

## **5.0 Tests and Examinations**

### **5.1 Examination Terminology**

The following terms are described as they are commonly used at the University of Maine at Orono.

1. Quiz - A brief examination designed to occupy only part of a period and to cover a small fragment of work.
2. Prelim - An examination designed to occupy an entire period and to cover a major unit of work.
3. Final - An examination given during the final exam period lasting for two hours or more. A final examination should not be scheduled during the last week of classes. If a prelin is substituted for a final examination, it should be given during the final examination period.

### **5.2 Suggestions for Examination and Course Procedure**

The suggestions for examination and course procedure listed below should be followed where practicable.

1. At the beginning of the semester the instructor should give each student an outline covering course objectives, featured topics, and a schedule of assignments. At the same time he or she should inform the class of the grading procedure to be used, including the weight to be given to quizzes, report, prelims, and finals.
2. The course grade should be based on a minimum of three major assessments (such as prelims, reports or term papers), in addition to the final examination.
3. The final examination should count no more than one-third of the course grade, although exceptions may be made at the discretion of the instructor in consultation with the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered.

4. Examinations should be designed so that, as a rule, the average student can finish in the time allotted.
5. All quizzes and prelims should be returned promptly to the student. Reports, term papers, and finals should also be returned or made available for review by the students.
6. Final examinations in multiple section courses should be given, if possible, at a common time.
7. A common examination for such courses should be given only when provision is made for frequent conferences among the teachers of the course.

The common examination should represent the combined efforts of all the instructors concerned.

8. A final examination should not be scheduled during the last week of classes. If a prelim is substituted for a final examination, it should be given during the final examination period.

### **5.3 Final Examinations**

Final examinations are given in most courses in order to provide the student with a planned review of the entire course and an opportunity to organize principles and generalities which he or she has learned. Exceptions are those courses in which the educational values of final examinations are obtained by other means, as in a laboratory course which contains little or no lecture material and which requires frequent written reports. In such courses final examinations may be eliminated at the discretion of the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered.

Final examinations must be held at the time and place designated in the examination schedule. Prior to the construction of each examination schedule, the Registrar's Office asks each department chairperson to indicate those courses for which a combined examination is required. An instructor should not give a final examination in advance of the scheduled hour and day. As misunderstandings sometimes occur in reading the final examination schedule, and students mistake the time of the final examination, instructors are requested to announce to their respective classes at or near the last recitation period the time and place of each final examination. An instructor should not excuse a student from the final examination in a course in which a final examination is scheduled. Authority for such excuse rests with the college dean.

#### **5.4 Absence from Final Examinations**

A student who is absent from a final examination is given a grade of I to indicate incomplete work in the course. An estimated grade for the course should be given by the instructor based on the performance of the student during the semester.

A student who misses the final examination for legitimate reasons should make the necessary arrangements with the instructor to make up the examination. Further details will be found in the section on Incomplete grades.

#### **5.5 Types of Examinations**

No specific type of test is specified. The essay, true-false, and multiple choice types are all used. The last two may be compatible with machine scoring. In any event, a new set of examinations should be prepared at the end of each course. Tests are usually proctored by the instructor and, if needed, by others in the department.

Each department or division makes its own arrangements for the printing or duplicating of examinations needed. Once the copies of the examinations have been received, great care should be taken to ensure their security.

#### **5.6 Machine Scoring**

The Registrar's Office provides an Optical Mark Test Scoring Service for the faculty. The current equipment is capable of scoring examinations and providing such information as Frequency Distribution, Item Analysis, Test Results by Student and Student Response Report. Normally, tests are scored within 24 hours of receipt. The Registrar's Office stocks blank 5-choice and 10-choice answer sheets. The Registrar provides a machine scoring service only. In the event of equipment failure, the Registrar's Office will not hand score tests.

#### **5.7 Examination File**

Some copies of recent final examinations are filed in the University library and are available to the students for use in preparation for their final examination. The filing of examination questions is optional on the part of the faculty. Most fraternity houses and some dormitories maintain similar files.