




UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND  
UNIVERSITY SENATE

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<http://www.senate.umd.edu>

Date: January 21, 2010

To: Neil Blough  
Chair, Educational Affairs

From: Elise Miller-Hooks   
Chair, Senate Executive Committee

Subject: Review of the Final Exam Policy 09-10-07

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) reviewed your report, "Review of the Final Exam Policy 09-10-07," at its January 19, 2010 meeting. The SEC would like to thank the Educational Affairs Committee for its time and effort expended in responding to the charge.

In the course of reviewing the Committee's report, it was discovered that there is no existing final exam policy at the University. Thus, the recommendation for a change to an existing policy would, in effect, be a recommendation for a change merely to a practice. The SEC recommends that the Committee reconsider this issue. In its deliberations, it would be useful for the Committee to first evaluate whether or not an official final exam policy should be created. If the committee decides that a new policy is needed, it should then decide whether there should be a limit of no more than two or three final exams in one day.

The SEC requests that the Committee review past legislation and supporting documentation before reaching a decision on whether or not a new policy is needed and if any changes in practice would be warranted. Documents to consider include, but are not limited to: Review the Scheduling of Final Examinations (Senate Doc# 01-02-04), the Registrar's review from 2005, Exam Schedule Effectiveness from the Registrar's Office and any statistics available from the Registrar. Additionally, the SEC feels that the committee should meet with some of the university's administrators who are responsible for implementing the policy, including administrators from the Offices of the Registrar, Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Studies, in the course of your deliberations.

If creation of a new policy is recommended, the policy should be drafted and vetted with the University's Legal Office and those who would be responsible for its implementation mentioned above. Note that necessary changes to the Faculty Handbook, Undergraduate Catalog and Schedule of Classes follow new policy implementation and fall outside the purview of this committee.

We look forward to your revised report on this issue. If you have any questions, please contact Reka Montfort in the Senate Office ([reka@umd.edu](mailto:reka@umd.edu) or x55804).

Attachments

Cc: Chelsea Benincasa

01-02-04



JUL 13 2001

# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

July 12, 2001

Chair Ellie Weingaertner  
Campus Senate Executive Committee  
Marie Mount Hall  
Campus

Dear Chair Weingaertner:

I am writing to express my concern for students who are obligated to write more than two final examinations on the same day and to request the Campus Senate to review the scheduling of final examinations with an eye to developing a policy change that will limit the number of final examinations that any one student must write to two per day. If this is not possible, I should like the campus to reduce the number of students who have to write more than two final examinations on the same day, do a better job of alerting students and professors to the problem, and urge professors to accommodate students with three or more examinations on any one day.

Based on an estimate provided by Mary Ann Granger and the Office of the Registrar (see attached), it appears that 1,400 students have three and 140 students have four final examinations on the same day. I expect that changing the academic calendar is a onerous task but I think a change will help students improve their academic performance.

1. Perhaps the campus could eliminate the need for students to write more than two examinations on any one day by increasing the number of final examination time slots.

One way to do this is to increase the number of days for administering final examinations. One way to do this is to begin the semester a day or two earlier than we do now. Another way is to surrender Exam Study Day and to begin final examinations on that day. Still another way to do this is to count the time of the final examination as classroom instruction just as we do now for the mid-semester and other examinations. Campus regulations call for 12.5 hours of classroom instruction for each credit hour. The campus honors this requirement by scheduling 15 three hour classes or 30 seventy-five minute classes or 45 fifty minute classes. Some of this classroom instruction time is devoted to quizzes, mid-terms exams, etc. to measure how well master the material. If these examinations are legitimately counted as classroom instruction, why not the final examination?

Chair Weingaertner  
Campus Senate Executive Committee  
July 12, 2001  
page 2

2. Perhaps increasing the flexibility of scheduling final examinations would be of some help.

One way of doing this is to reduce the number of common final examinations. Excluding the final examination schedule of the Smith School of Business, 50 percent of the 38 final examination time slots are devoted to a single course.

3. If the campus is not able to schedule final examinations so no student has more than two examinations on any one day, I urge the campus to consider ways of reducing the number of students confronted with this problem.

Perhaps this could be accomplished by permitting students with three or more final examinations on the same day to re-schedule one exam (the exam in the course with the smallest enrollment?). If we can't do this for all 1,400 students with three final examinations on the same day at least we can do it for the 140 who have four exams on the same day. This option requires that professors be informed of the students with three or more exams on the same day perhaps by including a code on class rosters.

Another way of reducing the number of students with three or more finals on the same day is to excuse graduating seniors from final examinations during final examination week by scheduling their final examinations earlier, during the last week of classes.

Another way to alleviate the problem is for some professors to provide take-home final examinations (give the students the final on the last day of class and make it due the day of the scheduled final).

Some colleges and universities permit students to self-schedule final examinations but to write their examinations in assigned rooms served by proctors. Perhaps some of our courses and/or departments might be able to adopt this practice.

4. At the present time we slough off the problem with the disingenuous remark that "students are advised to consider the time of final examinations when scheduling their classes." This is not effective advising. I suggest that the Office of the Registrar develop an electronic prompt to highlight student schedules that require more than two final examinations on the same day (and to report to all professors the names of students with more than three examinations on one day).

