until the time of their final examinations. When instructors cannot be available at the times they set, they will delegate this responsibility to an appropriate substitute.

Study Days

Study days are designated periods to act as a pause for students in an academic term, to reflect upon and catch up on their term's work to date and, as necessary, prepare for any upcoming assignments and assessments. The dates are published in the Calendar of Events and Academic Deadlines.

Examples of study days include the reading week during the winter term, as well as, the days in each term between the Formal Lecture Period and beginning of the Final Examination Period.

Except where classes are rescheduled as the result of a campus-wide emergency closure, no classes are to be held during study days. With the exception of the English Language Proficiency Examination, instructors are not permitted to administer, and students are not required to sit for examinations, tests, or lectures during study days.

Guidelines on Tests during the Formal Lecture Period

Instructors are encouraged to hold tests during the regularly scheduled class times for their courses. If instructors hold a test outside of the normal course meeting times that creates a legitimate conflict for students, the regularly scheduled event takes precedence, and the instructors must provide an alternative, mutually agreeable time for the student to write the test.

The date and time of tests must be included on the course outline. This time and date cannot be subsequently changed unless there is an extreme circumstance and unanimous consent from the class.

Material included on a test should be introduced sufficiently in advance of the test date to allow students reasonable time to seek clarification or greater understanding of concepts. Normally, this period will be a
Instructs are encouraged to avoid requiring students to sit for tests during the time when co-operative work-term employment interviews are scheduled. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to avoid scheduling co-operative work-term employment interviews that conflict with tests. Attendance at co-operative work-term employment interviews is not considered to be a valid reason to miss a test.

The parameters for scheduling tests are as follows:

1. Tests are held during the Formal Lecture Period from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, inclusive.
2. The Faculties of Mathematics and Science may schedule Saturday tests for large, multiple-section courses in the fall and winter terms, if those tests are approved by the appropriate Associate Dean, scheduled using test slots, and announced to students during the first week of classes via published course outlines.

Tests are not permitted outside of these parameters.

In instances where students have adjacent tests or when students have more than two tests in a given day, these students should request accommodation from instructors within one week of the notification that caused the conflict. Guidance on when accommodation may be granted and potential options for accommodation are provided in the following pages of the Academic Regulations Related to Assignments, Tests, and Final Exams section.

**Rules for Test Conduct**

Only students enrolled in a course are eligible to sit for a test; writing a test when not enrolled is a violation of test regulations, unless prior instructor approval has been obtained.

Students must present their University of Waterloo Student ID card at all tests. If students do not have this card, the instructor or proctor may accept another form of photo identification. If ID acceptable to the instructor or proctor is not provided, candidates must complete an Interim Identification Form (IIF) and sign each test booklet and/or answer card.

Only those items authorized for use in the test are to be on the examination desk. Bags, purses, knapsacks, and cases are to be closed and placed with any hats or caps under the desk or in a location directed by the instructor or proctor. Wireless or electronic devices that are capable of receiving, sending, and/or storing course-related information must be turned off and placed outside the reach of students.

There shall be no extension of time for students who are allowed to sit for tests after arriving late.

Students may, with the permission of the instructor or proctor, leave the examination room briefly, only if accompanied by an assigned proctor. During a test, it is a violation of test regulations to take electronic devices, capable of receiving, sending, and/or storing information, in and/or out of the test room.

At ten minutes before the conclusion of the test period, the instructor or proctor shall announce the time remaining (for tests longer than 50 minutes, one additional time announcement may be helpful). Candidates may not leave their seats in the test room after this time, until all papers have been collected.

At the conclusion of the test, all candidates shall cease writing and proctors shall collect the test materials. Failure to cease writing at this time is considered a violation of test regulations.

If candidates provide or obtain assistance from another candidate, or have unauthorized aids during tests, such individuals will be liable to disciplinary action.

If an instructor, proctor, or presiding officer – a designated person responsible for overseeing the test – has reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of academic regulations has occurred, that person shall collect all of the evidence available and has the authority regarding students to:

- remove anything on the desk not authorized for use in the test and keep it until those students have completed and handed in the test materials, as required.
- look into knapsacks, bags, purses, pencil cases, etc.; remove any "evidence" (this to be done in the presence of students and another proctor); and return the knapsack, bag, purse, pencil case, etc., to under the desk.

**Note:** If students require a copy of such evidence, a copy is to be provided with the original to be retained by the presiding officer or proctor.

- require students to move to a seat where the presiding officer or proctor can more easily monitor them.
• ask students to adduce "evidence" where the presiding officer or proctor believes that students have hidden it on their person.
  
  **Note:** If students refuse, under no circumstances should the alleged offenders be touched.
• remove answer book(s) and replace them with new ones.

In all cases, students are to be allowed to finish writing the test. As soon as possible following the conclusion of the test, the presiding officer or proctor is expected to: make a note of the time and details (e.g., refusal to cooperate); explain to alleged offenders that the status of their paper is in question; identify the paper and set it aside; inform the course instructor of the circumstances, and turn over all of the evidence available. In the event that the instructor is not available, the presiding officer or proctor will inform the student's appropriate Associate Dean.

### Additional Rules for Final Examinations

Once a final examination has begun, all candidates must remain for the first hour. Candidates who arrive more than one hour late for an examination may be barred from writing the examination if students have already completed the examination and left the examination room. The decision to allow candidates to write the examination is at the discretion of the proctor. If candidates are allowed to write the examination, the proctor shall mark the time of entry clearly on all of the answer booklets.

Students are prohibited from consuming food and drinks (with the exception of water in a clear bottle with no label) during their final examinations. Students can make arrangements for a short nutrition break supervised by a proctor outside the exam venue during the final exam.

