

Westfield State University

Policy Number: AP008 **Effective Date:** 2022-08-15

Midterm Examination Guidelines

1.0 Purpose and Overview

Westfield State University is committed to academic excellence and the continuous assessment of student learning. Midterm examinations are a critical component of this assessment, providing a structured opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of course material and for instructors to evaluate student progress. This policy establishes the framework for the scheduling, administration, and grading of midterm examinations to ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency across all academic programs.

The primary purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Standardize the procedures for conducting midterm examinations.
- Clarify the responsibilities of instructors, students, and academic departments.
- Provide a mechanism for resolving scheduling conflicts and addressing student concerns.
- Ensure that midterm grades are reported in a timely manner to facilitate academic advising and support services, including the issuance of early alerts for students who may be at academic risk.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate courses at Westfield State University that include a midterm examination as part of the course assessment. This includes courses delivered in all formats, including in-person, hybrid, and fully online. All faculty, instructional staff, academic administrators, and students are expected to adhere to these guidelines.

3.0 Policy Content

3.1 Scheduling of Midterm Examinations

- **In-Class Examinations:** Midterm examinations are typically to be held during regularly scheduled class periods. The date and time of in-class midterm examinations must be announced by the instructor in the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester.
- **Out-of-Class Examinations:** In exceptional cases where a common midterm examination is required for a multi-section course, the examination may be scheduled outside of regular class hours. Such examinations must be scheduled in consultation with the Registrar's Office to avoid conflicts with other courses and university events. The date, time, and location of out-of-class midterm examinations must be announced within the first two weeks of the semester.
- **Examination Period:** Midterm examinations should be scheduled to occur between the fifth and tenth weeks of a standard 15-week semester. For courses offered in shorter academic terms, the timing of the midterm examination should be adjusted proportionally.

3.2 Format and Administration

- **Format:** The format of the midterm examination (e.g., multiple-choice, essay, open-book) is at the discretion of the instructor and should be appropriate for the learning objectives of the course. The format must be clearly communicated to students in the course syllabus.
- **Duration:** The duration of the midterm examination should not exceed the length of the scheduled class period for in-class exams. For out-of-class exams, the duration should be reasonable and not exceed three hours.
- **Proctoring:** For in-person examinations, appropriate proctoring must be in place to ensure academic integrity. For online examinations, instructors are encouraged to use university-approved proctoring solutions or alternative assessment strategies that minimize the risk of academic dishonesty.

3.3 Grade Reporting and Early Alerts

- **Grading Deadline:** Instructors are required to grade and return midterm examinations to students in a timely manner. All midterm grades must be

submitted to the university's student information system no later than the end of the eleventh week of the semester.

- **Early Alerts:** Midterm grades serve as a key indicator for the university's early alert system. Students who are identified as being at academic risk based on their midterm performance will be contacted by their academic advisor or the Office of Student Success to develop a plan for improvement.

3.4 Make-up Examinations

Students who are unable to take a midterm examination at the scheduled time due to a documented emergency, illness, or other university-approved reason may be eligible for a make-up examination. Students must notify their instructor as soon as possible and provide appropriate documentation. The format and scheduling of the make-up examination will be at the discretion of the instructor.

4.0 Procedures

- **Students:** Students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and format of their midterm examinations. They are also responsible for communicating any potential scheduling conflicts to their instructors in a timely manner.
- **Instructors:** Instructors are responsible for scheduling and administering midterm examinations in accordance with this policy. They are also responsible for grading examinations and reporting grades by the established deadline.
- **Departments:** Academic departments are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy within their programs and for assisting in the resolution of any disputes that may arise.

5.0 Related Policies

- AP001: Academic Integrity Policy
- AP005: Grading and Grade Appeals
- AP012: Student Attendance Policy

6.0 Contact Information

For questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact:

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7.0 Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes
1.0	2022-08-15	Office of the Provost	Initial version of the policy.
1.1	2023-01-20	Office of the Provost	Added clarification on online examination proctoring.