Respectfully submitted,

*John Pease*

John Pease  
Sociology

August 23, 2001

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Professor Ian W. Hardie  
Chair, Senate Academic Procedures and Standards Committee

**FROM:** Ellie O. Weingaerter *EW*  
Chair, University Senate

**SUBJECT:** Proposal to Review the Scheduling of Final Examinations  
(Senate Document Number 01-02-04)

At its August 9 meeting, the Senate Executive Committee discussed Professor Pease's proposal to review how the University schedules final examinations. The intent of the proposal is to provide relief for students with three, four, or five exams scheduled for the same day. Many members of the Executive Committee, including Professor Pease, would prefer an informal solution to this problem by having individual students contact faculty and arrange another time for one or more of these exams. The informal approach, however, has not worked well for some students. Even among the members of the Executive Committee there is an undergraduate who can witness to the hardship of trying to manage four exams on the same day and renegotiate the time of two of them set for the same hour.

The Executive Committee and I ask that you consider all of the options in the attached proposal to solve or reduce the scope of the problem. I also charge you and the Academic Procedures and Standards Committee to focus on the following recommendations, some from the Pease proposal, others from members of the Executive Committee. You may want to consult with appropriate administrators in formulating a response to these points.

- Establish a written procedure for rescheduling multiple final examinations.
- Program Testudo to generate the final exam dates of students, put them on their class schedules, and add a notice urging students to contact their instructors about conflicts.
- Make students personally responsible for informing faculty at the beginning of the semester of conflicting final examinations.
- Give final examinations according to the meeting time of the class and not schedule exams so that all sections of a course have their exam at the same time.
- Consider whether there should be a limit on the number of exams given on a single day. If there should be a limit, determine whether it should be two or more.

Investigate whether it would be easier for the Registrar's Office and the faculty to accommodate scheduling changes for the smaller number of students with four or more exams in a single day.

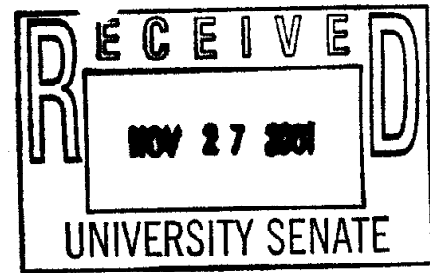
- Reduce the number of common final examinations on campus.
- Evaluate whether different final examinations for a single course can be equal and fair.
- Designate a point person in each college to help students resolve examination conflicts.

The Executive Committee and I also welcome your own proposals for resolving the problem of scheduling final examinations. Please submit your committee's report by Friday, November 9, 2001, to the Senate Office. If you need assistance or more time to complete the report, please call Mary Giles on extension 5-5804.

cc: S.Swank

Attachment

November 26, 2001



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Ellie O. Weingaertner  
Chair, University Senate

**FROM:** Academic Procedures and Standards Committee  
Ian Hardie, Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ian Hardie".

**SUBJECT:** Proposal to review the scheduling of final examinations  
(Senate Document Number 01-02-04)

This charge to the APAS Committee asked us to review how the University schedules final examinations, with the intent to provide relief for students with multiple final examinations scheduled for the same day. The committee discussed this issue both from a broad perspective (including canceling final examinations) and with respect to the specific recommendations provided by Dr. Pease and by the Executive Committee. In the course of our review, we collected information from other Universities as to their policies regarding multiple examinations on the same day, solicited explanations of the reasons for scheduling common examinations from Departments who administered them (Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics), solicited information from the registrar's office about the possibility of revising the current final schedule, reviewed their ongoing effort to revise the schedule to better "spread" finals across the existing examination period, requested information from the Office of Information Technology about the feasibility of including a final examination schedule for each student as part of the registration process, and solicited information about the possibility of altering the length of the final examination period from Associate Provost Victor Korenman. You asked us to return a report by November 9, 2001. Due to our meeting schedule, we are sending you that report now, in the form of this memorandum.

The magnitude of the existing problem can be seen from the following statistics for the Spring semester 2001: of 31,373 students taking finals in the Spring 2001 semester, 1,411 (4.5%) had three or more examinations scheduled for the same day. About 10% of these students had four finals, "one poor soul had five" and two students had three examinations per day on two successive days. These figures included some graduate students, which we attempted to have removed, but which was not feasible to accomplish.

At this time, the University of Maryland has no policy limiting the number of final examinations that may be taken on a single day. Since adoption of such a policy would establish the extent of the problem (1400 if limited to two examinations and 140 if limited to three), the committee held extensive discussion about establishing this type of policy. Based on that discussion, the Committee suggests the Senate consider establishment of the following policy:

Students whose class schedule requires them to take more than three final examinations on the same day have the right to have one of the examinations re-scheduled. The student must take responsibility for initiating the change. When re-scheduling is necessary, the student should contact the instructor of the class with the smallest number of students. Notification must be made at least two weeks prior to the start of the scheduled period of the final examination.

