To: The Faculty  
From: Curriculum Council  
Re: Proposed change in language (and policy?) regarding finals  

The Council recommends that the language in the Faculty Handbook, University Catalog, and the Student Handbook be uniformly changed to the following:

Final course assignments or exams are administered during and not before the regularly scheduled time during “finals week”. Comprehensive final examinations are not a mandatory part of every course, but a final exam or other activity must be administered during the scheduled final exam period. Exams or graded assignments scheduled earlier in the semester may come due during the last week of classes, but Faculty are strongly discouraged from assigning proximal to and due during the last week of classes additional exams, projects, or papers. Students are encouraged to prepare for final exams throughout the semester and to use reading day(s) for further preparation. These recommendations allow for better student and faculty member preparation for final exams.

The following memo from ASC to CC provides the background information.

Memorandum  
To: CC  
From: Academic Standards Subcommittee  
Date: 2-18-03  
RE: Clarification of intent of the language of final exam administration  

In response to a request by Provost McNew, ASC has discussed the language concerning final exams and assignments during of the last week of classes with the goal of clarifying the ‘regulations’ as they appear in the Faculty Handbook, University Catalog, and the Student Handbook (see attached page). Several points were highlighted during this discussion.

- Currently, faculty compliance of the suggestion that no exams or graded assignments be given during the last week of classes is variable. For many courses, not being able to have graded assignments during this week would result in unreasonable time limitations for the course. For example music juries, oral exams, or laboratory practicals not given during the last week of classes would either necessitate early termination (as much as two to three week) of this type of instruction in the course or administration of more than one exam during finals week.
- The original intent of the statement ‘Final exams may not be administered before the regularly scheduled time during “finals week”, was likely to prevent early termination of a course.
- The intent of not giving graded assignments during the last week of classes is to give students time to prepare for final exams. This language predates reading day(s), which currently offer students ‘free’ time to prepare for final exams.
- Assigning ‘last-minute’ assignments (one to two weeks prior to the end of class) is undesirable, but assignments scheduled early in the semester (on syllabus) due during the last week of class are acceptable.

Correlated with the above ideas, ASC recommends that the language in the Faculty Handbook, University Catalog, and the Student Handbook be changed to the following and that the recommendation (regulation) appears in identical form in all three sources:

Final course assignments or exams are administered during and not before the regularly scheduled time during “finals week”. Comprehensive final examinations are not a mandatory part of every course, but a final exam or
other activity must be administered during the scheduled final exam period. Exams or graded assignments scheduled earlier in the semester may come due during the last week of classes, but Faculty are strongly discouraged from assigning proximal to and due during the last week of classes additional exams, projects, or papers. Students are encouraged to prepare for final exams throughout the semester and to use reading day(s) for further preparation. These recommendations allow for better student and faculty member preparation for final exams.