

# Regulations on Final Examinations and Regular Examinations for the Semester and on Religious Observances

## University Governance

Thu 8/11/2016 2:37 PM

To: KU Lawrence Faculty and Staff <kulfs@ku.edu>; KU Graduate Teaching Assistants <kugta@ku.edu>;

August 11, 2016

TO: Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Teaching Assistants

FROM: Albert Sheu, Mathematics  
Chair, University Senate Calendar Committee for FY17

RE: Regulations on Final Examinations and Regular Examinations for the Semester and on Religious Observances

Occasionally our Committee receives reports from students that instructors have scheduled final exams during the last week of classes or during Stop Day. The purpose of this memo is to remind instructors that they are required to follow *University Senate Rules and Regulations ("USRR")*, Sec. 1.3 and Sec. 1.4, concerning final exam and regular exam scheduling. The rules were developed to protect students from the potential development of unmanageable test loads.

The regulations require that the last major exam of a class, whether covering material for the entire semester or only a section of the course material, may not be held during the last week of classes or on Stop Day. The appointed time for the exam during the final exam period for fall 2016 is listed on the Registrar's website at <http://registrar.ku.edu/exams/>. This regulation applies to classes on both the Lawrence and Edwards Campuses. Rules regarding special exams and conflicting exam times are on the Registrar's website. <http://registrar.ku.edu/final-exam-policies>

USRR 1.3.2 does specify: *If a "take home" final exam or an online final exam is given in a class with a regular meeting time, it may not be due prior to the end of the regularly scheduled final exam period for the class. If a proctored or online final exam is given for an online course, the due date shall be noted in the course syllabus. The above does not apply to assignments such as projects, performances, or papers. These may be due or take place during the last week of regular classes. Projects, performances, paper, and other coursework may be due during finals week only in lieu of a final exam. This rule does not apply to coursework for which the student has received an extension.*

The Calendar Committee does allow exceptions to the rule, but only under very special circumstances, with the best interests of students the overriding criterion. A vote by the class, even when unanimous, is not considered justification since, among other concerns, it can unintentionally place students under pressure to follow their peers. Also, special recognition ceremonies (held before the final exam week) are not grounds for rescheduling final examinations. Petitions for exceptions to the rule should be directed to me by email ([asheu@ku.edu](mailto:asheu@ku.edu)) and must be received at least three weeks before the last scheduled day of classes.

Instructors are also reminded that normally, exams and tests other than final examinations CANNOT be scheduled outside of regular class or laboratory hours. As stated in USRR 1.4.2, examinations and tests other than final examinations may be given at times other than regular class hours ONLY when the time and place have been approved by the Calendar Committee and published in advance in the Schedule of Classes (<http://classes.ku.edu/>).

The complete text of the final exam policy in USRR 1.3.2 can be found at <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art1sect3>. The policy for tests other than final exams in USRR 1.4.2 is at <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art1sect4>.

Please also consult USRR 1.3.9 and USRR 1.4.5 for the exam policies regarding needed accommodations of students who serve in the military.

<http://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR#art1sect3>

### **Religious Observances**

As you finalize your syllabi for the coming semester, please review the University Senate Rules and Regulations concerning academic schedules and academic work and its evaluation. Please note that USRR 1.4.3 requires instructors to ask, at the beginning of the semester, for students to speak with them privately should examination schedules conflict with mandated religious observances. Additionally, USRR 2.1.4 states that students should not be penalized for absences due to mandated religious observances. The full texts of the specific sections follow:

#### **Procedures for avoiding conflicts with mandated religious observances:**

1.4.3 Examinations and tests other than final examinations should not be scheduled in conflict with mandated religious observances. In order to ascertain in a given class if a scheduled examination conflicts with a mandated religious observance, at the beginning of the semester the instructor shall ask students who may be affected to identify themselves privately so that a make-up examination may be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time.

2.1.4 In cases where part of a class grade is based on attendance, a student shall not be penalized for absence from regularly scheduled class activities which conflict with mandated religious observances. In cases of conflicts between regularly scheduled class activities and mandated religious observances, the student is responsible for initiating discussion with the instructor to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

If you have any questions about the implementation of these policies, please contact the Governance Office ([govern@ku.edu](mailto:govern@ku.edu) or 864-5169).

Thank you for cooperating with these important regulations.