



University Evaluation and Final Examination Policies

No. 6810

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Affected Parties:
Undergraduate
Graduate
Faculty
Staff
Other

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1.0 Purpose

In order to preserve the credentials of the institution, maintain high standards of academic performance, and assure each graduate of this University of a respected degree, student performance in each course must be properly evaluated. This policy explains the procedures for administering examinations.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Evaluation

The instructor is solely responsible for evaluating a student's performance and assigning grades. This obligation may not be delegated.

Faculty must include in their course syllabi the expected performance for which grades will be assigned, including the instructor's class attendance policy.

Faculty members are expected to prepare a statement for each course they teach outlining the objectives and topical contents, prerequisites, grading criteria, honor system policies, and the evaluation procedures to be used. Such statements should essentially be the same for multiple-section courses. Current copies of the statement are filed with the department head and distributed to enrolled students on the first day of class. Justifiable modification of the statement may result from classroom experience during the courses, but the department head and the enrolled students are to be informed if substantial changes are made.

All written work required for a course, except term papers, must be returned in a regular class session before the end of classes.

Examinations are required at the end of every course, unless the course statement indicates that other comparable evaluation procedures are to be used.

The examination is an important part of a student's learning process, particularly in that it requires organizing the subject matter. It enables the student to demonstrate his command of the subject, and provides the faculty member an opportunity to review student performance and the character and quality of the course.

Students are entitled to review their graded examination papers. Failure to take an examination yields a zero grade for the examination, weighted as specified in the course statement on grading criteria. The faculty member administers and grades the examinations.

Grades are to be reported to the Registrar's Office within 48 hours after the examination.



2.2 Final Examination Schedule

A final examination must be conducted for each section of each course, except for sections specifically authorized to use alternative evaluation. Examinations for courses with 2 or more credit hours are to be held during the final examination period listed in the official University calendar. Examinations are to be given during the specific periods established by the Registrar and listed in the "Examination Schedule" displayed on the web, TIMETABLE OF CLASSES, for each academic term. No examination may be changed from the assigned period except with approval of the dean of the college for the course-offering department.

Examination periods for one-credit courses and laboratory courses are scheduled by the instructor during the regular class period on or before the last day of classes.

2.3 Common-time Examinations

A department may establish a common-time final examination for multiple sections of a lower-division (numbered under 3000) course. A declaration that a common-time exam will be conducted must accompany the TIMETABLE OF CLASSES when it is submitted to the Registrar. There must also be a request that the Registrar assigns the course to a period devoted to common-time examinations and schedule suitable rooms for the exam.

Courses scheduled for a common-time examination should be designated by the notation "CTE" in the TIMETABLE OF CLASSES.

When a common-time examination is scheduled for a course, examinations for all sections of that course must be held at that common time, whether or not a common examination is used.

2.4 Rescheduled Final Examinations

Students with conflicting examinations or with more than two examinations in 24 hours may reschedule an examination. Arrangements must be made with the instructor and permission obtained from the student's college dean. No fee will be charged. The deadline for rescheduling examinations will be displayed on the web, TIMETABLE OF CLASSES, "Important Deadlines," for each term.

Students who are unable to take an examination because of illness or circumstances beyond the student's control may reschedule the examination. Permission must be obtained from the student's college dean or a university physician and arrangements made with the instructor. The student will receive a grade of "I" (Incomplete) when the requirements of a course other than the final examination have not been completed due to illness or circumstances beyond the student's control. The "I" grade is the prerogative of the instructor.

2.5 Tentative Grades for Degree Candidates

Candidates for graduation in May will be identified in spring term to their professors. Grades for these students must be submitted to the Registrar for use in determining graduation status at that time. These grades will remain at the same or higher level unless the professor submits a lower than tentative grade via the Faculty Access web entry for final grades.

Grades for degree candidates that are lower than the tentative grades reported earlier must be delivered within 48 hours after the examination, but no later than noon the day before commencement.

Grades that are higher than the ones submitted on grade sheets for degree candidates may be entered on the final grade web entry form without additional notice to the Registrar.



