

Completion of Courses and Finalization of Grades Communication from the Senate Executive Committee

Updated April 3, 2024

In this document, the Executive Committee provides guidance to instructors, students and staff on the options available to complete FW'23 and Winter '24 undergraduate courses. All of York's undergraduate and graduate students have legitimate and understandable desires to complete their courses as soon as possible. However, many are in particularly vulnerable situations or have especially urgent needs, such as international and exchange 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 completion options and changes to the Winter term authorized by the Senate Executive Committee have been designed to accommodate a variety of circumstances but in some cases are of particular value to students who have pressing needs.

The course completion options and 2023-2024 term changes in this document apply to undergraduate:

- i. courses that have continued since the disruption that began on 26 February 2024 and which students will be able to conclude on the existing class schedule
- ii. courses that have been suspended until the disruption ends
- iii. courses where lectures continued on the existing class schedule, but labs / tutorials have been suspended until the disruption ends or graded feedback is not being received
- iv. students participating and those not participating in academic activities during the disruption

Many students are enrolled in a combination of these kinds of courses, or they have chosen not to participate or are unable to participate in courses that continued. The guidance and options made available cover all scenarios and they are designed to promote flexibility while balancing the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students, which are at the core of Senate [Policy on the Academic Implications of Disruptions or Cessations of University Business Due to Labour Disputes or Other Causes](#).

For ease of understanding the varying and complex circumstances pertaining to courses in this disruption, the four main **Course and Student Status Scenarios** are set out below. For each scenario, specific information is provided about the status of the term, options available for students to choose to complete a course, and decisions about the course that individual instructors can make to support the completion of courses consistent with the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students. Detailed information about each of the course completion options, including eligibility requirements and deadlines is also provided after the section on *Course and Student Status Scenarios*.

Additional or revised information in this communication is noted as “NEW” and highlighted in red text.

**Students are encouraged to carefully consider the course completion options to make decisions that are best suited to their academic needs. Guidance on the options can be provided by Faculty advisors, course instructors, Undergraduate Program Directors, Department Chairs or staff in the Office of the University Registrar.*

Undergraduate Course and Student Status Scenarios

A. Courses that Fully Continued and Students who Participated in Them

For full-year (Y) and winter term (W) courses that have fully continued and students who participated in them:

- existing class schedule and final examination period remain as originally published; **the April 9 study day can be available for make-up classes / course activities as needed (NEW)**
- course will be completed by the last day of exams on 26 April 2024
- instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments, tests and examinations of a course, provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible.
- students have the option to choose an assessed grade where eligibility is met by the deadline of April 9, 2024 **(including possibility of re-weighted assignments to meet 70% threshold, and /or meeting exceptional circumstances at the decision of the course instructor) (NEW; eligibility information below)**
- students may (prior to receiving a grade) withdraw from a **full-year** or winter term course without receiving a grade or transcript notation until the **last day of classes in the remediation period (NEW)**
- students may request to the instructor a pass / fail grading scheme where eligibility is met
- students may request from the course instructor deferred standing for an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation

B. Courses that have Fully Continued in Which Students are not Participating

For full-year (Y) and winter (W) courses that have fully continued in which students are not participating:

- a remediation period of up to 4 weeks long will be provided after the disruption ends to complete the course; reasonable access to course material covered in their absence will be provided in that period; dates of the remediation period to be announced once strike ends
- a revised final exam schedule will be held after the remediation period; dates to be announced
- instructors are permitted to shift to an online exam in the revised final examination schedule
- instructors may provide recorded lectures delivered either in-person or remotely as reasonable access to material covered in students' absences
- instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments, tests and examinations of a course, provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible. If at all possible, students should have the choice to complete the assignments following the originally published grading scheme for the course.
- students have the option to choose an assessed grade where eligibility is met by the first day of the remediation final examination period (including the possibility of re-weighted assignments to meet 70% threshold, and /or meeting exceptional circumstances at the decision of the course instructor) (NEW; eligibility information below)
- students may (prior to receiving a grade) withdraw from a full-year or winter term course without receiving a grade or transcript notation until the last day of classes in remediation period (NEW)
- students may request a pass / fail grading scheme where eligibility is met
- students may request from the course instructor deferred standing for an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation
- students will have a cushion period (of at least one class meeting) before assignments are due and tests / mid-terms are held in the remediation period.