It should be noted that the policy is stated in terms of a day instead of a 24-hour time period. Thus students may be faced with three examinations on successive days or three examinations in one day, including one after 4:00 pm, and a fourth at 8:00 o'clock in the morning of the following day. The proposed policy may need further consideration if it turns out that many students are faced with such situations. At this point, however, we would prefer to find out if such problems persist before attempting to alleviate them.

If the Spring 2001 numbers were representative, the proposed policy would affect about 140 students per semester. It would allow up to six hours of examinations in a single day, the same number that would apply in a university with two three-hour examinations scheduled per day. This policy is conservative, since it does not reduce the number of examinations to two in a given day. It relies in part on two other factors that may reduce the future number of students with more than three examinations: namely that it may be possible to rearrange the final examination schedule so that less students have three examinations on a given day, and that more attention can be paid to ensuring that the student is made aware of his or her expected final examination schedule when he or she registers for classes. The stated policy would be generally consistent with that of other peer institutions: of ten that were investigated, two (Michigan State and Virginia Tech) have policies where students with more than two two-hour examinations can reschedule. The others generally allow three or more examinations before rescheduling occurs.

Policies for rescheduling a final examination among the peer institutions range from that of University of California, Davis:

“Students wishing to adjust their final exam schedule because of multiple exams on the same day may discuss their problem with the instructors of the courses. There is no regulation to mandating a change.”

to that of North Carolina State:

“No student shall be required to take three consecutively scheduled final examinations within any 24-hour period. If students find that they have three consecutively scheduled exams, they should report to the Department of Registration and Records before the exams are given, to have their schedules verified and to obtain a form approving their request to change the date of a specific examination as designated by the student.”

The policy that the committee found most adaptable is that of Iowa State:

“If a student has three examinations within one day and wishes to change the time of one of them, he or she should contact the instructor of the course having the smallest number of students enrolled.”

As at Iowa State, direct arrangements between the student and instructor are seen to be more efficient. This informal procedure is in operation at present and seems to work well. Also the number of expected cases, 140 out of over 31 thousand, minimizes the need for an explicit administrative procedure. Thus the proposed policy is oriented to affirming that the university expects the instructor to accommodate a re-scheduling request when one meeting the “more than three” criterion is received.

The Committee also recommends that the registrar’s office continue to investigate the re-scheduling of final examinations during the exam period. This is now underway, following an analytical procedure developed at Clemson. As changes are made to more effectively spread examinations across days for more students, repeating the analysis of Spring 2001 should be done to monitor their effect. We propose completing this option before considering changes such as replacement of common examinations with examinations scheduled by section or changing the length of the final examination schedule.

A second administrative change concerns one of the specific recommendations in the charge sent to the Committee. That recommendation is to “Program Testudo to generate the final exam dates of students, put them on their class schedules, and add a notice urging students to contact their instructors about conflicts.” When asked about this possibility, the OIT application development staff responded that there were several nontrivial technical difficulties with implementing it. The essential problem seems to be that the final examination schedule is not complete at the time of registration; instead conflicts are resolved and changes are accommodated over the course of the first half of the semester. If this sensible option is not feasible, the committee recommends that other ways of revising Testudo be explored and implemented. Encouraging students to check the final examination schedule when registering for classes could substantially decrease the number of events of three or more final examinations in a day. It would also help if advisors were periodically reminded to check the final examination schedule and to discuss it with a student whenever advising about course schedules.

All of the Departments contacted about scheduling common examinations at different times strongly opposed this suggestion, in part because of increased costs of developing examinations, in part because of the need to give equivalent examinations, and in part because of the possibility of information about the content of the examination spreading between examination dates. The proposed policy probably would exempt most common examinations from rescheduling requests, because the number of enrolled students would be smaller in another class. When the costs of revising common final examination periods for courses like MATH 110, MATH 220, etc. are weighed against the possibility that more than a few students with these courses as part of their schedule would have more than three finals in a given day, it seems prudent to see if the multiple examination problem cannot be resolved by other means first. If it emerges from the suggested



monitoring that many students with schedules that include common finals also have to reschedule finals, then this possibility can be reconsidered.

As can be seen from the above, the Committee is recommending that the Senate consider a new policy – formal establishment of the student's right to have final examinations rescheduled in appropriate circumstances. It recommends completion of an ongoing effort to re-schedule existing examinations so as to minimize the multiple examination problem, monitoring of the number of students faced with this problem, and an effort to ensure that students are reminded to consider the final examination schedule when developing class schedules. The present procedure of student and instructor rescheduling the final examination on a case-by-case basis is left intact. This procedure appears to work well and we do not see a better way to do this.



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January 7, 2002

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Professor Ian W. Hardie  
Chair, Senate Academic Procedures and Standards Committee

**FROM:** Ellie O. Weingaerter *EDW*  
Chair, University Senate

**SUBJECT:** Proposal to Review the Scheduling of Final Examinations  
(Senate Document Number 01-02-04)

At its meeting on December 18, the Executive Committee discussed your committee's comprehensive and well-researched report on the scheduling of final examinations. The Executive Committee was pleased to hear that the Registrar's Office is now working to spread examinations more effectively throughout the final exam period for the benefit of our students. I appreciate your wisdom in waiting for the results of the Registrar's efforts before considering such alternatives as replacing common examinations or extending the duration of the final exam schedule. The Executive Committee is disappointed that currently there is no way for the Registrar, whether through Testudo or otherwise, to red flag students with four or more exams on one day. The Committee continues to believe that such a warning would be a consistent and effective means of alerting students to four or more exams on a single day.

