

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING FINAL EXAMINATIONS FOR SPRING SEMESTER 2020

1. How will final examinations be administered this semester?

The law school will administer final exams remotely using the Exemplify testing software. This is the same software the law school uses to administer final exams on campus in normal conditions. Exemplify does not require an internet connection during the exam, so exam-takers can be confident that their work is safe and secure during the examination period. The only times an internet connection is required is at some time before the exam, when each student can download the exam, and at some time after the exam, when each student must connect briefly to the internet to upload his or her exam answer for retrieval by the Registrar's Office. Students will receive their exam passwords by email before the exam.

The Registrar's Office will send students a list of contacts should they encounter a problem while testing remotely and will set up an exam trouble-shooting "office" via Zoom. If a test-taker experiences a problem that cannot be resolved promptly, he or she should handwrite the remainder of the exam answer, as described below. Exemplify will save any previously entered exam responses.

Exemplify does not permit test-takers to print copies of the exam questions, but test-takers can highlight, underline, and make notes within Exemplify.

2. Will I need any special computer hardware or software to take exams remotely?

You will need a laptop or personal computer that will support the Exemplify software. You can find information about Exemplify on the Registrar's channel on the Campus Life page on STANLEY.

You also will need an appropriate webcam. The law school will make use of the ExamID feature associated with Exemplify. It uses a two-step authentication process – a username/password coupled with biometric facial recognition – to prevent exam-taker impersonation. It also facilitates the process of student check-in traditionally required to verify student identification for large-scale exams. Before exams, the Registrar's Office will send instructions to students explaining how to set up the authentication process. If you do not have a webcam, you should obtain one quickly. If you cannot obtain a webcam, please notify the Registrar's Office by Wednesday, April 15, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. at registrar@stcl.edu.

Proctors will not be monitoring student activity during the examination by means of the webcam.

3. Will the law school adhere to the published final examination schedule?

Yes, with the limited exceptions explained below. The law school will administer most final examinations on the original dates published in the course schedule. We know that most students plan their course selections with the final examination schedule in mind, so preserving the regular exam calendar protects your expectations.

The exception to the regular examination calendar will be for the two Saturdays during the final examination period, Saturday, May 2, and Saturday, May 9. Both Saturdays have a testing period in the morning and in the afternoon, so some students may have two final examinations scheduled on the same day. To avoid students having to take two examinations within the same 24-hour period, the Saturday, May 2, 3:00 p.m., exams will be rescheduled for Sunday, May 3, and the Saturday, May 9, 3 p.m., exams will be rescheduled for Sunday, May 10. Students whose religious observances preclude their taking a Sunday exam should contact the Registrar's Office so that they make take their final examination as regularly scheduled.

4. At what time on the scheduled exam day will the final exam take place?

Students will have a limited version of self-scheduling for final exams. You will be permitted to take the final exam at any time during the 24-hour clock day on which the exam is scheduled. For example, if the examination is three hours long, you may take the exam during any three-hour period commencing at 12:01 a.m. and ending at 11:59 p.m. on the scheduled exam day. The Exemplify software will monitor your beginning and ending times to assure that you adhere to the examination time limit. The purpose of this limited self-scheduling is to provide enough flexibility for students to take the final examination at the time and place most conducive to test-taking and to accommodate religious observances during the exam period.

5. How long will each final exam be?

The duration of each final exam will be the same as if it were administered on-campus under normal conditions. Thus, courses usually having a three-hour final examination will continue to have a three-hour examination. Students receiving disability accommodations will continue to do so.

6. Will I be able to defer a 2020 Spring Semester final examination?

Yes. The law school has a deferred examination policy. That policy describes the circumstances under which a student will be permitted to defer taking a final examination when it is scheduled. Those grounds include, among other reasons, the student's illness, an immediate family member's illness, and "extenuating circumstances, [such that] preparing for and taking the examination at the scheduled time would be severely prejudicial to the student." SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020 at 14-15. A student seeking to defer a final examination must submit a request to the Registrar. The Deferred Examination Request form can be downloaded from the Registrar's channel on the Campus Life page on STANLEY.

