

# Grades and Examinations

## GRADES

### Grading Scale (ASC 8.1)

A+ = 4.33   B+ = 3.33   C+ = 2.33   D+ = 1.33   F+ = .33  
A = 4.00   B = 3.00   C = 2.00   D = 1.00   F = .00  
A- = 3.67   B- = 2.67   C- = 1.67   D- = .67   WF = 00

Pass/Fail grades will only be given for outside clinical work, for externships, for the non-seminar component of the Law Practice Clinic, for selected clinical lab components of substantive courses, for Law Review and Moot Court and, upon petition by the student and at the instructor's discretion, for Independent Study projects. (ASC 8.7)

### Dean's List, Honors, Class Rank

The Dean's List is comprised of the top ten percent (10%) of the current year students by year according to yearly grade point average.

Class rank is a ranking done by year in school in order of cumulative grade point average. See section below on Evaluation Dates for explanation of when class ranks are determined.

Graduation honors are as follows:

Cumulative GPA of 3.60-4.33	Summa Cum Laude
Cumulative GPA of 3.40-3.59	Magna Cum Laude
Cumulative GPA of 3.00-3.39	Cum Laude

### Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade will be awarded if illness occurs during an examination. The exam will be retaken at the next regularly scheduled examination in the course. If this is not possible, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, after consulting the faculty member, will make alternative arrangements. (ASC 7.5.1 and 7.5.2)

Generally, a grade of incomplete may not be given for failure to complete assigned work. Assigned work includes seminar papers, journals and memoranda. Assigned work must be completed by the last day of the examination period or, at the discretion of the instructor, within an extension period of one month. (ASC 8.8.2)

### Anonymous Grading

All examinations in examination courses shall be graded without knowledge by the grader of the student's identity. No identifying mark other than the student's examination number may be placed by the student on the examination. This rule does not apply to non-examination courses or to paper requirements in academic courses (clinics, seminars, independent studies). Where such marks are intentionally made, a failing or lowered grade may be entered at the discretion of the instructor after notification to the student and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. (8.9)

### Processing of Grades

Grades are due to the Office of the Registrar three weeks after the date of the last examination. Ordinarily, grades are processed as they are received. If the course falls under the mandatory or presumptive grade curve, grades are analyzed accordingly. If the grades meet the curve, they are processed. If not, grades are given to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for discussion with the appropriate faculty member. After the discrepancy is resolved, grades are processed. Once grades are processed, they are available to students through SUOnline (See Section on SUOnline).

### Grade Curves

In all first year courses, with the exception of Legal Writing, the following grade curve is mandatory. In all upper level, multiple section courses taught by more than one professor in the same year, the following grade curve is presumptive.

Range			
Cumulative %	A- and above	10 to 20%	15%, plus or minus 5%
Cumulative %	B+ and above	25 to 35%	30%, plus or minus 5%
Cumulative %	B and above	40 to 50%	45%, plus or minus 5%
Cumulative %	C and below	15 to 25%	20%, plus or minus 5%
Cumulative %	C- and below	5 to 15%	10%, plus or minus 5%
Cumulative %	D+ and below	0 to 10%	5%, plus or minus 5%

#### Grade Changes

##### Mathematical Error

If a grade is incorrect due to a mathematical error on the part of the grader, the grade may be corrected at any time by a written statement from the faculty member to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. (8.6.1)

##### Substantive Re-Evaluation

Grade changes based on substantive re-evaluation may only be made by a faculty member to correct a serious and egregious error or as a result of an official determination of the student's violation of the Student Conduct Code by the Conduct Review Board. In order to make such a change the faculty member must submit a written petition to be voted on during a faculty meeting by the career faculty. The petition must state that the proposed change is necessary to correct a serious and egregious error. An example of a serious error might be if a professor did not read a part of an exam. Petitions must be approved by a majority of the career faculty voting at the meeting. (8.6.2)

#### Evaluation Dates/Class Ranking

##### First Year, Full-Time

In the case of first year, full-time students, the evaluation date shall be computed after the receipt of spring semester grades. If a student has not completed all required first year work at the time for evaluation, computation of the GPA for evaluating purposes will ordinarily take place only after completion of all first year courses, except that academic evaluation shall take place whenever the achievement of a GPA sufficient for retention is mathematically impossible. A student's first year GPA is based only on first year courses. (ASC 8.4.1.)

