EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: WEEK PRECEDING FINAL EXAMINATIONS

I. PROPOSAL

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify to the faculty and students of Georgia Tech what is and is not allowed during the week preceding final examinations (WPFE).

B. WEEK PRECEDING FINAL EXAMINATIONS POLICY (WPFE)

Two separate paradigms exist for WPFE classification purposes: courses that give a traditional final examination, and courses that provide an alternative assessment in place of a final examination. Examples of the latter include a lab course which assigns a final lab report as the last deliverable, a technical writing course which assigns a term paper, or a senior design course which assigns a multifaceted project instead of a final. The following table outlines the specifics of the WPFE Policy.

**Table 1: WPFE Assignment Convention.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses with Traditional Final Exam</th>
<th>Courses with Alternative Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeworks¹</td>
<td>Tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects²</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Reports and Lab Practicums³</td>
<td>Alternative Assessment (One Project or Lab Report/Practicum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPFE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Final Exam</td>
<td>Any Additional Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals Week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No final examination will be given earlier than final examination week under any circumstances. All quizzes and tests must be graded and returned on or before the last day of class preceding final examination week. Student concerns may be discussed with the faculty member and/or to the chief academic officer of the department of instruction, or the Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. (See Student Academic Grievance Policy in the General Catalog.)

1. Homework may be given on new material covered during WPFE if the assignment is indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

2. Major projects (projects with more than one deliverable) due during WPFE should be assigned in the syllabus and fully detailed by the last day a student can withdraw from a class with a “W.” These projects cannot require mastery of material that is covered during WPFE. For these major projects, intermediate deliverables should be due prior to WPFE.

3. The only exception is four credit-hour courses, with a three-hour lecture component and a lab. In such courses, there may be a lab report and/or practicum due during WPFE and a traditional final examination during finals week, provided the lab report is assigned prior to WPFE.
General Catalog

VI. Scholastic Regulations:

H. Course Requirements:

1. Each course shall have a syllabus and course policies that include an outline of the course objectives, criteria used in determining the course grade, and any other requirements. Students shall be informed of any changes made to the syllabus and course policies with reasonable time to adjust to these changes.

2. In all courses students shall receive a graded performance evaluation returned prior to the last day to withdraw from classes (Drop Day). This is to allow students to evaluate whether to change the grade mode for the course or withdraw from it.

3. Progress Report grades of “S” or “U” will be submitted to the Registrar on all classes numbered 1000 and 2000 each semester prior to midterm – typically on the sixth week of Fall and Spring semesters and the fifth week of the Summer semester. A Progress Report grade of “U” indicates a performance level of “D” or lower. These are not permanent grades and never appear on a transcript but are issued to help students assess where they are in their class work and obtain academic help from the faculty and the many academic support services available on campus.
XII. Examinations

C. Week Preceding Final Examinations

The following applies to the Week Preceding Final Examinations (WPFE) during standard terms.

1. Two separate paradigms exist for WPFE classification purposes: courses that give a traditional final examination, and courses that do not give a traditional final examination. (See XII.D.1)

2. Courses with a traditional final examination given during finals week are allowed to have homework, projects, and some aspects of major projects due during WPFE, as described below. Major projects, defined as projects with more than one component (e.g., report, presentation, computer program, or piece of hardware), shall be assigned in the syllabus and fully outlined by the last day a student can withdraw from classes with a “W.” Additionally, major projects should have components due prior to WPFE. No projects can require the use of material that is covered during WPFE.

3. In courses with a traditional final examination, tests, quizzes, lab reports, and lab practicums are not allowed during WPFE. The only exception is four credit-hour courses, with a three-hour lecture component and a lab. In such courses, there may be a lab report and/or practicum due during WPFE and a traditional final examination during finals week, provided the lab report is assigned prior to WPFE.

4. In courses without a traditional final examination, homework, lab reports, and an alternative assessment in place of the final examination are the only items that may be due during WPFE. This alternative assessment may be any one of the following: project (including presentations and/or papers) or lab practicum. Lab reports may be due during WPFE only if assigned prior to WPFE.

5. For all courses, homework may be given on new material covered during WPFE if the assignment is indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

6. No final examination will be given earlier than final examination week under any circumstances.

7. All quizzes and tests must be graded and reported to students on or before the last day of class of WPFE.

8. Student concerns may be discussed with the faculty member and/or reported to the chief academic officer of the department of instruction, or the Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. (See Student Academic Grievance Policy in the General Catalog.)
D. Regulations Covering Final Examinations

1. In regularly scheduled lecture courses of the Institute, a final examination shall be administered at the time specified in the official final examination schedule as distributed by the Office of the Registrar. In courses such as seminars, senior design, capstone, writing courses, and laboratories final examinations may be waived and may be replaced with appropriate assessment. The decision to give a final examination in these courses shall be made by the instructor of record. An announcement of policy shall be made to the class at its first meeting and included in the class syllabus.

2. No assessment other than final examinations or their replacement may be due during the final examination period.

3. Requests to change a class examination time within final examination week must be submitted to the chief academic officer of the department of instruction for approval no later than one week before the beginning of final examinations. Any such request must have the unanimous approval of the class as shown by secret ballot, as well as approval by the instructor of the class.

4. A change in the period for a final examination for an individual student will not be permitted, ordinarily; but such change may be allowed for hardship cases at the discretion of the instructor. The request for a change must be justified in writing by the student and shall be submitted to the instructor prior to final examination week and may be rescheduled to an appropriate time.

5. In the event a student has two examinations scheduled for the same period, the conflict shall be resolved by the course having the lowest number being considered in conflict. The final examination in that course shall be given during the conflict examination period or, by agreement of the instructor and the student, at a mutually satisfactory time.

6. In the event a student is scheduled for three examinations in one day, that examination scheduled for the middle period shall be considered in conflict and the conflict shall be resolved by making the examination given during the conflict period or at some time mutually agreed upon by the instructor and the student.

7. A student reporting to a final examination room more than fifteen minutes after the scheduled starting time shall not be allowed to take the examination unless a satisfactory explanation is presented to the instructor conducting the examination.