

This page announces the approach that the Law School tentatively plans to take if it becomes necessary to cancel one or more in-person scheduled exams as a result of an emergency, such as a weather event, a civil disturbance, a power loss, or an epidemic. These plans are subject to change based on the specific nature of the emergency, technological ability to communicate with the student body, guidance from the University and/or from government officials, or for other unforeseen reasons.

Makeup days. Each year, when crafting the next year's Academic Calendar, the Law School will consider whether it is practical to include makeup days at the end of the exam period. (There are no such makeup days scheduled for the 2022-23 academic year.) If makeup days are scheduled, then the first sets of cancelled exams will be moved to these days. In addition, students who are unable to take exams for reasons such as illness may, in consultation with the Dean of Students Office, be able to use any such makeup days to schedule individual makeup exams, space permitting. Students are advised to consider the possibility of makeup exams when making their travel plans.

Exams that cannot be held will be moved to makeup days only if the makeup days are scheduled in advance and it is possible to move the exams without creating time conflicts for some students. In general, once a full day of exams is moved to a makeup day, it will not be possible to move other exams to that makeup day without creating time conflicts.

Conversion to self-scheduled exams. If a group of in-person scheduled exams cannot be rescheduled for makeup days, the Law School will report this when announcing the inability to hold those exams in person. Those exams shall then be converted to take-home, self-scheduled exams to be completed within 24 hours of the originally scheduled exam time. For example, if a three-hour exam were scheduled for 2 p.m., then students would be required to take the exam in some three-hour period before 2 p.m. the next day. Students who receive time accommodations for disabilities will still receive those time accommodations.

Students are strongly advised to schedule their exams so that they begin and conclude no later than 10 p.m., so that they can receive technical support in the event of any difficulty. Students with technical difficulty are advised to contact the Records Office at rec@law.gwu.edu. Students who cannot take their exams, whether or not for reasons connected to the emergency (such as power loss or lack of Internet), are advised to contact the Dean of Students Office at the earliest possible time. These situations will be treated in accordance with the Law School's general policy on makeup exams; whether the exams will be taken for credit or for a grade will be at the discretion of the instructor.

Multiple consecutive 24-hour exams. If rescheduling exams would lead to a student's having multiple 24-hour exams in the same day or on adjacent days, the student may delay exams as necessary to create at least a day buffer between 24-hour exams, but no more than this. So long as the student follows this approach, the exams will be considered to have been taken as scheduled, rather than taken as makeup exams. For example, suppose that a student has two three-hour exams scheduled on Day 1 and one three-hour exam scheduled on Day 2, but all are converted to 24-hour self-scheduled exams. The student should take one of the three-hour exams beginning on Day 1, one beginning no later than Day 3, and one beginning no later than Day 5.

This rule applies even if these days include weekend days. If this schedule is impossible for the student due to extraordinary circumstances, then the student may consult with the Dean of Students Office about the possibility of taking one or more of the exams as makeup exams.

Alternative exams. Faculty may opt to create an alternative exam that will be administered to students in the event that an exam is converted in an emergency to a take-home, self-scheduled exam. For example, a professor may choose to change the multiple choice portion of an exam to essay to reduce security risks inherent in a take-home multiple-choice exam. Such an alternative exam must be provided to the Records Office at least one day in advance of the scheduled exam administration. If no alternate exam is provided, then the original exam will be provided to students.

Software. The Law School plans to use Learning Management Systems like Canvas or MyLaw or test administration software like Exam4 or ExamForge to distribute such exams and track the time at which the exam is downloaded and the time at which the exam is uploaded. Students will be allowed a 10-minute grace period for downloading, printing, and/or uploading, but they are on their honor to use this grace period only for those purposes. In the event that the Learning Management System or test administration software is not functioning, students will write by email, assuming it is functioning, to examsubmit@law.gwu.edu (including the Course Name and Instructor in the subject line) to receive their exams, and they will return the exams by email. If a student turns in an exam after the permissible time period, including the grace period, the Dean of Students Office will work with the professor to determine whether the exam will be accepted, and if so, what grade penalty may be imposed. In the event that the Office concludes that the failure to turn in the exam on time was the result of an excusable technological difficulty, the Office will determine whether the exam should be graded for a letter grade or on a CR/NC basis.

Cancellation of exams in process. In the event that an exam must be cancelled while the exam administration is in process, the Law School will assess the appropriate action on a course-by-course basis, taking into account how much of the exam time was lost. Possibilities include allowing students to complete their exams at some later point, perhaps shortly thereafter, for example in the event of a brief fire alarm; converting the course to be graded on a credit / no-credit basis; and grading on the basis of work completed as of the time of cancellation.