##### First Year, Part-Time

In the case of first year, part-time students, the evaluation date shall be after the recording of the grades for the summer session following the first year of law school. If a student has not completed all required first year work at that time, computation of the GPA for evaluating purposes will ordinarily take place only after completion of all required first year work, except that academic evaluation shall take place whenever the achievement of a GPA sufficient for retention is mathematically impossible. If a student has deferred only Criminal Law due to entry in the fall semester, the student will be evaluated on first year grades exclusive of Criminal law. A student's first year GPA is based only on first year courses. (ASC 8.4.2)

##### Upper Division Students: Part-Time and Full-Time

The evaluation date for upper division students shall be the end of each spring semester, and shall include all students who have taken 8 or more credits summer, fall, or spring. (ASC 8.4.3) August and December graduates are ranked only with the May graduates for the academic year. Non-graduating 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students are ranked with the May graduates at the end of the spring semester.

#### FAILING GRADES

##### General Provisions

Grades of "F", "F+", or "WF" are considered failing grades. Grades of "D-" and above are passing grades. Only failed courses may be retaken for credit. Required courses that are failed must be retaken until a passing grade is achieved. (ASC 8.5 and 8.5.1) Both the original grade and the grade on the retaking of the failed course will appear on the transcript. Both grades will be counted in computing the cumulative grade point average. No academic credit toward graduation is granted for a failing grade. (ASC 8.5.2)

##### Computation of First Year Final Course Grades

If a student receives a failing grade in either semester of a year-long first year substantive course, the numerical equivalent of each semester's grades shall be computed to a two decimal place "final course grade" for the entire course. If the final course grade is below .67 the student fails the course and must retake it in its entirety (if otherwise eligible to continue). (ASC 8.3)

##### Tuition Credit For Students Who Fail Classes

Up to six credits of earned "F" grades may be retaken without charge. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs, in consultation with Student Financial Services and the Business Office, will determine the semester in which the administrative tuition credit will be applied. Students requesting an administrative tuition credit must have prior approval from the Associate Dean.

This policy does not apply to students who withdraw from courses or who receive administrative "F" grades.

#### FINAL EXAMINATIONS

##### Scheduled Examinations

Unless written permission is received from the Associate Dean, all students must take regularly scheduled examinations when scheduled and in the time and manner indicated on the examination schedule. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade in the course. (ASC 7.1)

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#### **Anonymous Grading**

Final examinations are graded anonymously; grades for the examination are reported anonymously. (See also section on Class Attendance.) The anonymous grading system promotes objective grading and encourages free interchanges in class between faculty and students. **Contact with professors should be avoided at all cost in order to protect the anonymous grading system. All arrangements for rescheduling exams are handled only through the Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.**

#### **Examination Numbers**

Prior to each examination period, students will receive an examination number. Please make every attempt to remember and use this number. In the event that you do not remember the assigned number, the examination proctors or the Office of the Registrar staff will be available to provide you with this information upon presentation of photographic identification.

#### **Rooms**

Examinations (other than "Take-Homes") must be taken in the scheduled room. A room schedule is posted during the exam period. Students may not bring any food or beverages (regardless of the type of container) into the examination room. Also, students may not bring into the examination rooms radios, cd players, mp3 players, palm pilots, etc., with or without headphones. Any student who wishes to leave the examination room once the exam has commenced may do so but may not leave with any materials, including blue books, examination questions, notes, etc.

