

**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. On March 7, 2017, President Mary A. Papazian signed University Policy, S17-1.

Replaces: S06-4

On September 30, 2024, the Academic Senate approved Amendment A to University Policy S17-1, Culminating Activities and Final Examinations Policy. On October 7, 2024, President Cynthia Teniente-Matson signed Amendment A to University Policy S17-1.

Amends: S17-1

**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:** September 22, 2024

**Vote:** 10-0-1

**Present:** Katelyn Gambian, Lisa Giampaolo, Yoon Chung Han, Resa Kely (non-voting), Amy Leisenring (non-voting), Ravisha Mathur, Kelly Masegian, Marco Meniketti, Soma Sen, Laura Sullivan-Green, Sidhant Sadawarti, Julian Vogel, Gregory Wolcott

**Absent:** Leonardo Brown, Eric Rollerson, Jon Tucker

**Financial Impact:** None

**Workload Impact:** Initial workload for Academic Scheduling to modify the current final exam schedule, as well as update relevant documentation. For the first two years of implementation there will be additional workload for Academic Scheduling. In addition, Academic Affairs will need to provide consistent communication throughout the division to ensure that faculty, students, and staff have access

to the updates within the policy.

**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. This applies to courses offered during Regular Session Fall and Spring<sup>1</sup>, during intersessions (Winter and Summer terms), and in all special session programs. Culminating activities may 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.

Culminating activities for Regular Session Fall and Spring Courses, including final examinations, must be completed no later than the last day of the Culminating Activity Period (“Makeup Day<sup>2</sup>”). Culminating activities for intersession, summer term regular session, and special session courses must be completed no later than the last instructional day<sup>2</sup>.

### Timing and Schedule for All Culminating Activities for Regular Session Fall and Spring Courses

Culminating activities, including final examinations, shall not be held or be due prior to the start of the “Culminating Activity Period<sup>2</sup>” for the given term. They shall not be held or be due during the instructional period or on “Study/Conference Day<sup>2</sup>.”

All courses are assigned a day/time for their culminating activity to be held or be due based on the start time, meeting pattern of the course and its mode of instruction. These “Culminating Activity Time Slots” shall be scheduled during the designated “Culminating Activity Period<sup>2</sup>,” as assigned in the academic calendar<sup>2</sup>, 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.

Courses with multiple components or multiple meeting patterns must specify which component(s) and/or meeting time(s) will have a culminating activity scheduled.

The schedule for the “Culminating Activity Period” for each Regular Session Fall and Spring courses shall be published prior to the beginning of the registration period.

#### Final Examinations or other Timed Culminating Activities

In the case where there is to be a scheduled final examination, whether in person

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<sup>1</sup> For definitions of term sessions, please refer to <https://www.sjsu.edu/academicscheduling/class-scheduling/types/index.php>.

<sup>2</sup> For identification of these days, please refer to the academic calendar that applies to your term session.

or online, it must occur during the scheduled “Culminating Activity Time Slot” 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 Time Slot” 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 Time Slot” from a designated list offered by the university.

#### Submission Dates for Culminating Activities other than Final Examinations

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 Time Slot” for the course.

### **Timing and Schedule for All Culminating Activities for Intersession, Summer Regular Session, and Special Session Courses**

For intersession, summer regular session, and special session courses culminating activities are typically scheduled for the last instructional<sup>2</sup> day. The culminating activity schedule must be available in the syllabus on the first instructional day<sup>2</sup> of the course.

Courses with multiple components or multiple meeting patterns must specify which component(s) and/or meeting time(s) will have a culminating activity scheduled.

### **Exceptions to Timing and Schedule for Culminating Activities**

Courses may have culminating activities where students cannot feasibly be assessed during the scheduled “Culminating Activity Time Slot.” 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. Exceptions will normally be requested before the start of the term and approved by the dean's office and then included in the syllabus. Deadlines for the exceptions will be set by the Office of the Provost.

Students may request an excused absence for a culminating activity per the university Excused Absence 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 their schedule results in three or more culminating activities held/due within a 24-hour period.

Requests must be made at least three weeks prior to the last class instructional day<sup>2</sup> 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.

### **Oversight of Culminating Activities**

The department chairs will oversee culminating activities in a manner that assures that the rules for culminating activities are followed. If a dispute arises, the dean (or designee) will be consulted.