The Executive Committee and I generally support the policy statement that you have prepared but recommend that your committee consider some changes to make the policy more explicit and more effective. The Committee felt that instructors should have more than two weeks' notice of a student's intention to reschedule a final examination. It urged that your final sentence on notification should be replaced with this or a similar statement: "Arrangements to reschedule should be made during the first two weeks of the class."

The Executive Committee expressed concern that the policy does not take into account that the instructor with the smallest class may not be in the best position to create another exam. Faculty members who offer objective tests in a multiple choice or short answer format have more difficulty in preparing alternate exams than those who give essay exams. The Executive Committee asks you to develop a scheme for helping students and instructors decide which of their exams could best be rescheduled.

Professor Ian Hardie  
January 7, 2002

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The language of the policy should, we think, stipulate very clearly that if students do not follow the rules, they must accept the consequences. However, there should also be assurances to the students that they will be helped if they do follow the rules. The policy should make it clear that instructors are now urged and expected to accommodate students who have more than three finals in one day. It seems to the Executive Committee that students who are not successful in rescheduling one of their four exams should have the option of appealing to their Dean's office for help. The Committee believes that this right of appeal should be included in the policy.

There is one remaining issue that I ask your committee to discuss with the Registrar. In the recent past the Registrar's Office has made great efforts to address the problem of Saturday exams. As you may be aware, students of two large religious communities have their weekly services on Saturday. Exams on Saturday for these communities are either a hardship or an impossibility. Would your committee explore with the Registrar whether Saturday finals could be completely abolished.

Please submit your report to the Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall, by Monday, April 1, 2002. If you have any questions, please call Dr. Mary Giles on extension 5-5804 or contact her by e-mail, at [mgiles@deans.umd.edu](mailto:mgiles@deans.umd.edu).

EOW:mdg

cc: S. Swank

Attachments



**TRANSMITTAL FORM FOR REPORT/PROPOSAL/RESOLUTION**

DATE PRESENTED TO THE SENATE: **April 4, 2002**

To: **UNIVERSITY SENATE**

From: Ian Hardie, Academic Procedures and Standards Committee

NAME OF CHAIR AND SENATE COMMITTEE

Subject of Report: Recommendation to Establish a Policy to Allow Students to Reschedule Final Examinations When they have More than Three in a Single Day

Senate Document Number: 01-02-04

Date of Charge to Committee (if applicable):

**Routing is:** (Check only one)

- to Executive Committee
- to the Senate (underline one) [for information only] [for discussion only] [**for Senate action**].

**Enclosed Report contains:** (Complete for reports requiring Senate action)

- a (underline one) [new] [replacement for existing] [**amendment to existing**] campus policy.
- comments and recommendations on policy submitted to committee for review
- a (underline one) [curricular or academic/administrative proposal] [plan of organization] for Senate approval.
- proposed amendment to (circle one) [Campus Plan of Organization] [Senate Bylaws].
- resolution or motion for Senate debate and action

**Senate should vote:** (Complete for reports requiring Senate action)

- on resolutions or recommendations one by one
- in a single vote.
- to endorse entire report.

**APPROVED**

APR 4 2002

Senator who will present the report: Senator Ian Hardie

**UM SENATE**

Presenter's telephone extension: 5-1284

## ABSTRACT OF COMMITTEE REPORT

SUBJECT: Recommendation to Establish a Policy to Allow Students to Reschedule  
Final Examinations When they have More than Three in a Single Day

SENATE DOCUMENT NUMBER: 01-02-04

*Please write a brief ABSTRACT (less than three (3) paragraphs) of the Report or Resolution submitted.*

The Senate Academic Procedures and Standards Committee recommends that the following statement should be added to the Undergraduate Catalog as number 6 under Assessment in the section, Attendance and Assessment/Examinations. The present number 6 and numbers following should be changed to accommodate this addition.

Students whose class schedule requires them to take more than three final examinations on the same day have the right to reschedule examinations so they have no more than three on a given day. The student must take the responsibility for initiating the rescheduling or be responsible for taking the examinations as scheduled. When rescheduling is necessary, the student should first contact the instructor(s) of the classes. Students who have difficulties rescheduling examinations with their instructors should contact the Dean's office of their academic program for help. Faculty are urged and expected to accommodate students with legitimate rescheduling requests.

