



## Completion of Courses and Finalization of Grades

### Communication from the Executive Committee of Senate

March 19, 2018

In this document, the Executive Committee sets out options for the completion of courses and finalization of grades covering:

1. courses that have continued since the disruption of academic activities began on March 5
2. courses that have been suspended

Many students are enrolled in both kinds of courses, or have chosen not to participate in courses that continued in accordance the rights set out in the Senate's **Policy on the Academic Implications of Disruptions or Cessations of University Business Due to Labour Disputes or Other Causes** ("Disruptions Policy"). The options set out cover all scenarios.

The options are designed to promote flexibility while adhering to the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students, which are at the heart of Senate's Policy. The Policy can be accessed here in English

<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-implications-of-disruptions-or-cessations-of-university-business-due-to-labour-disputes-or-other-causes-senate-policy-on-the>

ou en français ici

<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/reglement-du-senat-concernant-le-s-consequences-sur-les-etudes-des-perturbations-ou-interruptions-des-activites-de-luniversite-par-des-conflits-de-travail-ou-par-dautres-causes/>

#### Overview

#### Fairness to Students

It is important to note that students who cannot participate in academic activities or who choose not to during a strike are entitled to:

- immunity from penalty
- reasonable alternative access to materials covered in their absence
- reasonable extensions of deadlines

- other remedies as Senate deems necessary and consistent with the principle of academic integrity

All of York's undergraduate and graduate students have legitimate and understandable desires to complete their courses as soon as possible. However, many are in particularly vulnerable situations or have especially urgent needs, such as international and exchange students facing the expiration of visas, those graduating this term, and those for whom term completion impacts on opportunities for further study or employment. The course-based options set out below have been designed to accommodate a variety of circumstances. They may be especially valuable to students who have pressing needs.

### **The Meaning of “Remediation” in Senate Policy**

Senate policy uses the term “remediation” to describe “accommodations for students, modifications of normal academic regulations, and adjustments in class and examination schedules” and it states that “the completion of courses will involve a combination of such changes.” Some modifications were approved and announced early in the current disruption, such as an extension of the date by which to drop a course without receiving a grade. Others are always available to instructors and students, such as deferrals. The length of the disruption has necessitated the additional changes and options compiled in this document.

For ease of understanding, this document uses plain language such as “options” or “adjustments.” The term “revised” refers to a class or examination schedule for courses that resume. Students who have not participated in courses during the disruption will also be on revised schedules.

Although Senate Executive authorizes some changes, individual instructors continue to be in the best position to determine the impact of the disruption on their courses, and to implement remedies in conjunction with their Faculties, academic units and students. Course directors are encouraged to be flexible in dealing with individual requests from students, and must not unreasonably deny them.

Remedies available to students neither alter the academic standards associated nor relieve them of the responsibility for mastering materials covered. The availability of a remedy does not guarantee students the same learning experience that they would have received in the absence of a disruption.

Summary of Options and Modifications Available (further details below)	
For courses that have continued	For courses that are suspended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change in length of term</li> <li>• Normal class schedule applies unless instructor arranges alternative scheduling</li> <li>• Final day of exams no later than April 23</li> <li>• Assessed grades option</li> <li>• Changes in the kind, weight, and number of assignments</li> <li>• Extension of deadline to withdraw from course without receiving a grade / removing a “W” transcript notation</li> <li>• Extension of Pass/Fail deadline to opt in or out</li> <li>• Waiver of the 20 per cent rule <b>only in exceptional circumstances</b></li> <li>• Students who have chosen not to participate during the strike are entitled to complete the course after the disruption is over; course directors have same options as for courses that were suspended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised class schedule to be announced; terms will be reduced by a minimum of one week</li> <li>• Revised examination schedule to be announced</li> <li>• Assessed grades option</li> <li>• Changes in the kind, weight, and number of assignments</li> <li>• Extension of deadline to withdraw from a course without receiving a grade / removing a “W” transcript notation</li> <li>• Extension of Pass/Fail deadline to opt in or out</li> <li>• Cushion period before assignments are due when classes resume</li> <li>• Waiver of the 20 per cent rule</li> </ul>

## Term Lengths and Class and Examination Schedules

### Term Length for Courses that Have Continued

For courses that have continued throughout the disruption, there will be no alteration of the length of the term. Classes for these courses will continue the original schedule.

However, course directors may arrange for alternative scheduling if needed to adjust the delivery of some elements of the course, for example due to non-participation by some students. Alternative scheduling at a time that is convenient for students and instructors can be arranged through the Registrar’s office.

### Term Length for Courses that are Suspended

In the case of courses that have been suspended, a modified schedule will be announced. There will be a reduction in the length of the term for these courses of a **minimum of one week**. Exceptions apply to programs that have strict accreditation requirements that define the length of term.

When suspended courses resume, alternative scheduling of presentations, performances, labs, practica (that is, outside of regularly scheduled class meets) can be arranged through the Registrar's Office at a time that is convenient for instructors and students.

### **Final Examination Schedules for Courses that Have Continued**

The formal examination schedule for courses that have continued through the disruption -- and students who are participating in those courses -- **will end no later than April 23, 2018**. This does not apply to courses that are currently suspended.

