

Completion of Courses and Finalization of Grades

Communication from the Senate Executive Committee

Updated with New and Revised Information: 7 March 2024

In this document, the Senate Executive Committee sets out options for the completion of courses and finalization of grades. The options are designed to promote flexibility while adhering to the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students, which are at the core of the Senate [Policy on the Academic Implications of Disruptions or Cessations of University Business Due to Labour Disputes or Other Causes](#) (“Disruptions Policy”). These options are to cover:

- i. courses that have continued since the disruption of academic activities began on 26 February 2024, either in-person or remotely
- ii. courses that have continued but students are unable to or have chosen not to attend
- iii. courses that have been suspended
- iv. courses for which lecture components have continued but labs / tutorials suspended

Students are enrolled in courses covering one or more of the above categories. All of York’s undergraduate and graduate students have legitimate and understandable desires to complete their courses as soon as possible. Many are in particularly vulnerable situations or have especially urgent needs, such as international 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.

Academic Integrity and Fairness to Students: When a disruption of any length occurs, no dilution of standards normally expected of students should be permitted and there should be as little diminution as possible in the instructional or supervisory support given to students. Undergraduate and graduate students who do not participate in academic activities because (a) they are unable to do so owing to a Disruption, or (b) they choose not to participate in academic activities owing to a strike or lock-out on campus, are entitled to:

- immunity from penalty
- reasonable alternative access to course materials covered in their absence
- reasonable extensions of deadlines, and
- such other forms of academic accommodation as Senate deems necessary and consistent with the principle of academic integrity.

The options made available to all students to complete their courses are not to alter academic standards, relieve students of the responsibility for mastering materials covered, or guarantee students will have the same learning experience they would have received in the absence of a disruption. Students who need assistance understanding these provisions in the Senate Disruption policy can speak to their course instructor, Undergraduate / Graduate Program Director or Associate Dean in their home Faculty. The [Frequently Asked Questions](#) site is another University resource for information related to the labour disruption.

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.

Summary of Options and Modifications Effective 10 March 2024	
For Courses that Have Continued	For Courses that are Suspended and/or Which Students Did Not Attend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change in length of the winter term • Normal class schedule applies unless instructor arranges alternative scheduling • Final day of exams is no later than April 26 • Extension of deadline to withdraw from course without receiving a grade • Students who are either unable or 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. • Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight of Assignments (NEW: <i>*effective 17 March 2024</i>) • Temporary broadening of the Senate Policy on Pass / Fail Grades (NEW) • Temporary modification to course evaluations (NEW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised class schedule to be announced after the conclusion of the strike • Revised examination schedule to be announced after the conclusion of the strike • Extension of deadline to withdraw from a course without receiving a grade • Cushion period before assignments are due and tests are held when classes resume • Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight of Assignments (NEW: <i>*effective 17 March 2024</i>) • Temporary broadening of the Senate Policy on Pass / Fail Grades (NEW) • Move an exam from the revised Examination period to be held during the last class of the revised schedule (NEW: <i>*effective in revised exam schedule when set</i>) • Temporary modification to course evaluations (NEW)

Fuller details about each of the options are set out below.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies is developing “*Remediation Options and Guiding Principles for Graduate Students.*” The document will be made available once finalized.

Term Lengths and Class and Examination Schedules

Term Length for Courses that have *Continued*

For courses that have continued during the disruption, there will be no alteration of the length of the term. Classes and activities for these courses will continue on the original schedule. The exception is courses with labs that are not continuing but the class components are proceeding; the labs will be rescheduled upon the conclusion of the labour disruption.

Note, 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 Office of the University Registrar.

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 and there will be a compressed remediation and examination schedule as a result. Details on the revised term will be announced following the end of the strike. Students who have not participated in courses during the disruption will follow the revised schedules. Exceptions will 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 Office of the University Registrar at a time that is convenient for instructors and students.

Final Examination Schedule for Courses that *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 26 April 2024**. 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 26. Additionally, students needing accommodation for extenuating circumstances related to the disruption have the option to seek deferred standing through their course instructor or the petitions process. The searchable final examination schedule for courses that are continuing is posted on the *Office of the University Registrar* [website](#).

Final Examination Schedule for Courses that are *Suspended*

An examination schedule for courses that are suspended will be announced when the disruption ends and posted on the Office of the University Registrar website. A compressed examination schedule can be expected. This is also the examination schedule for students who were unable or chose not to participate in courses that continued.