C. Courses that have been Suspended until the Disruption Ends

In the case of courses that have been fully suspended:

- there will be a reduction in the length of the term of two weeks. (NEW)
- a remediation period up to 4 weeks long will be provided after the disruption ends to complete the course; dates of the remediation period to be announced once the strike ends
- a revised final exam schedule will be held after the remediation period; dates to be announced
- instructors can shift the resumed parts of a course to online delivery where feasible during the remediation period as a form of accommodation to students who cannot attend course activities in-person; dates of the remediation period to be announced once the strike ends
- instructors are permitted shift to an online exam in the revised examination schedule
- instructors are permitted to move an exam from the revised examination period to be held during the last class in the remediation period. (For this option only, the Limits on the Worth of Examinations in the Final Classes of a Term Senate Policy is waived).
- instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments, tests and examinations of a course to be in effect once the course resumes, provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible. If at all possible, students should have the choice to complete the assignments following the originally published grading scheme for the course.
- students have the option to choose an assessed grade where eligibility is met by the first day of the remediation final examination period (including the possibility of re-weighted assignments to meet 70% threshold and /or exceptional circumstances at the decision of the course instructor) (NEW; eligibility information below)
- students may (prior to receiving a grade) withdraw from a full-year or winter term course without receiving a grade or transcript notation until the last day of classes in remediation period; (NEW)
- students may request a pass / fail grading scheme where eligibility is met
- students may request from the course instructor deferred standing for an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation
- students will have a cushion period (of at least one class meeting) before assignments are due and tests / mid-terms are held in the remediation period.

D. Courses where Lectures Continued, Tutorials / Labs Suspended and Grading Paused

In the case of courses where lectures continued but tutorials or labs were suspended, and where grading of coursework that has been submitted has been paused:

- there will be a reduction in the length of the term **of two weeks (NEW)**.
- a remediation period of up to 4 weeks long will be provided after the disruption ends to resume tutorials, labs and to have grading of coursework completed.
- a revised final examination schedule will be held after the remediation period.
- instructors can shift the resumed parts of a course to online delivery where feasible during the remediation period as a form of accommodation to students who cannot attend course activities in-person; dates of the remediation period to be announced once the strike ends.
- instructors can determine if it is appropriate for students to write the final exam in the existing examination schedule with the requirement that students complete the labs when they are held in the remediation period. Where instructors permit this option, they will advise the students in the course in advance of the April examination schedule.
- instructors are permitted to shift to an online exam in the revised examination schedule.
- instructors are permitted to move an exam from the revised examination period to be held during the last class in the remediation period. (For this option only, the *Limits on the Worth of Examinations in the Final Classes of a Term* Senate Policy is waived).
- instructors are permitted to make changes to the number, kind, and weight of assignments, tests and examinations of a course to be in effect once the course resumes, provided this does not disadvantage students and preserves academic integrity as much as possible. If at all possible, students should have the choice to complete the assignments following the originally published grading scheme for the course.
- students have the option to choose an assessed grade where eligibility is met by the first day of the remediation final examination period (**including the possibility of re-weighted assignments to meet 70% threshold and /or exceptional circumstances at the decision of the course instructor (NEW; eligibility information below)**).
- students may (prior to receiving a grade) withdraw from a **full-year (Y)** or winter term (W) course without receiving a grade or transcript notation until the **last day of classes in the remediation period. (NEW)**
- students may request a pass / fail grading scheme where eligibility is met.
- students may request from the course instructor deferred standing for an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation.
- students will have a cushion period (of at least one class meeting) before assignments are due and tests / mid-terms are held in the remediation period.

Graduate Course Information

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

Information on Summer 2024 Terms

Summer 2024 Terms and Schedules

The S1 summer term will proceed on the [original schedule](#) with courses that can proceed on the start date of May 6, 2024. The list of [summer course offerings](#) is available to students. The start of the SU and S2 session will be delayed; the specific dates will be announced when the disruption ends.

