

Section:	II.1.13	
Title:	Final Exam/Evaluation/Reading Days Policy	
Effective Date:	November, 2013	
Approved By:	Board of Trustees	
Responsible Unit:	Academic Affairs (609) 771-3080; academic@tcnj.edu	
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3.0	November, 2013	Revised
2.0	July, 2008	Revised
1.0	July 10, 2007	New policy; Initial Release

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the final exam/evaluation/reading days policy.

II. DEFINITIONS

N/A

III. POLICY

Final Evaluations are an important component of the high-quality and rigorous educational experience at The College of New Jersey. All courses are to have a final evaluation that takes place during final exam period. The time designated as the “final exam period” contains both reading days and final exam days. It is expected that reading days will be a time during which students will be able to devote substantial time and effort to preparing for final evaluations. During this period, students will have an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and integrate course material in a long-lasting and meaningful way. During the reading period, there should be no mandatory scheduled activities for a course, including in-class examinations (including make-up exams), presentations, or required meetings with instructors. There is an understanding that faculty should be accessible to students during reading period.

- A. For each course, there shall be a final evaluation. Such an evaluation may take the form of an in-class final exam, a take-home final exam, a final paper or a final project. Other formats may be acceptable as well. In each case, the evaluation should be comprehensive and integrative in nature, but not necessarily cumulative. The final evaluation does not need to exhaustively cover details from the entire course, but should instead require students to identify the major themes covered

- during the semester and to synthesize these concepts in a holistic and integrated manner.
- B. The grade on the final evaluation must count at least 15 percent, but may not count more than 50 percent, toward the student's final grade for the course.
 - C. Final evaluations that take the form of an in-class exam or an in-class activity must be held during the regularly scheduled exam period for the course. Except in the unusual cases outlined in point F below, faculty members may not schedule final exams outside of the regularly scheduled period for the course.
 - 1. The rationale for requiring all courses to have a final evaluation that takes place during final exam period is that the comprehensive final experience will require a period of intensive study and thoughtful reflection on the part of the student. Placing all final evaluations during the final exam period will provide the time needed to successfully synthesize and integrate course materials.
 - D. The due dates for final evaluations that are not in-class exams or in-class activities but instead take the form of take-home exams, final papers, final projects or student-scheduled exams must fall within final exam period but need not coincide with the regularly scheduled exam period for that class.
 - 1. The rationale for allowing the instructors latitude to set the due dates for final evaluations that take the form of papers is to insure that instructors have a reasonable number of days to read and comment on the papers they receive. Otherwise, an instructor whose regularly scheduled exam period takes place late in the final exam period may not have time, given the scheduling for submitting final grades, to give the papers the attention they deserve.
 - E. Due dates for papers, projects, exams and other course assignments that do not constitute the final evaluation shall be on or before the last day of classes. Additionally, in order to preserve the integrity of the exam period, no in-class or take-home exams that have the character of a "final examination" as described above, or that counts more than 15 percent toward the final grade, should be held or made due during the last week of classes.
 - 1. The purpose of this provision is to insure that the study period preceding the final exam period and the final exam period itself will be available for students

to use for their intended purpose—the preparation for and completion of final evaluations.

- F. Students should not be expected to take more than two final exams on a given day. In the event that a student has three or more exams scheduled for a single day, the student may request that one of the exams be re-scheduled. In even-numbered years, the exam(s) falling third or later during that day should be rescheduled, and in the case of odd-numbered years, it shall be the first exam(s) of the day that is rescheduled.
 - 1. The justification for alternating which exams are re-scheduled in the cases of conflict is to prevent particular courses, for example night classes which would typically be the third exam scheduled on a given day, from consistently being the ones that must be offered at alternative times. By varying the rule for re-scheduling in the cases of conflict, the burden of alternative scheduling should not repeatedly fall on the same classes/instructors.
- G. While no regular season games involving TCNJ student-athletes are scheduled during final exam period, post-season playoff games, which are set by the local conference, NJAC, or NCAA, may occur during this period. When a post-season game conflicts with a scheduled final exam, the student-athlete should arrange with the instructor to reschedule the exam. Instructors are expected to accommodate such requests.
- H. Students are expected to take their final exams in the time blocks scheduled by The College. Except in the unusual cases outlined in point F above, this is the standard rule.
 - 1. Faculty, staff and students should not make end-of-semester travel plans prior to the publication of the final exam schedule (or should schedule travel for after the end of the final exam period)
- I. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing in advance by the chair (or program director) and dean.