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

Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight of Assignments (NEW; AS OF 17 MARCH)

If the strike remains ongoing as of 17 March 2024: instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments, tests and examinations provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible.

While instructors may make these types of changes to assignments, tests and examinations, if at all possible, students should have the choice to complete the assignments following the originally published grading scheme for the course.

***CORRECTION:** For courses that have been suspended there will be a compressed remediation and examination schedule announced. For these courses, instructors are authorized to move an exam from the revised Examination period to be held during the last class of the revised schedule. For this option only, the *Limits on the Worth of Examinations in the Final Classes of a Term* Senate Policy is waived.

Cushion Period Before Assignments are Due and Tests Set in Revised Schedules

Instructors in courses that will resume at the conclusion of the disruption are urged to help re-orient students to their studies and discuss options and possible changes with them before and during the first class. This is applicable to students in courses that were suspended and those who were unable or chose not to attend during the disruption.

There should be a cushion period before assignments are due and tests / mid-terms are held. Tests / mid-terms should not be held, and the submission of assignments should not be required, in any course (regardless of delivery mode) until at least one class “meet” has been held or one week has occurred, whichever is longer. 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).

Course Completion Options

Courses Switched from In-person to Asynchronous Online Delivery: an Addendum

As a form of remedial action, instructors can switch an in-person course / academic activity to online delivery, either synchronous or asynchronous mode, for the duration of the disruption and reported to Deans' / Principal Offices. Course instructors' decision to use an asynchronous mode of delivery is subject to specific program accreditation requirements.

Recorded Lectures as a Form of Remedial Action

In accordance with the Senate Disruptions Policy, students who cannot or chose not to participate in academic activities during a disruption are entitled to reasonable alternative access to materials covered in their absence. Senate Executive confirms that posting recorded lectures

delivered either in-person or remotely will be included as a form of remedial action that meets the requirement to provide reasonable alternative access to materials covered in their absence. This confirmation is provided as a suggestion to assist course instructors with planning ahead.

Withdraw from a Course Without Receiving a Grade

As already [announced](#) by Senate Executive, the last day to drop 2024 Winter term undergraduate courses without receiving a grade or a "Withdrawn from Course" (W) notification on their transcripts has been extended to the last day of classes. Currently the last day of classes is 8 April 2024. If the length of the disruption results in a decision by Senate Executive to change term dates, the deadline to drop a course will remain the last day of classes in any revised schedule.

The option does not apply to:

- graduate courses or the JD program
- Fall (F) term courses
- FW (six-credit) courses with a drop deadline before 26 February 2024

Modifications to the Pass/ Fail Grading Option for Undergraduate Courses (NEW)

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. It cannot be used for the following kinds of courses:

- i. courses which satisfy major or minor requirements (including for-credit practica not already on a pass/fail grading scheme)
- ii. required courses outside the major
- iii. courses taken to satisfy Certificate requirements
- iv. required 1000-level science courses for students in the Faculty of Science, the Lassonde School of Engineering and the Faculty of Health

Note: The Pass/Fail option is not applicable to BEd, JD, BBA or iBBA degree programs.

Senate has approved two modifications to the Senate [Pass/Fail Grades Policy](#), as follows:

- An extension of the deadline to select the Pass/Fail grading option for eligible courses to the last day of classes on the original schedule for courses that continued or the revised schedule following the disruption, and
- A broadening of the Pass/Fail Policy to permit students to add 6 credits above the normal maximum for both 90-credit (normally 6 credits) and 120-credit (normally 12 credits) degree programs; and for students who have not yet completed 24 credits an additional 6 credits above the normal maximum of 3 credits.

As provided for in the Pass/Fail Policy, students may revert to a grades assessment by the final day to withdraw from classes.

Students 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.

Accommodations, Petitions and Appeals

Course Evaluations (NEW)

The [Senate Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching](#) continues to apply. However, surveys will be conducted for all Y 2023-2024 and W 2024 courses at the request of individual instructors. Faculties should develop the means by which faculty members can communicate their desire to have evaluations conducted for their courses this term.

The Senate Executive Committee is continuing to consider course completion options, other forms of accommodations and schedule changes necessary with the ongoing disruption. Any decisions taken will be promptly communicated.

Poonam Puri
Chair of Senate