

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

S17-1, University Policy, Final Examinations, or Culminating Activities Policy

Legislative History:

At its meeting of February 13, 2017, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Kaufman for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee. This policy replaces S06-4 which required that all classes have a final examination or other appropriate culminating activity at the scheduled final examination time. There was concern that final exams were being rescheduled to times not allowed under S06-4. This policy clarifies final examinations and/or culminating activities policy and procedures.

Replaces: S06-4

Approved and signed by President Mary A. Papazian on March 7, 2017.

**University Policy
Final Examinations, or Culminating Activities Policy**

Whereas, SJSU's final examination periods are among the longest in the CSU system; and

Whereas, Research shows that students, especially teenagers and young adults, are not the most effective academically in early morning hours. It suggests that taking early morning examinations is akin to taking examinations with jetlag, which can be problematic given that such final examinations and culminating activities may be a significant portion of a student's final course grade; and

Whereas, In response to this body of evidence, the State of California now requires high schools to begin no earlier than 08:30 AM; and

Whereas, Early exam times outside of business hours may make commutes

challenging for students who rely on public transportation to arrive in time to take a final exam that begins at 07:15 AM, the current start time of final examinations; and

Whereas, Early morning examination times may also cause stress for students who have family obligations, such as childcare or eldercare, that are dependent on business hours; and

Whereas, Early morning examination periods may be assigned to classes that start as late as 10:25, which is significantly different than the normal class meeting times; and

Whereas, The current policy related to culminating activities and final examinations does not provide equal consideration for culminating activities other than final examinations, such as papers, projects, artistic works, presentations, or performances; and

Whereas, With the expansion of online coursework and programs, the policy should provide specific guidance on culminating activities and final examinations for online, hybrid, and asynchronous courses; and

Whereas, The current Excused Absence Policy ([S22-2](#)) should be clearly identified and applied within the context of culminating activities for culminating activities and final examinations; therefore, be it,

Resolved, That University Policy S17-1 be revised as follows.

Approved: April 29, 2024

Vote: 14-0-0

Present: Samuel Brown, Diya Doshi, Lisa Giampaolo, Estevan Guzman, Melinda Jackson (non-voting), Ravisha Mathur, Kelly Masegian, Gilles Muller, Sarab Multani, Iris Price, Eric Rollerson, Soma Sen, Jon Tucker, Julian Vogel, Gregory Wolcott

Absent: Amy Leisenring (non-voting), Romey Sabalius, Laura Sullivan-Green

Financial Impact: None

Workload Impact: Small initial workload for Academic Scheduling to modify the current final exam schedule, as well as update relevant documentation.

Original Policy:

Approved: November 14, 2016

Vote: 16-0-0

Present: Campsey, Kaufman, Khan, Medina, Medrano, Miller, Nash, Ng (non-voting), Perea, Sen, Simpson, Spica, Sullivan-Green, Trousdale, Walters, Wilson, Whyte

Financial Impact: None

Workload Impact: Small workload addition for chairs to educate and consult with faculty members about appropriate culminating experiences.

University Policy

Culminating Activities and Final Examinations

Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses. Culminating activities can include a final examination, research paper, project, creative work, performance, portfolio, or other appropriate assignment. Supervision, internship, and individual study courses are not required to have a culminating activity.

Timing and Schedule for All Culminating Activities

Culminating activities, including final examinations, shall not be held or be due prior to the start of the culminating activity period for the given academic year term. They shall not be held or be due during the instructional period or on “Study/Conference Day.”

All courses are assigned a day/time for their culminating activity to be held or be due based on the start time and meeting pattern of the course and its mode of instruction. These culminating activity sessions shall be scheduled during the final week of the academic year term, as assigned in the academic calendar, and shall:

- Be scheduled for no more than two hours in duration;
- Start no earlier than 0830; and,
- Be spaced a minimum of fifteen minutes apart.

The schedule for the culminating activity period for each academic year term shall be published prior to the beginning of the registration period for that term.

Final Examinations or other Timed Culminating Activities

In the case where there is to be a scheduled final examination, whether in person or online, it must occur during the scheduled culminating activity session for that course. If a final examination is to be a take-home examination, it may not be due prior to the start of the scheduled culminating activity session for that course.

Courses with multiple sections may be assigned a day/time for a group final examination. This examination schedule will be announced at the beginning of the semester in the course syllabus.

Online or hybrid courses without a designated day or time will be able to select a

culminating activity session from a designated list offered by the university.

Submission Dates for Culminating Activities

Submission dates and times for final papers, projects, creative works, portfolios, or other culminating activities shall fall no earlier than the beginning of the scheduled culminating activity session for the course.

Exceptions to Timing and Schedule for Culminating Activities

Courses may have culminating activities where students cannot feasibly be examined during the scheduled culminating activity session. Instructors or course coordinators, as appropriate, shall provide a rationale for an exception to the college dean for approval, with notification to the department chair/director.

Students may request an excused absence for a culminating activity per the university Student Excused Absences Policy ([S22-2](#)). Students should inform their instructor of the need to reschedule the culminating activity as quickly as feasible so a suitable alternative can be identified.

A student may request the rescheduling of a culminating activity if three or more are held/due within a 24-hour period. Requests must be made at least three weeks prior to the last class meeting of the semester. If one of those culminating activities scheduled for that 24-hour period is an individual activity, such as a final paper or project, the deadline for that activity will be moved to a mutually agreeable time within the culminating activity period.