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Name of Chair of Senate Committee: Ian Hardie

Committee Name: Academic, Procedures, and Standards Committee

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**UNIVERSITY SENATE ACTION AND  
DATE OF SENATE MEETING ACTION TOOK PLACE**

**APPROVED**



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

UNIVERSITY SENATE

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March 21, 2002

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Ellie O. Weingaertner,  
Chair, University Senate

**From:** Ian Hardie,  
Chair, APAS Committee

**Subject:** Response to January 7 memorandum on the scheduling of final examinations.

The APAS Committee members appreciate your willingness to present the Senate with a proposal to establish a policy that gives undergraduate students the right to re-schedule final examinations when they have more than three in a given day. We have taken up consideration of the changes suggested by the executive committee to make the policy more effective and will address the revisions we have incorporated here. The proposed policy of our earlier memorandum has been changed and a new policy statement is given below.

First, however, we wish to address the request that we take up the abolishment of Saturday exams for religious reasons as part of this revision. Doing so creates a presumption that simple abolishment is the correct answer to a very complex issue. We asked Associate Provost Korenman to discuss formulation of the academic calendar as part of another charge to the committee. From that discussion, it appears infeasible to add another weekday examination day to the final schedule without converting the current study day into an examination day. If the study day were maintained, removing Saturday would result in a shorter examination period. A shorter schedule would force more examinations to be scheduled within each remaining day, and it would place more students into a position where they would have more than three examinations in a given day.

Commencement scheduling, graduating senior activities, implementation of a study day between classes and finals, and reasonable final examination schedules for individual students are all intertwined with the Saturday examination issue. While the need to accommodate student religious beliefs is important, doing so will have enough implications that such a proposal should receive a thorough study. For example, we don't know how many students with strong religious beliefs are affected by Saturday examinations, how many (with better advising) can develop feasible course schedules that do not involve an examination on their day of worship, whether changing some finals

for some classes within the existing period will reduce the problem, whether it would be more feasible to set up an examination rescheduling policy for individuals than to revise the examination period, or how many students would end up with four or five final examinations in a given day if the examination schedule is shortened. We do not believe we should address such a complicated issue as a last minute addition to this charge. We request that, if you wish to consider this important question, you give it full due process.

The first suggestion in your memorandum is that a student should give an instructor notice of their intention to reschedule an examination during the first two weeks of class. At the time of submission of our earlier memorandum, we did not know and had not informed you that the registrar believes it would be possible to identify students with more than three scheduled examinations after the schedule adjustment period is completed. If this can be piloted, the option of notifying these students of their examination situation and of also notifying the instructors of the affected classes becomes available. A date by which the student must reschedule can then be included as part of a notification, and this date can be specific to each semester. While such a date would be after the schedule adjustment period, it could be well before the middle of the semester. Thus we propose that the policy not specify any particular date by which rescheduling take place, that a notification procedure be developed and tested, and that a date be incorporated as part of that notification. If the notification process turns out to be unworkable, then the policy can be revisited and revised as necessary.

Your request that we develop a scheme for helping students and instructors decide which of their exams could be best scheduled has led to some extensive discussion within the committee. We have considered a decentralized policy where each student is left the option of choosing which professor to approach and a centralized process in which the dean's office of the student's academic unit determines which examination will be rescheduled. We believe that the gains from implementing a centralized process do not justify the costs, and that the student should choose which instructor or instructors to contact. Notifying the instructors of multiple examination problems plays an important role in this option, as an instructor will know that the student has a legitimate request that is in accordance with University policy, before being contacted. With that knowledge, we believe most instructors will try to accommodate the request and will turn down a student only if there are cogent reasons for doing so. This should create a situation where most students will be able to reschedule without incurring too much of a "run-around." In the unlikely event that a student does not have success in rescheduling, the policy provides an option for obtaining help from a Dean's office.

One of the costs of this student initiated and decentralized process is that it does not prevent a student from rescheduling two or three examinations in order to obtain a more desired final examination schedule, perhaps with only one or two examinations a day. The costs of this gaming will fall upon the instructors, who will have more special examinations to administer. We have not been able to think of a certain way to remove this possibility without development of a centralized rescheduling process with monitoring and coordination. If such gaming consists of isolated instances - and we believe most students will not do this - then the costs of an elaborate centralized process

may well be greater than its potential benefits. As a consequence, we propose to let this gaming happen and to see how much of a problem it becomes. We do believe it worthwhile to explore the possibility of including all of the involved courses and instructors in the notifications to the faculty. That would allow instructors to coordinate on individual cases if they feel the need to do so. Whether it is feasible to program this list of affected courses into the notification procedure also is an open question, since the pilot project is not yet developed.

Finally we have handled your concerns about student responsibility, faculty responsibility and right of appeal through re-wording of the proposed policy statement. The revised statement that we propose is:

**Students whose class schedule requires them to take more than three final examinations on the same day have the right to reschedule examinations so they have no more than three on a given day. The student must take the responsibility for initiating the rescheduling or be responsible for taking the examinations as scheduled. When rescheduling is necessary, the student should first contact the instructor(s) of the classes. Students who have difficulties rescheduling examinations with their instructors should contact the Dean's office of their academic program for help. Faculty are urged and expected to accommodate students with legitimate rescheduling requests.**

The second sentence of this revised statement is in response to your concern that the policy should clearly stipulate that if students do not do not follow the rules they must accept the consequences. Assurance to the students that they will be helped if necessary is included in the next-to-last sentence, which provides the option of appealing to their Dean's office. Finally, the last sentence of the policy makes it clear that the faculty should try to accommodate legitimate rescheduling requests. These revisions encompass the three specific changes you suggested in your memorandum.

