Last updated: April 7, 2020

In light of the extraordinary, shifting and emergent situation of the global pandemic, the University of Victoria announced on Friday, March 26, 2020 that they would be changing the process for final grading for all faculties which has impacted how the grading at the Faculty of Law operates.

The following list covers Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with the most up to date answers provided. The answers may shift as more information becomes available, so make sure you actively check the document. The final say on all questions will be by the University of Victoria’s Emergency Operations Centre.

Questions for the faculty of law should be directed to: lawassoc@uvic.ca

Why are we going ahead with final exams?

Our University is governed, at this moment, by an Emergency Operations Centre with attention to emergency protocols. The decision was made through this process that decision-making with respect to whether there would still be a final examination in a course rests with each individual professor.

We have made sure to fully abide by that process.

Where a professor has determined that learning outcomes have not been met in a course prior to the end of term, a final examination (or other assessment) is necessary to assign a grade. In order to meet our obligations, we have chosen to convert our examination schedule to offer a take-home examination in each scheduled course, offering as much time on each exam as our schedule can accommodated.

How will I get access to my exams?

Exams will be posted to Coursespaces at the time set on the exam schedule.

If my exam is deferred am I still able to access Coursespaces?

The student undertaking is not to access, or learn about in any way, the exam that is posted to Coursespaces, so only students writing the exam at the set time are permitted to access the exam document on the site. It will be removed after the exam is submitted. However, students with deferrals can still access Coursespaces during that time, if need be.
Do I write my exams on Exam4?

No. Your exams will be written on your own computer, using a word program, and submitted as a Word document by email. Be certain to back-up your work.

How do I submit my exams?

Each student will email their exam to a member of staff. That staff member’s email will be on the cover page of the exam. Each exam will have a different process, so please pay careful attention to the information on each specific exam.

Will there be specific word or page limits on the exams?

Each professor will set the word or page limit on each exam. Please pay careful attention to the cover sheet instructions. The aim for all of these exams is that they will not take much longer to write than if you were doing them as sit-down exams. The extended time is for preparation alongside the caregiving responsibilities that you will have to yourself and others. Realistic page or word limits is a key facet of achieving a reasonable and safe exam period for everyone.

Do I submit my exam in Word or PDF format?

Please submit your exams in word and be sure to continually backup your work.

Will the exams be harder than usual and do I prepare in the same way?

Giving two or three days for each exam does not mean the exam will be more difficult. Instructors are well aware of the fact that you will be writing your exams remotely in unique and challenging circumstances.

The idea is not that this is a lengthy exam period. The idea is that you will be able to prepare to write your exam with the questions in hand. For 1L students, the same amount of time exists between exams. The difference is that you will know what the question is throughout the preparation period, and you can write to the set page or word limits and at the time during that period that best fits your life.

We would encourage you to still do the preparation that you would have – an outline for example is still a helpful study tool. But of course, you will have resources available to you now that you would not have otherwise (i.e., the internet). Your professors will not be testing you on your ability to recall information when that information is at your fingertips.
**Why are we not restricting internet use?**

It is not realistic to put any restrictions on a take-home exam with respect to materials. The only restrictions are with respect to collaboration, and those will be firmly articulated on each exam. We cannot police whether and if you are in touch with others about the exam. You are on your honour for that. However, we will be able to assess whether exams are substantively similar.

All exams can be answered solely on the basis of your terms work. A take home exam is not a research project. However, if you draw on outside information in answering the question it must be properly cited.

**How will academic integrity issues be handled?**

The process that guides academic integrity during an ordinary semester or exam period will apply. Any issues raised by instructors or by students about conduct with respect to an exam will be examined by the administration in line with the process articulated in the Calendar.

[https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2020-01/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html](https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2020-01/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html)

**Does the Faculty of Law adhere to Pass being 50%?**

The University has advised that “Pass” for the purposes of their grading guidelines is 50%. For standing in the Faculty of Law students ordinarily need a GPA of 3.0, which is 65%.

All “Pass” grades will not be counted towards a GPA calculation. This is the ordinary process (i.e., Law Centre). GPA for the purposes of standing and graduation will be based on all courses with a percentage grade.

**What if I can’t write the exam on the scheduled day/time?**

If any of you cannot write your exam remotely on the scheduled day/time, a deferral will be readily available up until the start time of the exam, and no documentation will be required. Please contact Associate Dean Gillian Calder at lawassoc@uvic.ca and/or Yvonne Lawson at lawmaass@uvic.ca as soon as you know you will not be able to receive your exam at the set time.

**What if I become sick during an exam?**

If for any reason you cannot finish an exam after accessing it on Coursespaces, contact Associate Dean Gillian Calder at lawassoc@uvic.ca and/or Yvonne Lawson at lawmaass@uvic.ca immediately. The process governing “Special Examinations” in our Calendar will apply.
How will this new examination period impact awards?

This is a good question, and one that the faculty is currently discussing. It is likely that we will be determining whether an award can be given this year on an award to award basis. Student financial need is a pressing concern, as is the impact of a revised evaluation process.

Our focus remains on financial aid at this moment. Particularly on students in financial distress due to Covid-19. We will continue to work with SAFA and our donors in order to administer our end of term awards as soon as evaluation for this term is complete.

I am supposed to start articling on May 1st, what is going to happen?