2.6 Study Days

For undergraduate classes, all written work, with the exceptions noted below, should be given at such time that it can be graded and returned during a regularly scheduled class meeting of the semester. In any event, in-class hour examinations or other major in-class written assignments or tests shall not be given during the last three calendar days of scheduled classes.

The exceptions for undergraduate courses are:

1. Dates for turning in term papers and project reports may be set at the discretion of the instructor, provided that the student is not to be held responsible on the final examination for the subject matter therein.
2. Final examinations in laboratory courses and in other courses that do not warrant a final examination during the examination period, if required by the department and/or instructor, should be given during the last regularly scheduled laboratory or class period.
3. Regularly scheduled final examinations, when special permission has been granted by the dean of the appropriate college.

For graduate classes, all written work, with the exceptions noted below, should be given at such time that it can be graded and returned during a regularly scheduled class meeting of the semester. In any event, in-class hour examinations or other major in-class written assignments or tests shall not be given during the last three calendar days of scheduled classes.

The exceptions for graduate courses are:

1. Dates for turning in term papers and project reports may be set at the discretion of the instructor.
2. Final examinations in laboratory courses and in other courses that do not warrant a final examination during the examination period, if required by the department and/or instructor, may be given during the last regularly scheduled laboratory or class.
3. Regularly scheduled final examinations when special permission has been granted by the dean of the appropriate college.
4. Final examinations for Masters and Doctoral candidates, if approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

There shall be at least one full day for study between the last day of classes and the first day of the examination period each term. There shall be at least one-half day each summer term. The weekday or Saturday immediately following the last day of classes in each term will be a study day.

No class meetings, tests or course requirements of any sort may be scheduled on study days.

Extra-class activities must not be placed on the activities calendar for the period that begins 48 hours before final examination week starts and ends with the week itself.

2.7 Re-examination

A re-examination in one course, in which the final grade is C- or below, may be authorized only when a student has been enrolled in that course during the final term of his or her senior year and only when a "satisfactory re-examination" would qualify the student for graduation. A re-examination request must be made and the exam completed by the student as soon as possible, but no later than one term or two summer sessions after the initial



examination in the course. Approval by the instructor and the student's department head and college dean is required and is based on class performance, attendance, and completion of assigned work.

2.8 Compliance and Administration

Instances in which this policy is not followed should be reported to a department head or college dean for investigation and correction.

Administration of the evaluation and final examination policy is the responsibility of each department head and college dean.

3.0 Procedures

4.0 Definitions

5.0 References

Policy Memorandum No. 5, "Common-Times Examination Policy," approved by University Council and the President May 15, 1978, and issued June 29, 1978.

Policy Memorandum No. 6, "Rescheduling Multiple Examinations on One Day," approved by University Council and the President June 5, 1978.

Policy Memorandum No. 9, "Restricting Extra-class Activities During Final Examination Periods," approved by University Council and the President May 24, 1982, and issued June 28, 1982.

Policy Memorandum No. 64, "Study Week," approved by University Council and the President May 20, 1985, and issued October 23, 1985.

Policy Memorandum No. 66, "Policy on Re-examination for Graduating Seniors," approved by University Council and the President January 6, 1982, and issued January 17, 1986.

Policy Memorandum No. 143, "Policy on Classroom Attendance," approved by University Council and the President on February 21, 1994.

6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved January 9, 1990, by University Registrar, Wanda Dean.

Reviewed August 22, 1990, by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, James F. Wolfe. No changes.

Annual review, December 15, 1998, by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford. No revisions.

- Revision 1



Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Section 2.1. Added requirement that faculty must include in course syllabi expected performance for which grades will be assigned, including instructor's class attendance policy.

Section 2.2, 2.3, 2.4. Updated information on the TIMETABLE OF CLASSES.

Section 2.5. Establishes process for submitting or changing grades electronically.

Section 2.7. Charge for re-examination removed.

Section 5. Added reference to Policy Memorandum No. 66.

Approved April 17, 2002 by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.