UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

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Finals Week Plan

UC Santa Barbara Chancellor Henry T. Yang has announced plans for finals week. The full text of his note to campus follows:

December 8, 2017

Dear Members of our Campus Community,

The past few days have been challenging ones for our community. I am writing to provide another update on the impact of the Thomas fire and our plans for finals week.

UC Santa Barbara puts the highest priority on the health and safety of our community, while striving to protect the educational progress of students and the academic integrity of our curriculum. We continue to assess the conditions caused by the Thomas fire in Ventura County. Based on all available information from officials and experts, we remain confident that the campus will not be threatened by the Thomas fire. Red Cross and government officials have designated UC Santa Barbara as an official shelter for residents evacuated from fire zones. There is concern about the air quality currently affecting more than a million residents in this area, and in response we are distributing 30,000 face masks for students, staff, and faculty to use when they are outdoors.

Because of these extraordinary circumstances, for the remainder of finals week we are continuing the policy announced earlier of offering final exams while adding

additional flexibility for students. Many students and faculty have requested this flexibility, while many have clearly stated their wish to continue final exams as scheduled. Some students have compelling reasons (such as visa and financial aid requirements, or pending employment) to get final grades and complete their academic quarter. We have consulted extensively with campus officials in charge of safety preparedness and others. Final exams will take place as scheduled. Some instructors may choose to make arrangements to substitute other assignments (such as a take-home final) for the regularly-scheduled exam. At the same time, we are asking faculty to be understanding and flexible in reviewing requests from students who need to be excused from taking the regularly-scheduled final and instead provide accommodations such as make-up exams and alternative assignments.

It is our normal policy to make accommodations for students who have medical problems or family emergencies that prevent them from taking a final exam as scheduled. That policy continues. Students who have medical or other compelling reasons should contact their instructors in advance of the final exam to explain why they cannot attend and request that an alternative arrangement be made. For students who are excused from the regularly-scheduled final, instructors will provide opportunities to make up the exam in Winter Quarter or offer alternative assignments in lieu of the final. If necessary, the Registrar will assist faculty in scheduling a make-up date in Winter Quarter for students who cannot attend the regularly-scheduled exam next week. If make-up exams are arranged, students will have to take an “incomplete” until work for this quarter is completed and a grade can be assigned.

Faculty who plan to offer a take-home exam or other alternative assignment instead of the scheduled final exam should inform their students immediately. Students should contact College academic advisors if they have questions about incompletes, withdrawals, or other questions about impacts on their academic status.

We will continue to monitor conditions and at present expect the university to be open next week.

We thank our faculty, staff, and students for their patience and dedication as we work through these complex and challenging circumstances.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang
Chancellor

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.