



FACULTY SENATE PROPOSAL
FSP-2018-2019-004
Student, Alumni, and Community Service

I. Proposal Name:

Academic Conflicts with Commencement

II. Stated Proposal:

The UCO Faculty request that finals not be scheduled to conflict with commencement.

III. Justification:

Commencement is a time not only to award students their diplomas, it is a time for the university as a whole to celebrate the achievements of the graduating student body. While this ceremony is largely symbolic, it is both the literal and figurative end of their study, where all coursework should be complete. For those not graduating, commencement marks the end of every semester, the closing of a chapter before turning a page and beginning another journey. As commencement is both a symbol of completion and the structural end of the academic term, it makes sense that all final exams should be completed before these ceremonies begin. Justification of this proposal is outlined below:

- All faculty are obligated to actively participate in commencement ceremonies, with many departments requiring full-time professors to attend at least one ceremony every semester. Should a final exam be scheduled during this time, an important responsibility to the university could go unfulfilled.
- Even if students are not graduating, students should have every opportunity to support the achievements of their colleagues. A final exam given during any commencement ceremony could hinder this opportunity.

- Many students, particularly those in the College of Fine Arts & Design, often contribute to commencement ceremonies through performing. For example, an instrumental ensemble to perform "Pomp and Circumstance," a vocalist may perform special ceremonial music and the National Anthem. A final exam scheduled during any commencement ceremony would deprive the students of this opportunity, not to mention deprive those in attendance of the privilege to hear the talents of the UCO Students.
- This proposal does not require online exams to be cancelled during commencement. However, if an online exam is scheduled during the same time as any commencement ceremony, the faculty member should provide a 48-hour window before the first commencement ceremony of the semester begins where the exam can be taken.
- Section 4.4 of the UCO Student Handbook allows students to reschedule exams to attend commencement ceremonies. However, there is currently no policy that allows faculty to move a scheduled exam to attend commencement.

Submitted by Senator Geib. Recommended for Approval by the Student, Alumni, & Community Service Committee.

Passed unanimously on the 9th day of May, 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristi S. Archuleta", written over a horizontal line.

Faculty Senate President