Senate Executive encourages instructors to exercise flexibility as appropriate to permit students to concurrently enrol in a Summer 2024 course(s) if they are completing a prerequisite course in the FW'23 or W '24 term. (NEW)

Fuller Details on the FW and W 2024 Course Completion Options Referenced Above

Changes to the Number, Kind and Weight of Assignments

Instructors of all categories of courses 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.

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

Instructors in courses that will resume in the remediation period 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, courses where tutorials and labs were suspended, and 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 component (regardless of delivery mode) until at least one class “meet” has been held in the remediation period 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 lab session).

Assessed Grades (NEW; April 3, 2024)

An assessed grade is a final grade based on coursework completed that comprises a defined proportion of the assignments in a course syllabus. Students may choose this **option on their own**.

This option is available for undergraduate courses as follows:

- when 70% of course work has been completed and grades received in continuing courses or in the remediation period for resumed courses.
- includes courses taken on a Pass / Fail grading scheme.
- the option can be chosen by students when 70% of completed and graded coursework has been achieved in continuing courses or in the remediation period
- **If 60 per cent of course work has been completed, course instructors have the authority to exercise their judgement whether it is appropriate for the nature and circumstances of the course to make minor adjustments to the value of its graded components so that the 60 per cent can be raised to meet the 70 per cent threshold (i.e., no more than 10 per cent change to the collective weight of assignments). Course directors would communicate the re-weighted assignment scenarios to students. (NEW)**
- in exceptional circumstances students may request assessed grades on the basis of work that falls below the 70 per cent threshold. Such requests are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by individual instructors exercising their discretion consistent with the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students. Examples of exceptional circumstances include but are not limited to:
 - international and exchange students facing the expiration of visas
 - students graduating this spring
 - students with firm study or employment plans. **(NEW)**
- students choosing an assessed grade must contact course directors to communicate their choice and then use the online system on the Registrar’s Office website to make this choice.
- students seeking an assessed grade *on the basis of exceptional circumstances* must contact the course instructor directly to discuss the request; in the absence of the course instructor, students should contact the Chair of the Department offering the course.
- they may not be available in programs with accreditation requirements. Students must confirm eligibility with their programs and Faculties to know which, if any, courses are eligible for the assessed grade option. The online system to choose assessed grades will filter out ineligible courses. Accredited and exempted programs include:
 - JD (Osgoode)
 - BEng, BSc & BA programs in Computer Science and Computer Security, BAsC in Digital Technologies (Lassonde)
 - 3rd and 4th level accounting courses in BBA (SSB)
 - ADMS courses in BCom necessary for accreditation (LAPS)
 - ADMS courses which will have not achieved 70% of assessments by end of classes. (LAPS)
- the deadline for students participating in *continuing courses* to choose an assessed grade is the day before the start of the exam period (**9 April 2024**); the deadline for all other course-student scenarios is the first day of the remediation final examination period; specific date to be announced.
- Students who opt for an assessed grade by the deadlines, cannot revert to the 100% grading scheme of the course (includes not sitting the final examination or submitting the final assignment).

Courses Switched from In-person to Asynchronous Online Delivery

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.

Instructors of undergraduate and graduate courses also have the option to deliver academic activities online during the remediation period as a form of accommodation to students who cannot attend course activities in-person after April and /or who may have other extenuating circumstances owing to the disruption. Instructors are encouraged to extend maximum flexibility and option resources available to them to accommodate students' needs in the remediation period to meet the principle of fairness to students as expressed in the Senate Disruptions Policy.

Graduate courses may carry specific learning outcomes that are often directly connected to other milestones in their graduate program. To this end, instructors are encouraged to consider the distinct nature of graduate courses in exercising remediation options and forms of accommodation to students.

