

**From:** [Office of the MSU Provost](#)  
**Subject:** Common Hour and Final Examinations and Blended Courses  
**Date:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 10:19:32 AM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear MSU Faculty:

The following information regarding finals week, common hour exams and the delivery of blended courses are associated with changes this fall semester necessitated by space and scheduling constraints to accommodate reduced density and increased physical distancing in classrooms. Please consider these items as you finalize plans for your courses this fall semester.

1. *Common Hour Exams and Final Examination Week*

Because of the effect that required physical distancing has had on room scheduling, it is necessary to make adjustments to the schedule for final examinations. For this fall semester, we will maintain the regular class schedule during the final week of the semester and ask that your final examinations be given during that time. Common hour examinations will not be accommodated this fall semester because of schedule and space constraints. If it is not feasible for you to conduct your examinations during normal class times, I encourage you to employ alternative methods of learning assessment. The MSU Center for Faculty Excellence provides guidelines and training for best practices in learning assessment.

2. *Blended Courses*

Examine the list of students in blended courses that you are offering, divide them into sub-sections alphabetically, plan for students whose last names start with letters near the beginning of the alphabet to attend classes earlier in the

week, and communicate the planned rotation of attendance to your students in your course's Brightspace (D2L) shell before the start of classes.

Please notify students whether they should – or should not – attend class in person on the first day of class. Using this approach, we expect to reduce student density on campus. If you need help in opening your Brightspace shell (D2L), or in using it to communicate with your students, please seek expert assistance through the Academic Technology & Outreach group (<http://www.montana.edu/ecat/>) or the Center for Faculty Excellence (<https://www.montana.edu/facultyexcellence/>).

Thank you all for everything that you are doing to support teaching, research, and service at your university.

Best regards,



**Dr. Robert L. Mokwa | Executive Vice President and Provost**  
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