Marking priority will be given to graduating students. However, the University’s decision to enable students to elect their final grade notation will mean a slight delay between the release of grades and the availability of a letter from the Associate Dean’s office articulating that academic requirements are met. Once the Law Society receives that letter, articling can begin.

The university continues to work diligently on details for the election process, and as soon as we have we can share it further.

As we do every April, we will work closely with Law Societies to let them know when you are done. Your degrees will still be conferred by Senate at a set date, likely in late May or early June.

What if I need an extension on a paper or assignment?

All requests for extensions or any form of accommodation should come to Associate Dean Gillian Calder at lawassoc@uvic.ca and/or Yvonne Lawson at lawmaass@uvic.ca as soon as you know you will not be able to meet a set deadline.

Does UVic Law intend to use a marking curve?

UVic Law does not have a marking curve in place. All exams will be graded with attention to the faculty’s published marking guide on the calendar.

Is it business as usual for marking?

Nothing right now involves business as usual. Your professors will be grading your exams with attention to course lectures, but also

What if I have an exam accommodation through the Centre for Accessible Learning?

The decision to give 2 or 3 days for exams was to take into consideration the needs of students with accommodation, alongside the needs of students with caregiving responsibilities. All students with
questions on accommodation should contact Associate Dean Gillian Calder at lawassoc@uvic.ca and/or Yvonne Lawson at lawmaass@uvic.ca as soon as possible.

**Will there still be an appeal period for grades? How will I review my exams?**

We are seeking guidance from the University on this issue, *but we anticipate that there will be* an appeal period, and a mechanism through which students will be able to view their exams virtually.

**What will happen if I don’t achieve standing this term?**

The Faculty of Law has a process for supplemental exams, and the extraordinary nature of this term will be a factor in how that process is delivered.

**What happens if I have a deferred exam?**

If you are writing your exam at a deferred time you will sign an undertaking not to access the exam posted to Coursespaces. When your time opens you will then access the exam. Coursespaces logs will be reviewed to ensure academic integrity concerns are met. It is likely all deferred exams will be written in July. Dates are to be confirmed soon.

**Will there be any fees for all of this, for example, for supplemental exams or appeals?**

There will be no additional fees assessed during this extraordinary exam period.

**Once grades are released and I want to opt for Pass/Fail, how do I do that?**

The details of the process have not been released yet to the Faculty of Law by the University. As soon as that information is available it will be conveyed to all students.

**If I choose a Pass/Fail grade for my course, can I change my mind and revert it to a percentage grade?**

That is a good question, and we continue to advocate for a clear answer. Our assumption, at this stage, is that students will be given an opportunity to elect to keep their grade or take a grade of “Covid-Pass” and that decision will be final.

There will be a specific process for law students. We are working on the details of *When & How* with attention on the requirements of our professional program.
If I pick a Pass/Fail grade will that impact my ability to article or find employment later on?

This is an unknown, and rests in the hands of future employers, graduate programs, etc. The assurance that we can give you all at this stage is that this semester will always be seen as extraordinary, for everyone the world over. Our view is that a grade of “Pass” in any UVic Law course demonstrates learning outcomes have been met, and that was done at the most challenging moment that a student likely has ever encountered.

The LCO is also working hard with various members of the profession for clear answers on your behalf. See their careful FAQs for more information.

When does Jordan get back from parental leave?

Jordan is back and accessible at lawaoa@uvic.ca on Friday, April 3, 2020. Luke Mione will be staying on with the team to support faculty and students as we move to putting our summer courses on-line.

***Jordan has been reunited with the team***

Will there be any changes to the prerequisite requirements of specific courses due to the outcome of grading?

A grade of “Covid-Pass” in any course is a grade signalling course completion, and that learning outcomes have been met. For prerequisite requirements to be met a grade of “Pass” will suffice.

Are students going to have to follow the same process for receiving transcripts/special letters to apply for articling or to law societies at the end of this term?

As soon as final grades are released (after the election period is complete) the Associate Dean for students can write a letter to the Law Societies to indicate a student has fulfilled their academic requirements. That letter ordinarily suffices for a student to begin their articles in the period between the completion of academic work and the conferring of a student’s degree.

When will information regarding summer courses be released?

With apologies --- that information won’t be available until next week. Our goal is to be clear and certain in what we share, so all students can act accordingly.

Please feel free to contact Associate Dean Calder at lawassoc@uvic.ca if you have a question that needs answering over the weekend.
Do you have information of the election process?

Yes, it is proposed that the students will have a set period of time, likely two weeks to seek advice and accept the grade given or elect “Covid-pass”. Students can also elect to drop the course or take “Covid-we” and withdraw without penalty. Monday we continue to advocate for the best process for law students.

Who do I talk to if I need help?

We are all here to help. The Amicus Team is available by email or by phone. The admin team in the front office is also available via email to sort through any issues.

Please refer to https://www.uvic.ca/law/admissions/contact/index.php for more contact information

Has the standard 65% for the ALRW major paper still required or has that changed due to the pass/fail at 50%?

The 65% paper requirement is still a set standard to receive a “completed” designation on your transcript.

I have some Take-Home exam questions and am wondering who I can ask?

If you require more information around the take-home exams please contact the following emails.

Jordan: lawoa@uvic.ca  Luke: lawsupport@uvic.ca  Yvonne: lawmaass@uvic.ca  or Associate Dean Calder lawassoc@uvic.ca

If you have questions that you believe should be put on the FAQ list please email: lawassoc@uvic.ca

Thank you!