Thank you for your suggestions. We hope you find this policy proposal to be more explicit and effective.

IH:ss





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## MEMORANDUM

Date: April 11, 2002

To: C.D. Mote, Jr., President

From: Ellie Weingaertner, <sup>EW</sup>Chair, University Senate

Subject: Recommendation to Establish a Policy to Allow Students to Reschedule Final Examinations When they have More than Three in a Single Day (Senate Doc. 01-02-04)


I am pleased to forward for your consideration the attached report entitled, "Recommendation to Establish a Policy to Allow Students to Reschedule Final Examinations When they have More than Three in a Single Day". Ian Hardie, Chair of the Senate Academic, Procedures and Standards (APAS) Committee, presented the report. The University Senate approved the proposal at its April 4, 2002 meeting.

We appreciate your consideration of the proposal and request that you inform the Senate Office of your decision as well as any subsequent action related to your conclusion.

Enclosure: Recommendation to Establish a Policy to Allow Students to Reschedule Final Examinations When they have More than Three in a Single Day (Senate Doc. 01-02-04)

EW/MG/am

cc: William Destler, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost  
Robert Hampton, Associate Provost of Academic Affairs/Dean, Undergraduate Studies  
Ian Hardie, Chair, APAS Committee  
Andrea Levy, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ann Wylie, President's Chief of Staff

Approved:   
C.D. Mote, Jr.  
President

Date: 4/15/2



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

UNIVERSITY SENATE

01-02-04

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October 20, 2004

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** William W. Destler  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

**FROM:** Arthur N. Popper <sup>ANP</sup>  
Professor of Biology and Chair of the University Senate

**SUBJECT:** Rescheduling Final Examinations

In April 2002, the University Senate passed and President Mote subsequently approved a proposal to help certain students reschedule their final examinations. Up to this time the University had no policy for rescheduling final exams. The now established procedure allows students with more than three final examinations on a single day to reschedule any additional exam for another day and time. Students take the initiative in approaching their instructors to arrange a new test date but must do so by the deadline for dropping courses.

This policy represents a compromise. An earlier proposal would have given students the right to reschedule if they had more than two finals on a single day. Some faculty and student senators felt that the policy recommended by the Senate Academic Procedures and Standard Committee did not adequately address students' best academic interests. The Senate, however, recognized the logistical and administrative burden that would be placed on the Registrar if the more than two finals rule was implemented initially. The Senate chose to adopt the more conservative approach but did approve a motion to ask the Office of Academic Affairs to revisit the policy within a year. It could then consider the possibility of reducing from three to two the number of final examinations, if scheduled, that a student must take in one day.

Two years after the passage of the rescheduling rule, I write to request that the Registrar analyze the impact on the final examination period if a student could reschedule the third of two final exams in a given day. His study should address whether this allowance would be administratively feasible. If a reduction from three to two should prove workable, please have the Registrar assess whether the new rule could be implemented within the next two years.

AP:mdg

cc: David Robb, University Registrar



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

Mitchell Building  
College Park, Maryland 20742

January 4, 2005

## Memorandum

To: William W. Destler  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

From: David Robb *David Robb*  
Registrar

Subject: Report to the Senate on Reducing From Three to Two the Number of Final Examinations That a Student Must Take on a Single Day

Background: In April 2002, the University Senate passed a proposal allowing students the option to re-schedule any final exam in excess of three on a given day. The approved proposal requires the Registrar's Office to notify all affected students and faculty during the eighth week of instruction and requires students to take the initiative in rescheduling excess exams by the end of the tenth week of instruction (which is also the deadline for dropping courses). At the same time, the Senate adopted a motion requesting that Academic Affairs review this policy after one year to assess the feasibility of reducing the final exam threshold from three to two.

Data Analysis: There is no analytical data-base for final exam scheduling. All data must be retrieved from an operational data-base that is over-written from term to term. Consequently, the following analysis is based on current Fall 2004 examination scheduling data. However, as this data does not change significantly from year to year, information on Fall 2004 final examinations is broadly representative of all terms. Information on the number of students with three or more exams and the distribution of these cases over the entire six day final exam period are displayed on the following page.

Of the 34,998 currently enrolled students for Fall 2004, only eighteen students are scheduled for more than three exams on a single day. This compares with a total of 966 students who are scheduled for more than two exams on a single day. This latter figure represents only 2.76% of the entire student body and, arguably, is an extremely small minority of students (not all of whom may wish to reschedule their exams). Conversely, **97% of student body has no more than two final exams on any given day.**

As each occurrence represents an individual negotiation between a student and a faculty member to reschedule an exam, lowering the threshold from three to two represents a fifty fold increase in the number of such individual accommodations.