The published deferred examination policy ordinarily requires a student to defer the final examination to the next semester or session for which the student is registered and in which the course is offered. For the 2020 Spring Semester only, a student may elect either (i) to defer a final examination as provided by the law school's current policy or (ii) to defer a final examination until the final examination period for the 2020 Summer Session. In either case, the deferral does not depend on whether the course is being offered during the later session or semester. If the course is offered during the session or semester, the faculty member may require the deferring student to take the final examination being administered for that session or semester. If the course is not offered, the faculty member will have discretion to require the deferring student to take the same examination administered during the 2020 Spring Semester or to take a different examination. In all cases, the student's grade in the 2020 Spring Semester course will be officially recorded on the student's transcript as Credit/No Credit.

Recognizing the present uncertainties surrounding administration of the July 2020 Texas Bar Examination and the possibility of a fall administration of the Texas Bar Examination, the law school will work with individual students whose deferred 2020 Spring Semester final examination would conflict with preparation for the bar exam.

7. What kind of questions will appear on final exams?

Each professor may determine what forms of exam questions are appropriate for assessing student performance in his or her course, including essay, short-answer, and multiple-choice questions, just as in any other semester. Exemplify supports the use of all formats, so the text of all exam questions will appear on test-takers' computer screen, and test-takers will answer directly into the exam. If your professor has not told you what kind of questions to expect on the final exam, you should ask him or her.

8. Will final examinations be "open-book" or "closed-book"?

As in other semesters, faculty members may decide whether to administer final examinations as "open-book" or "closed-book." The law school anticipates that most final examinations in the 2020 Spring Semester will be conducted as "open-book" exams, *i.e.*, test-takers will be permitted to consult during the examination any books, notebooks, outlines, papers, notes, or other *printed* material they have a right to possess. Test-takers will not, however, be permitted to use any information stored on a computer disk or in a digital or electronic format. As with final examinations administered on campus, the law school will employ the "closed resource" function in Exemplify, which forecloses test-taker access to the computer hard drive and to applications other than the testing software during the exam. **A student who expects**

to consult any study materials during an “open-book” examination should plan to print those materials in advance of the exam.

Some faculty members may elect to use a “closed-book” examination this semester. This choice may be especially appropriate in courses related to subjects tested on the bar examination, since the bar examination itself is a “closed-book” examination. Possessing or referring to any study material, whether in written or digital form, constitutes an act of academic dishonesty, if the faculty member has not authorized its use in the examination; and a student who commits academic misconduct such as academic dishonesty is subject to discipline, including expulsion from law school.

9. Will I be able to handwrite my final examination answer?

Yes. The law school would like to encourage all students who are capable of typing their final examination answers using the Exemplify software to do so this semester. For those students who are not capable of doing so, they will handwrite their answers, photograph them, convert the images to a PDF file, and submit them to the Registrar’s Office. Some students who cannot type already have offered to follow this procedure. The Registrar’s Office nevertheless will prepare instructions for handwriting students to ensure that they know how to submit their answers, set guidelines for producing the most legible exam papers, and assure that the answer-submission process does not infringe on exam-taking time.

10. Will students be permitted to take final examinations on campus?

Maybe. At present, the Harris County “Stay Home, Work Safe” order does not allow the law school to be open to students. Should the terms of that order change during the final examination period in a way that permits student access to the campus to take exams, the law school plans to make the building available.

11. Does the Student Conduct Code apply to remotely administered final examinations?

Yes. The law school’s Student Conduct Code appears in the SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020 at pages 26-32. All students should reacquaint themselves with the contents of the Code before final exams, especially Part II dealing with Academic Misconduct. The legal profession is distinguished by the expectation that its members will conduct themselves with honesty and integrity and will adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct. As a professional school for lawyers, the law school also expects its students to adhere to those same high standards. That we must conduct final examinations in a novel fashion this semester does not diminish the law school’s expectations for student conduct. Students also will be required to execute the usual examination honesty pledge as an exam acknowledgement on a pre-notice screen prior to entering the examination on Exemplify.