#### **Academic Integrity Code**

It is a violation of the Academic Integrity Code knowingly 1) to give, seek, or receive information, answers, or solutions to examination questions; 2) having taken an examination, to divulge questions or answers or comment upon the substantive nature of the examination under circumstances in which it is reasonable to believe that a person learning of the statements could use the information to improve his or her performance on the same exam; 3) to use resources not authorized by the faculty member; 4) without the faculty member's permission, either to discuss a take home exam with another person or to work with another person on a take home exam; 5) to violate any other rules established to ensure the integrity of the examination; or 6) except when authorized by a faculty member, to enter a faculty office, secretarial area, or other area with the intent to obtain a copy of an examination. To report an alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Code, a written, signed Request for an Investigation should be submitted to the President of the Academic Conduct Board.

#### **Policy on Use of Computers on Examinations**

In order to use your laptop computer for exams you must install a program called SofTest. SofTest allows you to use your laptop as a simple word processor in a secured environment. SofTest blocks access to any stored files during the administration of exams. Complete instructions on downloading the software will be emailed to your Seattle University email accounts by the Administrative Computing office prior to exam periods.

**The entire risk for the performance of all equipment rests with the student. If a computer malfunctions for any reason during the scheduled hours of an exam, additional time will not be allowed to complete the exam.**

#### **Final Examination Scheduling Conflict Resolution Rules**

Final examination conflicts will be resolved in accordance with the rules stated below.

No student shall be required to take examinations during consecutive examination periods. Consecutive examination periods are an examination in the morning and afternoon of the same day, an examination in the afternoon and evening of the same day, and an examination in the evening of one day and the morning of the next day. An examination conflict also exists whenever a student is scheduled to take more than one exam on the same calendar day or is scheduled to take an exam on each of three (3) consecutive calendar days. Courses in which the entire exam is given as a "Take-Home" shall not be considered in determining whether any of the above "conflicts" are present.

Rescheduled examinations must be taken during the next exam period in which no conflict exists between the first day and the last day of examinations. In rescheduling exams, other factors taken into consideration include the student's overall examination schedule, the availability of alternative examination dates and the availability of rooms and proctors. (ASC 7.6)

**Examinations cannot be rescheduled for a date that precedes the scheduled date (or the alternative examination date, if applicable).**

Students will be notified when examination conflict resolution forms are available. Conflict forms must be completed and returned to the Office of the Associate Dean. Students will receive confirmation of the conflict resolution in their student mailboxes.

#### **Alternative Examination Dates**

It is within the discretion of an individual faculty member to offer an alternative examination date. Alternative exam dates must be within the regular examination period. If a faculty member is planning to offer an alternative exam date, the date and time of the alternate date will be announced in class. Students planning to take an exam on the alternative date must sign up on a list that will be circulated in the class. Alternative examination dates are not permitted in first year classes.

#### **Take-Home Examinations**

Faculty may choose to give a take-home examination. In first year courses, take-home exams will be distributed at the conclusion of the prior exam and due on the exam date and time originally scheduled for that course.

All upper division take-home examinations must be distributed to students on the last regularly scheduled class day in which the class actually meets. Professors must elect between having upper division take-home examinations due at the exam date and time originally scheduled for that course, or at the last day of the examination period (not including the reschedule day). Students may, of course, turn take-home exams in to the exam coordinator before the due date.

If the professor wishes to limit the amount of time students spend on an exam (time-limited take-home examination), the professor must inform the students and make the time limits clear in the exam instructions. The professor may not choose a different due date for a time-limited take home exam other than the two options stated above. Because students may have access to the take-home exam for longer than the time limit the professor has set, students will be individually responsible for complying with the time limit.