If a single short break will not be sufficient because a student is medically required to consume food or drinks regularly during a final exam, they must register for this accommodation with AccessAbility Services and must submit appropriate documentation from a recognized professional at least three weeks before the start of the final examination period.

Students who become ill during the writing of an examination and are unable to continue should ensure before leaving the site of the examination that the proctor in charge is notified of the situation. In addition, students must notify their course instructor and supply the medical documentation specified above within 48 hours after the partially completed examination.

If students complete an examination, even though they are ill, the grade obtained in the course will normally stand. Students may seek exception to academic regulations on the grounds of illness. These requests must be accompanied by appropriate and timely documentation. The department or Faculty of these students may take the illness into consideration, and possibly alter academic standing, but the grade will not normally be altered.

### Accommodations

From time to time, students will encounter extenuating circumstances such as significant illnesses, ongoing medical conditions, or religious observations that prevent them from meeting academic obligations. The University is committed to assisting students who experience these events.

Students who are unable to meet assignment due dates or write a test must provide documentation verifying the events that have precluded them from meeting their academic deadlines. When illness is the cause of a missed deadline, students should seek medical treatment and provide confirmation of the illness to the instructor(s) within 48 hours by submitting a completed University of Waterloo Verification of Illness Form to support requests for accommodation due to illness. Students in Centre for Extended Learning (CEL) courses must submit their confirmation of the illness to CEL.

The University of Waterloo Verification of Illness Form is normally the only acceptable medical documentation. Students who consult their physician or use the services of an off-campus walk-in clinic must provide this form to the attending physician for completion; notes and forms created by the physician or clinic are normally not acceptable. Although not compelled to do so, instructors may accept medical documentation that contains the same information specified on the University of Waterloo Verification of Illness Form. Health Services charges a fee for completing the University of Waterloo Verification of Illness Form that is not covered by OHIP/UHIP. Fees for this service or those levied by off-campus practitioners are the student's responsibility.

False claims of illness and/or the submission of false supporting documentation of extenuating circumstances constitute an academic offence that will result in disciplinary action under Policy 71.
Adjustment of due dates or deferrals of term tests or final examinations are not automatic upon the presentation of suitable medical verification. Instructors will use this documentation among all information available to them when determining whether accommodation is warranted.

When instructors elect to provide an accommodation, the options available to students vary based on the nature of the extenuating circumstances they are facing, and on the kind of evaluation mechanism they are unable to complete on time.

For in-term assignments, instructors may use their discretion and allow an extension. If the instructor does not grant an extension and an element is missed, it is recommended that the weight of the missed element – an assignment, a laboratory report, or other evaluation mechanism – be transferred to similar types of elements due later in the term. If this option is not available, the weight of the missed assignment may be transferred to a test or the final examination.

If students are granted an accommodation for a test, the weighting of the missed test is added to the final examination weighting or spread over the remaining tests. Term tests are normally not deferred.

If students are granted an accommodation to postpone a final examination, they shall write the exam the next time the course is taught or during the next term the student is on campus, whichever is sooner. The examination may be written earlier than the specified period if students and their instructors mutually agree upon a date and time or if a final grade is required for continued enrolment. The Undergraduate Officer from the offering academic unit should be informed as to the dates and times when deferred final examinations are to be written. If the course instructor of the deferred examination is not available to set and mark the examination as well as grade the course overall, the department/school will arrange for these activities to be carried out.

Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an accommodation.

The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may seek accommodations on religious grounds. Accordingly, students must consult with their instructor(s) within one week of the announcement of the due date for which accommodation is being sought. Failure to provide a timely request will decrease the likelihood of providing an accommodation.

Any unresolved disputes between instructors and students regarding the legitimacy of extenuating circumstances or the suitability of accommodations will be decided by the appropriate Associate Dean(s). When in doubt, students should approach the Associate Dean from their home Faculty. In such cases, any regularly scheduled University academic activity will be given precedence in the resolution of a conflict with a test or examination in another course. For students in courses taught at the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo where there is no Associate Dean, the Dean exercises these responsibilities.

### Accommodations Due to Final Examination Schedule Conflicts

Senate has determined that the University will strive to schedule final examinations conflict-free and with:

- No student having two examinations in a row.
- No student writing in the last period on one day and the first period the next day.

Where this cannot be accomplished for a particular student, the University shall ensure relief by making alternative scheduling arrangements for that student. Students can elect to accept examination combinations that violate these constraints. In doing so, they understand that petitions or appeals based on violation of the above conflicts will not be granted.

If students have an examination conflict with a Laurier final exam (two examinations at the same day/time) that has been detected during the examination scheduling process, the department/instructor will be notified by the Registrar’s Office and asked to contact the individual students to discuss alternative examination arrangements to be determined by the department/instructor.

If students have an examination conflict (two examinations at the same day/time) that was not detected during the examination scheduling process, they must complete the Final Examination Timetable Conflict Form from the Registrar’s Office website. The Registrar’s Office will confirm the conflict, then notify the department/instructor so that they can contact the individual students to discuss alternative examination arrangements to be determined by the department/instructor.

### Student Access to Final Examination Papers

http://ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/printing/?groupId=10299
For many courses, final examinations are a major component of student assessment and often contribute substantially to the final grade awarded. In addition, final examinations may serve an important educational purpose in indicating to students what, and how well, they have learned in the course. Course instructors may choose to use a final examination for one or both of these objectives.

Students may request an informal review of a final examination (both the questions and the examination responses) up to one year from the date that the examination was written or until the date indicated in the course outline.

If students wish to challenge their mark on the final examination, the request must be made within one month of notification of the mark. Policy 70 dictates the challenge process.