Withdraw from a Course Without Receiving a Grade (REVISED)

The last day to drop **any full-year (Y) or Winter term (W)** undergraduate courses (prior to receiving a grade) without receiving a grade or a "*Withdrawn from Course*" (W) notification on their transcripts has been extended to **the last day of classes in the remediation period; date to be announced when disruption ends.**

The late withdrawal 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

Senate has a *Pass/Fail Grades Policy* that allows students to take a limited number of courses on a pass/fail basis. 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: This extended Pass/Fail option is not applicable to BEd, JD, BBA, iBBA or BCom degree programs.

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

- An extension of the deadline to request 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 temporary broadening of the Pass/Fail Policy to permit students to add 6 credits above the normal maximum of 12 credits within their program; 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 graded 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.

Recorded Lectures as a Form of Remediation

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.

Deferred Standing

Students always have the option to request from a course instructor a deferral of an assignment, test, exam, or other evaluation. Students must make a formal request for deferred standing, and are not automatically entitled to this relief. Senate Executive urges instructors to deal with requests generously in the spirit of the accommodations under the Disruptions Policy's principle of fairness to students. *In considering deferred standing as an option, students should carefully consider the potential delay it could have on progress towards their degree completion and possibly graduation.*

Accommodations

Course Evaluations

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 only 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.

Instructional Activities Permitted During the Examination Period with Agreement

The [Senate Policy on Sessional Dates and Scheduling of Final Examinations](#) stipulates that examination schedules will not overlap with teaching dates. Given the need for flexibility in the completion of courses, this rule will be relaxed such that remediation activities **may** be scheduled during formal examination periods. The agreement of both instructors and individual students is required to proceed. Protections for students articulated in the Sessional Dates Policy remain in place.

Background Information on Academic Remediation

The CUPE 3903 strike that began on 26 February 2024 has substantially interrupted the University's academic activities. The impact of the disruption on undergraduate and graduate course delivery is uneven. There are several categories describing the status of academic activities; they are:

- i. courses that are continuing either through in-person or remote delivery
- ii. courses that are continuing but students are unable to or have chosen not to attend due to the strike
- iii. courses for which lecture components are continuing but labs / tutorials suspended
- iv. courses that have been suspended

Guided by the Senate [Disruptions Policy](#), the Executive Committee continues to announce options that are available for the completion of FW23-24 and Winter 2024 term courses and finalization of grades; The options are designed to promote flexibility while adhering to the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students defined in the Disruptions Policy. This information is provided to assist instructors with course planning, and to assist students in knowing what options are available for completing their courses in a timely manner and to support their responsibility for mastering materials covered if they did not participate in academic activities during the disruption.

The Meaning of “Remediation” and “Remediation Period”

The term “remediation” in the context of the Senate Disruptions Policy describes “*accommodations for students, modifications of normal academic regulations, and adjustments in class and examination schedules*”. The Policy states that “the completion of courses will involve a combination of such changes.” 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.

Revisions to the FW'23-24 and Winter 2024 term class and examination schedules will be necessary because of the interruption to academic activities. The Senate Disruptions Policy presumes the need for a revised teaching term examination schedule when two or more weeks of instructional time are lost in 6-credit courses and one week or more is lost in 3-credit courses. As such, classes, tutorials and labs that have been suspended during this disruption will resume following the end of the disruption. This time of resumed courses and academic activities is necessary to facilitate the completion of courses / course components that were suspended; it is called the “remediation period”. The remediation period will be of a length of up to 4 weeks, with the exact length and dates to be defined by the Senate Executive Committee once the end date of the strike is known. A remediation examination period follows the remediation period for classes, tutorials and labs. The remediation exam period will also be defined by Senate Executive once dates are known.

Academic Integrity and Fairness to Students

The Senate Disruptions Policy provides accommodations for undergraduate and graduate students who cannot or choose not to participate in academic activities because of the disruption. Students in this category are provided:

- 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.

In providing this option and these accommodations, the Disruption Policy also states that students have the “...responsibility for mastering material covered” in their absence. The course completion options made available to all students support their ability to finish courses in as timely a manner as possible in the circumstances while also balancing a course’s academic integrity. Students who need assistance understanding these provisions in the Senate Disruption Policy, including any advantages and disadvantages to be weighed for those with a choice to attend courses, can speak to their course instructor, student academic advisors, 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.

Poonam Puri, Chair of Senate