**All take-home exams must be turned in to the exam coordinator. Student may not mail, FAX, e-mail or use other electronic means to deliver their take-home examinations.**

#### **Excused Absence from Final Examinations**

Upon written application submitted in advance, a student may be excused from taking an examination at the time it is regularly scheduled. The student must show unusual dire and exigent circumstances i.e., religious prohibition or unavoidable business trips. Similarly, a student may be permitted to submit a "Take-Home Examination" at a time later than the announced deadline. These requests must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean with the appropriate documentation. Except when the absence or late submission is caused by an emergency (see below), a request for excused absence or late submission must be filed before the date set for the examination or the request will be denied as untimely. Examinations cannot be rescheduled for a date that precedes the scheduled date and will be rescheduled during the regular examination period.

#### **Deferral of Examinations Due to an Emergency**

The following policy regarding the deferral of examinations due to an emergency i.e., death in the family, will be strictly implemented.

If, **prior** to a scheduled examination, an emergency arises or a student is so sick that he or she will be unable to sit for the examination, the student must contact the Associate Dean. In a case of illness, a note from a physician who has diagnosed and treated the student must be submitted before the examination can be rescheduled. In all other cases, the student must submit a statement setting forth the nature of the emergency. In consultation with the student and in consideration of the nature of the emergency, the exam will normally be rescheduled within the regular examination period.

If, **during** an examination, a student becomes so seriously ill that he or she cannot complete the examination, the student must first notify the proctor of the nature and seriousness of the illness; the proctor will note the time and the examination number of the student and collect the examination and written work completed by the student. The student will then report to the exam coordinator or the Associate Dean for further instructions. A written statement from a physician indicating the cause and seriousness of the student's illness and stating whether the asserted illness in fact made the student incapable of completing the examination, must be submitted prior to the rescheduling of the examination. An incomplete grade will be awarded if illness occurs during an examination. The examination will be retaken at the next regularly scheduled examination in the course.

#### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who have disabilities that require accommodation in the exam process or scheduling should discuss these early in the semester with the Associate Dean. Appropriate accommodation will be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Documentation of the disability will be required (See section on Students with Disabilities).

#### **ELS (English as a Second Language) Students**

ELS students may submit a request for extra time on timed in-class examinations to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The student has the burden of proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that extra time is necessary for the student to perform adequately on law school examinations. Normally, part of the documentation accompanying such request will be a TOEFL score predating the application to law school. The Associate Dean will also consider the student's academic history, including LSAT scores.

Normally extra time on examination will not be made available to ESL students who received an undergraduate or graduate

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degree from a United States college or university, or to students who have lived in the United States (or other English-speaking country) for four years or longer.

If extra time on examinations is granted, the standard amount of extra time offered will be one-quarter extra time during the first year of Law school, decreasing to one-sixth extra time in the second year of law school. No extra time is usually granted after the second year of law school. Students should also be advised that state bar examiners do not offer exam accommodations to ELS students.

#### **Exam Review Procedures**

Students may not review their examinations until grades for the course are posted. Once grades are posted, students will be notified by e-mail when exams will be ready for review. Students are asked to provide by e-mail the following information at least 48 hours in advance of the day planned for review to the faculty secretary responsible for arranging examination reviews: the day and time the student would like to come in to review the examination(s); the student's examination code number; the course name course section and name of the professor of each examination you would like to review; and the examination semester. Appointments will be confirmed by e-mail. **Please note: You must know your Student Code Number in order to review your exams. If you do not remember your number, you may obtain it from the Registrar's Office.**

Students must review their examinations in the designated area of the faculty offices. Once the student has been given the exam(s), the student may not under any circumstances leave the room, or make photocopies of their blue book(s) or sample exam answers without express permission from the faculty member. As exam review must take place in the presence of a staff member, exams will not be given out for review unless enough time is available for review before office hours end.

STUDENTS MAY SEE NO SAMPLE ANSWERS FOR ANY EXAMS OTHER THAN THOSE THEY HAVE ALREADY TAKEN.

The faculty member will either 1) make appointments directly for those students who wish to review their answers or 2) advise the student to contact his/her faculty secretary to schedule an appointment.