

March 20, 2015

Pablo Reguerin
Disability Resource Center

Re: Final Exam Scheduling

Dear Pablo,

At its meeting on March 11, CEP discussed the issue of final exam accommodation requests that had been brought to CEP's attention by the Anthropology department: the increasing number of students who require additional time to complete final examinations has been creating logistical difficulties in terms of scheduling and administering these exams. The problem is even more acute in light of the fact that several students have several exams on the same day, and if they have additional time to take each exam, these students may have difficulty completing their exams. CEP has informed that Anthropology department that their exams need not be three hours long, and that it would be possible to give students shorter exams; this would allow students with accommodations to take final exams in a more reasonable amount of time.

CEP intends to send a more formal letter to all faculty members to make this policy clearer. The committee would like the Disability Resource Center's feedback on this letter: is this letter accurate in light of DRC policy? Should it be changed in any way to make it more clearly reflect best practice with regard to respecting students with accommodations for disabilities? A draft of this letter follows:

In response to recent inquiries from faculty, the Committee on Educational Policy would like to clarify the policies regarding the scheduling of final examinations. The final exam schedule (see the Spring 2015 schedule [here](#)) is determined by the Registrar in consultation with course-sponsoring units. The final exam for each course is scheduled for a specific three-hour block, with only thirty minutes to one hour between exams. It is not uncommon for students to have two or more final exams in a single day.

Three hours represent the maximum duration of an exam given to students without testing accommodations approved by the DRC (see below). However, faculty are permitted to give a shorter final examination if they wish to do so, as long as the starting time and length of the exam is clearly stated in the course syllabus distributed at the beginning of the quarter. By choosing to give shorter examinations, instructors can reduce the burdens placed on students who have multiple exams in one day.

It should also be noted that, in some cases, students with documented disabilities are given extra time to complete exams by the Disability Resource Center. CEP understands the necessity of these accommodations: these students have documented disabilities that are independently diagnosed. Nonetheless, scheduling final exams for students who require extra time to complete

an exam poses clear logistical challenges. Departments and divisions must find rooms and proctors for these exams, and the students taking these exams may spend an excessive amount of time taking final examinations. This problem, too, could be made somewhat less severe by scheduling shorter exams.

If an instructor were to decide to give a shorter exam he or she must be explicit about the length of the exam in writing and enforce it when given; if an exam is to be two hours, for example, then students should be informed of this on the syllabus, and any students who do not require an accommodation must have their exams collected after two hours. If a student is allowed to take twice the amount of time to complete an exam due to a disability, this would be twice the time relative to the amount of time allotted to a student without an accommodation. Thus, if a student is allowed to take twice as long to complete a test, and the exam is announced as a two-hour exam, then he or she could be given four hours (rather than six) to complete the final examination.

If you have any questions, please send them to Chair Tamkun (tamkun@ucsc.edu) or the committee analysts (Barak Krakauer at bkrakaue@ucsc.edu or Susanna Wrangell at swrangel@ucsc.edu).

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/

John Tamkun, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy