

# The Adjusted S20 Calendar

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

The Adjusted S20 Calendar displayed below provides a framework for faculty who have limited time to prepare for the online delivery of what is essentially the second half of the semester. The move to virtual instruction in the midst of a pandemic will be extremely challenging for most faculty; instructors will have to be super-creative in the reformatting of course content, super-sensitive about workload, and super-flexible with respect to student accommodations.

## Formal Class Days

The Adjusted S20 Calendar has five fewer class days than the Original S20 Calendar:

	Original	Adjusted
Mondays	13	12
Tuesdays	14	13
Wednesdays	14	13
Thursdays	14	13
Fridays	14	13

This is made possible by doing away with Senior Week.

## Semester Wrap-Up

The end of the semester is May 23, the day before original Commencement. A decision about Commencement has not been made. The deadline for submission of grades TBA.

The number of study days is preserved with the same rules: no assignments due, no exams scheduled.

The 8-day exam period is shifted from May 9-16 to May 16-23. Instructors are not compelled to use their scheduled exam slot for synchronous assessment, indeed, it can create time zone related problems. More guidance on final exams to follow.

## Uncertainty and Flexibility

We must be receptive to subsequent calendar modifications that take into account outside factors. These include how the pandemic unfolds, how well the systems hold up that are being used to support online instruction, and how the various state and federal agencies modify requirements for compliance.

Jan 19								
Jan 26								
Feb 2								
Feb 9								
Feb 16								
Feb 23								
Mar 1								
Mar 8								
Mar 15								
Mar 22								
Mar 29								
Apr 5								
Apr 12								
Apr 19								
Apr 26								
May 3								
May 10								
May 17								
May 24								

*The Adjusted S20 Calendar.* The class days are green, the break days are red, the study days are brown, the exam days are yellow, the no-class weekend days are pink, and the originally scheduled Commencement Day is purple.

<sup>1</sup> Additional resources. The [University COVID-19 Website](#) posts all the latest updates, advises students about [virtual instruction](#), and maintains this [FAQ](#). The Center for Teaching Innovation offers these [resources for remote teaching and class administration](#) and these [webinars](#) for help with the same. Questions, concerns, and insights can be posted [here](#).

## Further Considerations

The calendar is a just framework. How well it works for a given course that is taught online during a pandemic depends on a number of factors. Here are some things to think about:

1. The S/U grade option is the grade option of choice and has been made available to all undergraduates in all courses. Subtracting letter-grade pressure is the right thing to do in the current climate. Students should be encouraged to meet with the student services/academic advising office to discuss potential implications of their decisions, particularly on financial aid eligibility.
2. Students living at home may have a hard time getting their work done. There may be a family illness or tragedy situation. There may be an internet connectivity problem. There may be a laptop availability problem. Instructors will have to be sensitive to these realities.
3. It may be better to base the final grade on a number of modest assignments spread evenly across the semester than on a handful big exams and assignments. Faculty have full authority to reweight how exams and assignments figure in the final grade computation. Be sure to communicate any changes clearly and often.
4. The reasons we have a 4:30-7:30 Free Time Zone during normal instruction on campus will likely not apply for the next few months. Therefore, this time slot is opened up for things like virtual office hours.
5. There is likely to be an uptick in the number of students requesting incompletes. Student requests for INC are due by the last day of instruction. NYSED is allowing flexibility for course incompletes and the deadline for them to be resolved. However, faculty should work with students to complete their INCs in a timely fashion to minimize implications to financial aid eligibility and an unmanageable accumulation of unfinished work in future semesters.
6. To avoid complicating what is (hopefully) a return to normalcy in early summer, the S20 semester needs to wrap up before May 23 with grade submission shortly thereafter.
7. Recognizing that the collective moral compass is threatened when desperation takes over, there need to be repeated reminders about the Code of Academic Integrity.
8. There needs to be an all-hands-on-deck message sent to all TAs and graders. Conversely, given the tendency to “pack the syllabus” even in normal times, faculty need to be reminded not to overload their teaching assistants and grading staff. For TAs the rule is 15 hours/week not to exceed 20 hours/week.
9. There are numerous reasons for instructors to introduce flexibility through asynchronous instruction and assessment: time zone differences, religious observance concerns, etc.
10. We must inspire confidence that there will be an eventual return to normalcy. One way to do that is to think about what that transition might look like. For example, if an F20 class requires an S20 course as a prerequisite, then some kind of review mechanism may be necessary to stage during the orientation period. With so many day-to-day concerns it is hard to think long term, but we should at least try.