

Term Regulations & Examination Policies for Fall 2026

These term regulations and examination policies derive from [Rules and Regulations of the Faculty](#), and apply to academic exercises during the fall and spring terms. Questions of interpretation and requests for exceptions to regulations should be referred to the Chair of the Faculty (exam-termregs@mit.edu). Exceptions to regulations are granted for no more than five years.

KEY DATES: FALL 2026

Last Test Date	Friday	December 4
Last day of classes	Thursday	December 10
Final examinations	Monday-Friday	December 14-18

See the [Academic Calendar](#) for additional dates.

ALL SUBJECTS

Class Times

Academic exercises are, in general, held between 9pm and 5pm, Monday through Friday.

Beginning of Term

Early in the term, the faculty member should inform students of expectations regarding permissible academic conduct. Particular attention should be given to such questions as the extent of collaboration permitted or encouraged, and the use of prior years' materials in completing problem sets, lab reports, and other assignments.

Assignments

A single assignment may be considered to include multiple components if they are derived from one project.

Academic Exercises Outside of Regularly Scheduled Class Time

A student who is unable to take a test or participate in a required review or other academic exercise that is held outside of scheduled class time owing to a conflict with a regularly scheduled academic exercise must be allowed to do so at another time.

Some subjects may require extra hours outside of regular class time for special activities such as presentation sessions. These require an exception from the [Chair of the Faculty](#). These activities must be scheduled at the beginning of the semester and included in the syllabus, and students who are unable to participate as described immediately above shall be accommodated.

Exercises After the Last Scheduled Class in All Subjects

No required class sessions of any kind may be scheduled after the last regularly scheduled class

in any subject – whether full-term or half-term – except for final examinations scheduled through the Schedules Office. (The architecture design reviews that occur during finals week are considered to be equivalent to final examinations and are scheduled by the Department of Architecture.)

Formal reviews must be held during regular class periods. However, instructors may schedule optional reviews or sessions at which the instructing staff is available to answer questions for students who choose to attend after the last day of classes. No new material may be introduced during optional events.

An instructor may give an extension to an individual student for an assignment, but blanket extensions should not be given to the entire class.

Scheduling Final Exams

The final examination period for **H1/H3 half-term subjects** is the last week of a subject. Final examinations for H1/H3 half-term subjects are held during a regularly scheduled class period and last no longer than one class period. These examinations are not scheduled through the Schedules Office.

Final examinations for **full-term subjects** and for **H2/H4 half-term subjects** are held during the final examination period at the end of each term and are scheduled through the Schedules Office. Final examinations are scheduled in either the morning (9am to noon) or afternoon (1:30pm to 4:30pm) on examination days.

A final examination must be scheduled to last at least one hour and not more than three hours; *ex camera* examinations for undergraduate subjects are the only exception to this regulation, and these require an exception from the [Chair of the Faculty](#) and have different guidelines for timing (see [Section 2.53](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*). Final examinations may not be cancelled once they are announced, and, after the final examination schedule is published, the time of the final examination may not be changed.

Students are responsible for attending the final examinations required in the subjects for which they are registered. The schedule of final examinations is published on the [Registrar's website](#) by the end of the third week of the fall and spring terms. The Schedules Office contacts students who have conflicts between scheduled final examinations to notify them of the conflict examination schedule, which is announced the day after Drop Date. The Schedules Office also provides instructors with the conflict examination schedule immediately after Drop Date.

Excused Absences from Final Exams

A student may be excused from a scheduled final examination for reasons of illness or significant personal problems. To seek an excused absence in these situations, an undergraduate student should contact the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Graduate and Undergraduate Education. Faculty members with questions about this process should contact the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Graduate and Undergraduate Education. (See definition of "O" and "OX" grades in [Section 2.62.3](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*.)

In addition, the faculty member in charge of a subject may excuse a student from a final examination for reasons such as a conflict with another examination or a religious holiday. In these cases, a mutually satisfactory agreement must be reached between the student and the faculty member, the agreement ratified in advance of the examination by the head of the department in which the subject is offered, and the faculty member must be prepared to submit a grade based on other evidence.

Faculty members are not required to provide make-up examinations to accommodate an individual student's personal plans at the end of the term.

UNDERGRADUATE SUBJECTS

BEGINNING OF TERM

For undergraduate subjects taught on campus during the instructional period of the fall and spring terms, there cannot be any required academic exercises between 5pm and 7pm Monday through Thursday, and between 5pm Friday and 8am Monday. This same restriction also applies to undergraduate subjects taught during the Independent Activities Period.

Monday evening class times are reserved for regularly scheduled classes; therefore, tests and required reviews are prohibited on Monday evenings. When an optional review session is scheduled for a Monday evening (including a session that introduces new material or discusses upcoming test content), students must have an alternative way of obtaining comparable help within the normal instructional periods, e.g., faculty office hours.

Full-term Subjects: First and Third Weeks

In full-term subjects, the faculty member must provide the following **in written form** by the end of the first week of classes:

- a clear and complete description of the required work, including the number and kinds of assignments;
- the approximate schedule of tests and due dates for major projects;
- an indication of whether or not there will be a final exam; and
- the grading criteria and procedures to be used.

By the end of the third week, the faculty member must provide **in written form** the precise schedule of tests and major assignments.

Half-term Subjects: First and Second Weeks

In half-term subjects, the faculty member must provide the following **in written form** by the end of the first week of classes:

- a clear and complete description of the required work, including the number and kinds of assignments;
- the approximate schedule of tests and due dates for major projects;
- an indication of whether or not there will be a final exam; and
- the grading criteria and procedures to be used.