### FALL 2004

#### Number of Students With Three or More Exams On Any One Day

<b>Total Students Examined</b>	<b>34,998</b>
<b>Total Students With 3+ Exams</b>	<b>966 (2.76%)</b>
<b>Freshmen</b>	<b>170 (.48%)</b>
<b>Sophomore</b>	<b>298 (.85%)</b>
<b>Juniors</b>	<b>247 (.71%)</b>
<b>Seniors</b>	<b>185 (.52%)</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>66 (.19%)</b>

### FALL 2004

#### Number of Students With Three or More Exams Per Exam Day

	<b>Total Students Examined</b>	<b># With 3+ Exams/Day</b>
<b>Day 1 (12-13-04)</b>	<b>19,050</b>	<b>131 (.69%)</b>
<b>Day 2 (12-14-04)</b>	<b>19,685</b>	<b>252 (1.3%)</b>
<b>Day 3 (12-15-04)</b>	<b>13,335</b>	<b>58 (.43%)</b>
<b>Day 4 (12-16-04)</b>	<b>19,557</b>	<b>265 (1.4%)</b>
<b>Day 5 (12-17-04)</b>	<b>17,793</b>	<b>198 (1.1%)</b>
<b>Day 6 (12-18-04)</b>	<b>12,922</b>	<b>62 (.48%)</b>

Peer Practices: There is no observable pattern of final exam policies among our AAU peer institutions. Many institutions have no limit on the number of exams students may be required to take on any given day. Schools that administer three-hour finals are more likely to limit finals to two per day (in some cases this is purely a practical matter as there are only two exam periods per day: 9-12 and 1-4).

Administrative Impact: As only 966 students (or less than 3% of the total student body) have more than two final exams on any single day, the University already does a reasonably good job in reducing and controlling the number of exams students take each day. Given existing constraints: six days of exams, two-hour exam blocks, and the

current classroom inventory it is unlikely that the Registrar's Office can further reduce the number of students scheduled for three or more exams on a single day.

A student's final exam schedule is a function of two variables: the final exam schedule itself, and each student's course selection pattern (class meeting days and time). To assist students with their course selection, the final examination schedule for courses meeting at standard class times, is made available prior to the beginning of each semester.

Faculty Impact: Limiting from three to two, the number of final exams students are required to take, will have a major impact on individual faculty members who will have to arrange the necessary accommodation.

Recommendation: Given the small number of students who are scheduled for more than two exams on a single day, efforts to completely eliminate such occurrences by manipulating the exam schedule are not administratively feasible (especially since some of these situations are the result of student scheduling choices).

Consequently, a large portion of the burden involved in rescheduling exams in excess of two per day would fall on individual faculty members, who may view this as unreasonably burdensome.

I recommend no change to the current policy, limiting to three the number of finals a student may take on any single day, unless the faculty as a body are willing to assume a significant role in accommodating affected students.

## Fall 2005

STUDENTS WITH NO EXAMS = 4437  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 1 EXAM A DAY= 16409  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 2 EXAMS A DAY= 13221  
**STUDENTS WITH MAX 3 EXAMS A DAY= 1077**  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 4 EXAMS A DAY= 27  
STUDENTS WITH 5+ EXAMS A DAY= 0

## Fall 2007

STUDENTS WITH NO EXAMS = 5377  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 1 EXAM A DAY= 15501  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 2 EXAMS A DAY= 14479  
**STUDENTS WITH MAX 3 EXAMS A DAY= 1295**  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 4 EXAMS A DAY= 27  
STUDENTS WITH 5+ EXAMS A DAY= 0

## Spring 2008

STUDENTS WITH NO EXAMS = 5020  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 1 EXAM A DAY= 15177  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 2 EXAMS A DAY= 13382  
**STUDENTS WITH MAX 3 EXAMS A DAY= 1217**  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 4 EXAMS A DAY= 42  
STUDENTS WITH 5+ EXAMS A DAY= 0

## Fall 2008

STUDENTS WITH NO EXAMS = 5177  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 1 EXAM A DAY= 16299  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 2 EXAMS A DAY= 14918  
**STUDENTS WITH MAX 3 EXAMS A DAY= 1223**  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 4 EXAMS A DAY= 29  
STUDENTS WITH 5+ EXAMS A DAY= 0

## Spring 2009

STUDENTS WITH NO EXAMS = 5896  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 1 EXAM A DAY= 15233  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 2 EXAMS A DAY= 13733  
**STUDENTS WITH MAX 3 EXAMS A DAY= 1112**  
STUDENTS WITH MAX 4 EXAMS A DAY= 29  
STUDENTS WITH 5+ EXAMS A DAY= 0

**Exam Schedule Effectiveness**

In 2001, in response to limitations on exam times and classroom space, an extensive study of the final examination schedule was undertaken. A new schematic was developed following a model provided by Clemson University. Class enrollment trends were investigated, and the most popular class periods identified. These were deliberately spread across the days of the exam week at varying hours of each exam period day. A 4-6 p.m. time period was also added to the schedule, providing six additional exam time blocks. The Registrar’s Office also addressed the new policy set forth by the University Senate, providing students with the right to reschedule any exam in excess of three on any given day. Various schedule configurations were tested against actual student schedules, the standard table was modified accordingly, and a conflict resolution period was added at the end of the exam week to provide for any students who encountered conflicts. Results have been consistently positive, with an average of only 30 students – out of 34,000 – who were scheduled for more than 3 exams in one day. An illustration of the existing schedules with representative numbers of exams scheduled in each time block appears below.

