MERCER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Title:	Undergraduate Final Examination Policy
Effective Date:	October 30, 2026
Issuing Authority:	Provost
Policy Contact:	Vice Provost of Academic Affairs provost@mercer.edu, 478-301-2110

Purpose

Mercer University establishes policies for final examinations and the examination period to ensure undergraduate students can adequately plan and study for their examinations and other final assignments.

Scope

This policy applies to Macon residential undergraduate courses administered for grades.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to Macon residential undergraduate courses that are:

- internships/field experiences,
- independent studies,
- research courses,
- University Life (UNV) courses,
- learning skills (LSK) courses,
- University Honors Program courses, and
- courses that are offered abroad.

Additionally, this policy does not apply to undergraduate courses for working adults or graduate courses.

Definitions

As used in this policy, the following term(s) have the meaning specified below:

Final Examination: any examination or other assessment administered or due after the last day of class.

Final Examination Period: a course's designated date, time, and location of the final examination as published by the Office of the Registrar, except in laboratory-only classes, practicums, and one-credit-hour courses where the final examination may be given during the last class meeting.

Final Examination Schedule: a timetable outlining the dates, times, and locations for all final examinations.

Hardship: a severe, unexpected situation that prevents a student from taking a final examination at the scheduled time. Examples include:

- Medical emergencies: severe illness, sudden hospital stay, or injury requiring immediate medical attention.
- Family crisis: death, severe illness of a close family member, or sudden home disaster like a fire.
- Legal or military duties: mandatory court appearance or unexpected military deployment.

Exclusions (i.e., what does not qualify as a hardship) include the following:

- Personal travel, vacations, or flights booked during the examination period.
- Personal scheduling conflicts, oversleeping, or forgetting the exam time.
- General exam stress or lack of preparation.

Students must provide written proof (e.g., note from a treating physician, court order, or police report) to verify the hardship before an exception is granted.

Reading Day(s): the designated day(s) after the final day of class for students to prepare for final examinations. No classes meet, including labs, recitations, projects, design/capstone courses, and studios. No final examinations are administered or due.

Policy Statement

1. Instructors are required to include a final examination as part of the course. The decision on the type of final examination shall be made by the instructor. The final examination period is counted as classroom or direct faculty instruction in accordance with the University's Credit Hour Policy.

   The final examination must be included in the course syllabus so students can plan accordingly. Any change in the type or nature of the final examination must be communicated with students through written notification prior to the withdrawal deadline. An instructor may establish, within the course syllabus, exemption policies from the final examination based upon individual student success metrics on all classwork excluding the final examination.

Final examinations in fully online courses must be online examinations. Final examinations in hybrid or face-to-face courses can be either online or face-to-face examinations.

No assessment other than a final examination may be due at any point during the final examination schedule.

2. If there is an in-class final examination, it must be scheduled during the final examination period.

   If there is a final examination completed outside of class, it must be due at the end of the final examination period or at a time after the final examination period that does not conflict with any other final examination period during the final examination schedule.

3. Students must be given the entire final examination period to complete their work, even if the final examination is designed to be completed in less time. This provision applies to all final examinations, including those given online. At the discretion of the instructor, students who arrive late, who exit the room without permission, or who are absent for an excessive period of time may forfeit the opportunity to complete the final examination.

4. No student events (i.e., campus activities, meetings, or social functions) may be scheduled on campus during the final examination periods.

5. Assignments (or assessments) may be administered or due during the last week of class if they **altogether** account for less than or equal to 15% of the student's course grade and are listed on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester. Grading based on course attendance policies as specified in the syllabus are excluded from this 15% rule.

   Instructors are expected to post all other course grades prior to the final examination.

6. Instructors may schedule optional study review sessions for students during reading days, but no credit or extra credit may be attached to these optional sessions. New content may not be covered, and any materials (e.g., handouts, slides, practice problems) that are provided at these optional review sessions must be made available to all students. This provision does not require that such optional sessions be audio or video recorded.

7. Requests to change a final examination day and/or time for an individual student ordinarily will not be permitted; however, such a change may be allowed for hardship cases or for extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. The student must submit the written request to the instructor at least two weeks prior to the final examination schedule, and, if approved, the student's final examination may be

rescheduled at an appropriate time. The instructor will notify the associate dean of any approved changes. In case of an emergency within the last two weeks of class, the student should make a request to the associate dean. If the student requests to change multiple final examination days or times within the same semester, the student must receive approval from the associate dean. All requests connected to university-sponsored groups or events, such as athletic events or musical ensembles, must be generated by the sponsoring program and processed through the associate dean's office(s) of the school(s) in which the affected courses are offered.

8. If a student has two final examinations scheduled for the same time, the course having the lower course number shall be considered in conflict. If a student is scheduled for three final examinations on one day, the assessment scheduled for the middle period shall be considered in conflict. In either case, the student must notify the instructor of the course in conflict no later than one week before the first day on the final examination schedule. In such case, the final examination in that course shall be given at a mutually satisfactory time by agreement of the instructor and the student subject to appeal to the appropriate associate dean for the course. If the student fails to notify the instructor as required, the student shall, at the discretion of the instructor and subject to appeal to the appropriate associate dean for the course:

    - be given the final examination at an alternative time (during the final examination schedule) at the faculty member's choosing which does not conflict with the student's other final examination periods as presented within this policy, or
    - receive a course grade of "ABX/ABXSU" with an opportunity to take a makeup final examination during the following academic term, or
    - receive a score of zero on the final examination.

9. Students with approved accommodations from the University's Office of Access and Accommodations must follow procedures for making reservations in Accommodate one week prior to the first day of final examinations. The Office of Access and Accommodations does not approve moving final examination days; any changes must follow University procedures for exceptions as outlined in this policy.

10. Faculty requests for any exception to this policy, including a change to the final examination day, time, or location within the final examination schedule, must be submitted to the Provost for approval prior to the last two weeks of classes. Any such request must include the approval from the academic dean. Requests to change the final examination day, time, or location must also include proof of unanimous consent of students as shown by an anonymous survey that includes the **specific** day, time and location for the final examination. The instructor must communicate any approved exceptions with students.

Additional Resources

1. Credit Hour Policy: https://policies.mercer.edu/credit-hour/
2. Grade of ABX or ABXSU: Consult the Academic Information section of the University catalog: https://catalogs.mercer.edu/
3. Office of Access and Accommodation: https://access.mercer.edu/
4. Students in programs other than Macon residential undergraduate programs should follow guidance on final examinations as provided in the school/college handbooks located in MyMercer.

History

Revised July 31, 2023
Revised June 14, 2024
Revised July 14, 2025
Revised October 30, 2026