By the end of the second week, the faculty member must provide **in written form** the precise schedule of tests and major assignments.

Tests and Academic Exercises Outside Scheduled Class Times

Tests, required reviews, and other academic exercises outside scheduled class times may not be held on Monday evenings. This regulation is intended to reduce conflicts with evening classes and first-year advising seminars and also to invigorate student activities and programs in the living groups.

In addition, tests held outside scheduled class times shall:

- not exceed two hours in length;
- be scheduled through the Schedules Office; and
- begin no earlier than 7:30pm when held in the evening.

When a test is held outside scheduled class time, either:

- a regularly scheduled class session (lecture or recitation) must be cancelled during the same calendar week OR
- no assignment will be due during the same calendar week.

A student who is unable to take a test or participate in a required review or other academic exercise that is held outside of scheduled class time owing to a conflict with a regularly scheduled academic exercise must be allowed to do so at another time.

END OF TERM

End of Term Tests in Full-term and H2/H4 Half-term Subjects

In all full-term and H2/H4 half-term undergraduate subjects, there are to be no tests after the Last Test Date, defined in [Section 2.53](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty* as the Friday preceding the start of the Reading Period. [For **Fall 2026**, the Last Test Date is Friday, December 4, 2026.] Unit tests may be scheduled during the final examination period.

End of Term Assignments for Full-term and H2/H4 Subjects with Finals

For all full-term and H2/H4 half-term subjects in which there is testing during the final examination period, no assignment may fall due after the Last Test Date (**Fall 2026**: Friday, December 4, 2026).

End of Term Assignments for Full-term and H2/H4 Subjects without Finals

For full-term and H2/H4 half-term subjects in which there is no testing during the final examination period, at most one assignment* may fall due between the Last Test Date (**Fall 2026**: Friday, December 4, 2026) and the end of the last scheduled class session in a subject.

Optional assignments between the Last Test Date (**Fall 2026**: Friday, December 4, 2026) and the

* As noted above, a single assignment may include multiple components if they derive from the same project.

last scheduled class period in the subject should be for self-study and may not be used toward part of the grade in a subject, even for extra points or as substitutes for earlier assignments.

End of Term Assignments for H1/H3 Half-term Subjects with or without Finals

For H1/H3 half-term subjects, the final week of the class is considered to be the Half-Term Final Examination Period. There may be at most one assignment* due or one exam held during this final week of the class. Optional assignments during the Half-Term Final Examination Period are for self-study, and may not be used toward part of the grade in a subject, even for extra points or as substitutes for earlier assignments.

***Ex Camera* Finals**

A faculty member must obtain the permission of the [Chair of the Faculty](#) to hold an *ex camera* (out-of-room) final examination in an undergraduate subject and permission will be granted for no more than five years. *Ex camera* examinations are a different mode of testing that gives students access to computers and libraries and evaluates their abilities to select resources and answer questions of an integrative nature. *Ex camera* examinations are not intended as a way to increase the amount the material covered. An *ex camera* examination must:

- be scheduled through the Schedules Office,
- be offered over the course of a single afternoon — starting at 1:30pm EDT and ending no later than at 7:30pm EDT, and
- permit students unrestricted use of resources.

GRADUATE SUBJECTS

BEGINNING OF TERM

Full-term Subjects: Third Week

In full-term subjects, the faculty member must provide the following **in written form** by the end of the third week:

- a clear and complete description of the required work, including the number and kinds of assignments;
- the schedule for tests and due dates for major projects;
- whether or not there will be a final exam; and
- the grading criteria and procedures to be used.

Major assignments should be assigned early enough to allow students the opportunity to manage their time effectively throughout the term.

Half-term Subjects: Second Week

In half-term subjects, the faculty member must provide the following **in written form** by the end of the second week:

- a clear and complete description of the required work, including the number and kinds of assignments;

- the schedule for tests and due dates for major projects;
- whether or not there will be a final exam; and
- the grading criteria and procedures to be used.

Major assignments should be assigned early enough to allow students the opportunity to manage their time effectively throughout the term.

Tests and Academic Exercises Outside Scheduled Class Times

A student who is unable to take a test or participate in a required review or other academic exercise that is held outside of scheduled class time owing to a conflict with a regularly scheduled academic exercise must be allowed to do so at another time.

END OF TERM

End of Term Tests and Assignments for Full-term and H2/H4 Half-term Subjects with Finals

In all full-term and H2/H4 half-term graduate subjects with a final examination, no other test may be given and no assignment may fall due after the Last Test Date, defined in [Section 2.53](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty* as the Friday preceding the start of the Reading Period. [For **Fall 2026**, the Last Test Date is Friday, December 4, 2026.]

End of Term Tests and Assignments for Full-term and H2/H4 Half-term Subjects without Finals

For each full-term and H2/H4 half-term subject without a final examination, there may be at most one assignment* due or one in-class test held between Friday, December 4, 2026, and the end of the last scheduled class session in a subject. If an in-class test is given, its length is limited to one normal class period (or to one and one-half hours, whichever is shorter).

End-of-Term Tests and Assignments for H1/H3 Half-term Subjects with or without Finals

For all H1/H3 half-term subjects, the final week of the class is considered the Half-Term Final Examination Period. During this week, there may be at most one assignment* due or one in-class test held. An in-class test or final examination given during this period is limited to one normal class period (or to one and one-half hours, whichever is shorter).

* As noted above, a single assignment may include multiple components if they derive from the same project.