

Updated 12/6/2022

Final exam

Plan A: If the strike situation is resolved before 11:59PM 12/7 (Wednesday), the final exam, and everything else will proceed according to the original course policy. The final exam will be in-person, and the final exam is mandatory (not showing up = F). The format of the final exam will be as usual, consisting of 6-9 questions covering all materials taught in the semester before the impact of the strike fully kicked in (i.e., up to and including NS&S 4.5, or lecture note 33). The difficulty of the questions will be easier than usual. The letter grade distribution will likely be more lenient compared to the standard set by previous years.

In this case, all students from Professor Paulin's class last semester in need of a makeup exam and all students enrolled in Math 49 for this class are automatically approved to attend the in-person exam.

This will be a closed book exam.

More information:

Room (7pm-10 pm PT): Pimentel Hall, Room 1

Room for DSP students (4pm-10pm PT): Moffitt, Room 101

Plan B: If the strike continues after 12:00AM 12/8 (Thursday), the final exam will be performed online using gradescope (course entry code: V5W3WB). In this case:

1. The exam starts at 12:00AM 12/15 (Thursday) and lasts 24 hours to 12:00AM 12/16 (Friday). By some alternative rules of arithmetic operations, 24 hours should be treated as an infinite amount of time, i.e. $24 \text{ hours} * 200\% = 24 \text{ hours}$ etc. So, everyone gets the same 24-hour slot.
2. The format of the exam: there will be only two multiple choice problems. One on linear algebra, and one on differential equations. The exam covers all materials up to and including NS&S 4.5 (i.e., lecture note 33). This will also be an open book exam.
3. There will be a “mock final exam” so that you can familiarize yourself with the format. Due to my upcoming travels, it will likely be released during this weekend.
4. The final still weighs 40 points. If your final score is higher than one of your midterm scores after normalization (in the sense of the original course policy), then the midterm with a lower score will be replaced by the final score after normalization. This is the same as the original course policy.
5. If the strike ends before 12/30, or if the GSI can still help with the processing of the grade sheet before campus's deadline for submitting letter grades, the letter grade will be properly calculated according to the course policy. The grade distribution will likely be more lenient than usual.
6. If the strike does not end before 12/30, and if the GSI cannot help with the processing of the grade sheet in any scenario, the submission of the letter grade will be withheld until the very last deadline set by campus (if there is any). In this scenario, the grade distribution will likely be **extraordinarily** lenient. In this case, no A+ will be rewarded. Please note that there is some nonzero probability that some other parties on campus may have the power of rejecting this grade distribution altogether at a later stage.

Based on all the information I have collected so far, it is not obvious that this plan must be rejected (i.e., the probability of rejection is < 1), but I cannot provide a more refined estimate of this probability.

7. The participation in the final exam can be optional but is very strongly recommended. In other words, not showing up in the final exam (for whatever reason) will not automatically lead to F, and its impact will be properly calibrated at a later stage. I expect everyone to perform extraordinarily well in this alternative format of the final exam, which may be used to partially justify the potentially extraordinarily lenient grade distribution.
8. The reason we are conducting this final exam at all is that it is required by campus, i.e., cancelling the final exam is not an option. Meanwhile the reasons behind the form of this exam include at least 1) there is little to no help at the campus level for instructors of large courses 2) I do not want honest students (i.e., the supermajority of Berkeley students) to be penalized by their honesty in this unproctored exam format. 3) It is desirable to minimize everyone's potential waste of time given the circumstances.

In the case of Plan B, I recommend all students from Professor Paulin's class last semester in need of a makeup exam and all students enrolled in Math 49 for this class to take the final exam next semester, if possible. If this is not an option for you, you can still login to gradescope with code V5W3WB to participate in this alternative final exam (no approval from me is needed).

WARNING: Doing this has some considerable risks:

1. If we are in scenario Plan B.5, "If the strike ends before 12/30...", I would think that this final exam fulfills nothing more than some formality requirement from campus and is insufficient information to judge whether you have passed the course or not, not to mention to provide a letter grade. In practice, your letter grade will not be sent to campus. I imagine that this may create considerable administrative hurdles for both you and me during the Spring semester. **I simply do not have a good solution in this case, and I am sorry for that.**
2. If we are in scenario Plan B.6, "If the strike does not end before 12/30...", I will submit your letter grade to campus, and the grade distribution will likely be extraordinarily lenient. Please note that there is still some nonzero probability that some other parties on campus may have the power of rejecting this grade distribution altogether at a later stage.

Note:

1. Due to my other duties at hand, this updated course policy has not been proofread many times and may contain typos / loopholes / errors. If so, fixing these is not my priority at the moment.
2. Due to the large volume of messages and the unprecedented nature of the event, my email responses for course matters may be very significantly delayed.