Even in courses that continued through the disruption, it may not be possible for some examinations to proceed as scheduled. As a result there may be some changes to examination dates prior to April 23. The University is working to minimize changes to the regular examination schedule and any changes will be announced. Once finalized a searchable examination schedule will be posted on the Registrar's Office website.

### **Examination Schedules for Courses that Are Suspended**

An examination schedule for courses that are suspended will be announced when the disruption ends, and posted on the Registrar's Office website. This is also the examination schedule for students who chose not to participate in courses that continued.

## **Assignments: Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight / Cushion Period / Timing**

### **Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight of Assignments**

Instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments (including tests and examinations) provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible. If 60 per cent of course work has been completed, minor upward adjustments to the value of graded components completed can be made in order to reach the 70 per cent threshold (that is, no more than 10 per cent change to the collective weight).

### **Cushion Period Before Assignments are Due in Revised Schedules**

Instructors in courses that will resume are urged to help re-orient students to their studies and discuss options and possible changes with them before and during the first class.

There should be a cushion period before assignments are due and tests are re-set. Tests should not be held in any course (including Internet-based courses) until at least one class "meet" has been held. Similarly, there should be a reasonable cushion before assignments must be submitted, including those that might otherwise be due according to original class schedule (this does not apply to assignments or work such as laboratory exercises which are typically assigned and submitted as a regular and integral part of the laboratory session).

## Limit on the Worth of Tests in the Final Two Weeks of Classes

Senate has a policy on the *Limits on the Worth of Examinations in the Final Classes of a Term*. This policy stipulates that no examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term.

For courses that have continued, this policy **remains in force**. Only in exceptional circumstance can this be waived.

For courses that resume on the revised class schedule, the **policy may be waived** to provide instructors with more flexibility to allow students the possibility of completing courses as quickly as possible while also ensuring that course learning objectives have been assessed.

### Options Individual Students May Choose on Their Own

**Assessed grades:** An assessed grade is a final grade based on work completed that comprises a defined proportion of the assignments in a course syllabus.

This option will be available to students in undergraduate graded and Pass/Fail courses the week of March 26, 2018. To qualify, students must have completed assignments worth a minimum of 70 per cent of the grade on the original course syllabus.

As described above, instructors are also permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments (including tests and examinations) so long as this does not disadvantage students. If 60 per cent of course work has been completed, minor upward adjustments to the value of graded components completed can be made in order to reach the 70 per cent threshold (that is, no more than 10 per cent change to the collective weight).

Restrictions apply:

- generally, the option is not available for programs with accreditation requirements (examples include JD, BEng, BScN degree programs, Clinical Psychology graduate courses); students must confirm eligibility with their Faculties
- students participating in continuing courses must exercise this option by the last day of classes for those courses (April 6); other students must exercise this option by the last day of classes in the revised schedule after the disruption ends (date to be determined)

Students in **exceptional circumstances** may request assessed grades on the basis of work that falls below the 70 per cent threshold. Such requests are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by individual faculty members in the first instance.

**Withdraw from a course without receiving a grade:** The last day to withdraw from a full year (Y) or Winter (W) term course will be the last day of classes on the original

schedule for courses that continued or the revised schedule created after the disruption.

This option does not apply to:

- Osgoode Hall Law School students in JD or Professional LLM programs
- Fall (F) courses

**Conversion of W Transcript Notation:** Any student who withdrew from Winter term and/or Full-year courses using the Withdrawn from Course option (“W”), will have the “W” notation retroactively removed from their transcript.

**Pass/Fail grading deadlines:** Senate has a *Pass/Fail Grades Policy* that allows students to elect to earn a limited number of credits on a pass/fail basis in some courses. See the calendar for details. It cannot be used for the following kinds of courses:

- major or minor (including for- credit practica)
- outside-the-major required
- General Education or Certificate requirements

Normally, students must select this option in the first two weeks of classes. No changes are being made to the eligibility requirements for the pass/fail option set out in the policy, however the deadline to select the option has been **extended to the last day of classes on the original schedule for courses that continued or the revised schedule following the disruption.** (Please note that this option is very limited and can only be implemented by means of a formal request. Moreover, students are advised to consider this option with great care before electing it. A pass / fail notation on a course may have a negative impact on applications to graduate and professional programs.) Students may revert to a grades assessment by the final day to withdraw from classes.

For more information and to retrieve the necessary forms, see the Registrar’s Website.

**Note:** Osgoode Hall Law School will provide students with guidance on Credit/No Credit courses the week of March 19.

### **Options Available with the Agreement of Course Directors**

**Deferrals:** Students always have the option to seek a deferral of an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation. Students must make a formal request for deferred standing, and are not automatically entitled to this relief. However, Senate Executive urges instructors to deal with requests generously.

## **Appeals and Accommodations**

### **Appeals, Petitions and Concerns**

Normal appeal and petitions procedures remain in place.

Students who have concerns about any aspect of course remediation should take them up with their instructors in the first instance. If they are unable to connect with instructors or are hesitant to do so, or if they are not satisfied with an outcome, they should, as always, communicate their concerns to the applicable department or Faculty office.

### **Accommodations on Religious Grounds or for Students with Disabilities**

All normal accommodations for persons with disabilities and for religious reasons remain in place and must be respected.