**Standard Final Exam Table for Daytime Classes**

<b>Exam Time</b>	<b>Day One</b>	<b>Day Two</b>	<b>Day Three</b>	<b>Day Four</b>	<b>Day Five</b>	<b>Day Six</b>
<b>8:00-10:00</b>	240	217	188	117	141	180
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	37	COMMON FINALS	COMMON FINALS	227	59	224
<b>1:30-3:30</b>	COMMON FINALS	158	147	181	215	84
<b>4:00-6:00</b>	COMMON FINALS	COMMON FINALS	COMMON FINALS	62	73	Conflict Resolution

**Evening Classes**

For the Fall '03 semester we anticipate scheduling approximately 373 evening exams between the hours of 6-10 p.m.: 215 graduate classes, 158 undergraduate classes. A breakdown by weeknight appears below. While students who are enrolled in evening classes may well expect to take their final exam in the evening, it is uncertain how a day student might react to an evening final. Day students may expect to use evening hours to prepare for the following day’s examinations.

<b>Weeknight</b>	<b># of final exams at 6pm or later</b>
<b>Monday</b>	115
<b>Tuesday</b>	125
<b>Wednesday</b>	69
<b>Thursday</b>	64

## **Final Exam Policy Timeline:**

July 13, 2001: John Pease, Faculty member, asked the Senate to review the scheduling of final examinations with an eye to developing a policy change that will limit the number of final examinations that any one student must write to two per day.

August 9, 2001: The SEC tasked Senate Chair Weingartner with charging the APAS Committee with reviewing Pease's proposal.

August 16, 2001: A draft charge to APAS was circulated to the SEC. They made minor revisions to the charge.

August 24, 2001: The APAS Committee was officially charged.

November 26, 2001: The APAS committee reported back stating that the University should create a new policy limiting the number of final exams taken in one day to 3.

December 4, 2001: The SEC deferred their discussion of the proposal to the SEC meeting on 12/18/01

December 18, 2001: The SEC generally accepted the policy that the APAS Committee had developed for students with more than three examinations. However, they proposed a number of modifications to the policy statement. The SEC returned the report with another charge letter.

January 7, 2002: The APAS Committee was given the revised charge.

March 21, 2002: The APAS Committee responded to the new charge with a full report:

The Senate Academic Procedures and Standards Committee recommends that the following statement should be added to the Undergraduate Catalog as number 6 under Assessment in the section, Attendance and Assessment/Examinations. The present number 6 and numbers following should be changed to accommodate this addition.

*Students whose class schedule requires them to take more than three final examinations on the same day have the right to reschedule examinations so they have no more than three on a given day. The student must take the responsibility for initiating the rescheduling or be responsible for taking the examinations as scheduled. When rescheduling is necessary, the student should first contact the instructor(s) of the classes. Students who have difficulties rescheduling examinations with their instructors should contact the Dean's office of their academic program for help. Faculty are urged and expected to accommodate students with legitimate rescheduling requests.*

March 28, 2002: The SEC gave final approval to put the report on the Senate agenda for the April 4, 2002.



April 4, 2002: The Senate approved the Proposal to Review the Scheduling of Final Examinations (Senate Doc.# 01-02-04). The Senate approved this proposal

but also passed a motion fixing a date for review of the proposal: "The University Senate requests that within a year the Office of Academic Affairs advise the Senate about the possibility of reducing from three to two the number of final examinations that a student must take on one day."

April 15, 2002: The proposal was approved by the President.

July 15, 2002: The Registrar who is a member of the APAS Committee tried to get the changes entered into the 2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, but could not meet the deadline. He did, however, place the new proposal on scheduling of final exams in the Schedule of Classes.

October 7, 2004: Bill Stuart, faculty, asked the Senate to revisit the proposal at the 10/7/04 SEC Meeting. The SEC requested that the Registrar analyze the impact on the final examination period if a student could reschedule the third of three final exams on a given day.

October 20, 2004: Senate Chair Popper sent a letter to Provost Destler requesting that the Registrar analyze the impact on the final examination period if a student could reschedule the third of two final exams in a given day. His study should address whether this allowance would be administratively feasible.

February 4, 2005: The Registrar reported back and recommended against changing the present procedure. He stated, "only 966 students out of 34,998 were scheduled for more than two exams on a single day (2.76%). Limiting from three to two, the number of final exams students are required to take, will have a major impact on individual faculty members who will have to arrange the necessary accommodation. Given the small number of students who are scheduled for more than two exams on a single day, efforts to completely eliminate such occurrences by manipulating the exam schedule are not administratively feasible. Consequently, a large port of the burden involved in rescheduling exams in excess of two per day would fall on individual faculty members, who may view this as unreasonably burdensome. I recommend no change to the current policy, limiting to three the number of finals a student may take on any single day, unless the faculty as a body are willing to assume a significant role in accommodating affected students."