

Scholastic Dishonesty: Instructors are responsible for setting rules and advising students of the rules governing examinations and they must supervise examinations in their classes. They should remain in the exam room and take necessary action to ensure an orderly examination while reducing opportunities for cheating. Students must be informed that all written work handed in by them is considered to be their own work and prepared without unauthorized assistance. Instructors who suspect scholastic dishonesty must report the case to the Dean of Students.

Student Responsibilities: Students are expected to (a) remain in the exam room until the test is completed; (b) refrain from talking; and (c) leave all notes and books where they are not accessible unless otherwise directed by the instructor. In addition, students should be asked to cooperate in maintaining the integrity of the exam and encouraged to inform the instructor, without identifying the offenders, when cheating has occurred.

Office of The Ombudsperson

Who We Are

We are a resource of The University of Texas at Austin. Our office is a place where students come to share their concerns. We can also help faculty, staff, and administration by providing information, problem-solving, and reporting data trends back to the university.

Principles

- Confidential
- Neutral
- Independent
- Informal

What We Do

- Develop options
- Make referrals
- Clarify policy
- Explore solutions



Guide to Final Exams and Grade Disputes

This brochure is intended to provide answers to those questions that arise frequently at the end of each semester. Most of these policies are located in the *General Information* catalog. If you have any question about these policies or if you need assistance dealing with a problem regarding final exams, our staff will be happy to assist you.

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*Email is not a confidential form of communication.

Office of the Ombudsperson
The University of Texas
at Austin

Exams and Grades

Exam Period: No semester final examinations may be given before examination week begins. An instructor must obtain permission of the department chair and dean before making a change to the scheduled exam time. In order to change the exam location, an instructor must contact the registrar. Students may obtain permission from the dean to take the exam in a different time or place for good reason.

Requiring an Exam: An instructor may decide not to give a final examination with the approval of the chair. If an examination is given, all students must take it, and no exemptions may be allowed except pursuant to a uniform exemption policy announced to the class.

Weight of the Exam: No exam worth over 30% of the final course grade may be given in the last week or during “no class days.” Classes should not be held and assignments should not be due on “no class days” or “dead days.”

Length of Exam: Examination should begin promptly at the scheduled hour. Exams should not continue beyond the three hours allocated. Students should plan on arriving on time and remaining in the room until the completion of their exam. However, an instructor may opt to give a shorter exam.

Coverage of the Exam: In a course extending two semesters when the subject matter is continuous, the second semester final exam may include subject matter presented in the first semester.

Credit: To earn credit for a course, an undergraduate must secure a grade of at least a “D”. A “D” is a passing grade in a pass/fail course. A “C” must be obtained to be included in the course of work for graduates.

Concerns with Final Exams: Students may address concerns related to final exams to the chair of the department, the dean of the college, or the Office of the Ombudsperson.

2-3 Exams in One Day: There is no rule limiting the number of finals a student can take in one day. An instructor can allow a student to take an exam with a different section from that in which the student is registered. Students may petition their academic dean for permission to take the final exam at some time other than the time assigned in the *Course Schedule*. If permission is given by the Dean and the Instructor, no penalty (such as reduction in grade) may be imposed.

Grade Dispute: If a student cannot settle a grade dispute directly with their instructor, there is an appeal process. If the student has discussed the problem with the instructor and is not satisfied with the results, the student must submit a grade appeal in writing to the Chair of the department and then the Dean of the college in which the course is offered. The Dean’s decision is final.

Incomplete Grade: An undergraduate student may be assigned the symbol “X” as an incomplete for one of the approved reasons listed:

- **Missing the final exam:** An incomplete is appropriate when the student is unable to take the exam because of illness or other nonacademic reasons. A physician’s statement or other satisfactory verification is required.

- **Incomplete classroom assignment:** An incomplete can be given when the student has been unable to complete the required class or laboratory assignments for a reason other than lack of adequate effort. A request for an incomplete can only be made if the student has a passing average on class work already completed and has taken and passed the final.
- **Re-examination petition:** Request for a delay of a final grade can be made by a student who has failed a final but has at least a “C” average in the coursework prior to the final. In such cases, a student may be permitted to take a re-examination if the instructor agrees and have that grade substituted for the original final exam grade.

An incomplete grade must not be assigned to permit; (1) time to prepare coursework in addition to that assigned to the whole class, (2) time to repeat the entire course, or (3) an opportunity to raise a grade for any reason other than above.

Reviewing Exams and Coursework: The faculty member or department office is required to retain all materials not previously returned for a period of at least one long semester following the course. A student has the right to either review or have returned all written materials submitted to meet the requirements of the course. This does not guarantee a right to a copy, but the materials may be inspected in a designated office.