

Faculty of Science
Assessment Regulations for Winter 2021 and Potential Subsequent Remote Semesters

Version 6

October 22, 2020

This document provides regulations for all examinations and presentations in courses offered by the Faculty of Science in semesters in which in-person exams cannot take place. It extends and interprets University-wide regulations available at <https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/instructors/class-disruption/guidelines-remote#assessment-fall-2020>.

1. Regulations for Written Exams

- 1.1. All written exams (final exams, midterms and quizzes) need to be delivered remotely; they should be designed to be completed in 3 hours or less. Final exams should be designed to be completed in 3 hours. The total combined length of all exams in a course should not exceed the usual level of previous years.
- 1.2. The availability window for all exams carrying a weight of 20% or more of the total course grade must be at least 72 hours.
The availability window for all exams carrying a weight of less than 20% of the total course grade must be at least 24 hours.
Within this availability window, instructors may further constrain the time available to students for completion.
 - An exam that doesn't put further constraints on the time available for completion will be called a **take-home exam** henceforth.
 - An exam that puts additional constraints on the time available for completion will be called a **timed exam** henceforth.
- 1.3. Additional Regulations for Timed Exams
 - 1.3.1. Students must be permitted to start their timed exam either
 - anytime during the availability window, or
 - at predetermined times spread throughout the availability window. All students in the course must be able to fully complete the exam between 9am and 9:30pm in their **local** time zone.
 - 1.3.2. If the timed exam is designed to be completed within x hours, students must be allowed at least $2x$ consecutive hours plus 30 minutes from the starting time for completion of the exam. This provision accounts for both
 - internet connectivity issues or other technical difficulties (following the recommendation from TLS to add 30 minutes to assessments), and
 - barriers to learning (following the recommendations from OSD to double the duration of the assessment).
 - 1.3.3. Students registered with OSD receiving time-based accommodations with a factor of 2 or less will be deemed fully accommodated by the extra time provided by paragraph 1.3.2.

However, in a small number of cases OSD may determine that additional accommodations are required, and instructors are obligated to implement them. All such accommodation requests must come directly from OSD and from no other source.

Example 1: For a timed final exam, designed to be completed in 3 hours and worth 40% of the total course grade, the instructor needs to make the exam available for 72 hours; once a student starts the exam, they then have 6.5 hours for completion.

Example 2: For a timed quiz, designed to be completed in 45 minutes and worth 10% of the total course grade, the instructor needs to make the quiz available for 24 hours; once a student starts the quiz, they then have 2 hours for completion.

Remark: The functionality for implementing timed exams is currently available in myCourse's quiz tool and in Crowdmark.

- 1.4. Final exams may be replaced by a longer form assessment. Workload for such an assessment should not exceed the time typically spent by students on preparing for and writing a final exam. Longer form assessments must be made available to students on the first day of the final exam period at the latest and are due on the last day of the final exam period.

2. Regulations for Oral Exams and Oral Presentations

2.1. Terminology

- An **oral exam** is when one student gets orally questioned by an examiner in the absence of other students and in which the grading is solely based on the student's answers.
- An **oral presentation** is when a student speaks on a predetermined topic while often using visual support, like a PowerPoint presentation. Oral presentations usually occur in the presence of other students and may be followed by a period of Q & A. The grading is based on the quality of the presentation AND answers to questions.

2.2. Regulations for Oral Exams

While oral exams will be permitted, instructors are urged to consider other forms of assessment. The reason for this recommendation is that the Faculty of Science has little experience with oral exams and there are a number of potential pitfalls to be mindful of— including preserving the right of students to have their grades reassessed as well as avoiding (implicit) bias.

2.2.1. All oral exams need to be recorded unless the student requests to not be recorded. In that case, a second examiner needs to be present for the entirety of the exam. The second examiner needs to be a faculty member knowledgeable in the subject matter of the course. It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure the availability of a second examiner.

2.2.2. If requested by the examined student, the oral exam can be answered in French.

2.2.3. The total combined weight of all oral exams in a course of level 100 to 400 may not exceed 25%.

2.2.4. For any oral exam carrying a weight of 20% or more of the total course grade, instructors need to offer exam time slots covering a period of at least 72 hours.

2.2.5. The duration of oral exams should be between 10 to 30 minutes. It is suggested that an oral exam worth $x\%$ of the total course grade should last for about x minutes.

- 2.2.6. The time slot assigned to a student for their oral exam needs to fall between 9am and 9:30pm in that student's **local** time zone. It is recommended to use sign-up sheets so that students can freely choose a time that's suitable for them.
- 2.2.7. Instructors need to make accommodations for students if requested by OSD. Accommodations may have to include replacing the oral exam by a different form of assessment.
- 2.2.8. Instructors need to ensure that all students are asked questions of comparable difficulty. It is strongly suggested to create a list of questions beforehand (potentially containing alternative questions for variability).
- 2.2.9. Instructors are urged to consider how to avoid (implicit) bias based on language proficiency, preconceived performance expectations, gender, race etc.

2.3. Regulations for Oral presentations

- 2.3.1. For any oral presentation carrying a weight of 20% or more of the total course grade, instructors need to offer time slots for the presentation covering a period of at least 72 hours.
- 2.3.2. The time slot assigned to a student for their oral presentation needs to fall between 9am and 9:30pm in that student's **local** time zone. It is recommended to use sign-up sheets so that students can freely choose a time that's suitable for them.

Instructors must specify the type (take-home exam, timed exam, longer form assessment, oral exam or oral presentation) as well as the duration of each exam or presentation on their course outlines as part of the method of evaluation.