



Exams at the Faculty of Law in Spring Semester 2020, Info Mail of 15 April 2020

Dear students,

We hope that you all had a pleasant and restful Easter and are in good health. As you know, the Faculty Council has decided to postpone the examination session for Spring Semester 2020 in light of the COVID-19 crisis. We would now like to inform you of further developments and resolutions by the Faculty Council:

1. Structure of the Examination Session

The written and oral examinations will be held in the following weeks:

- 10 to 14 August (CW 33) – oral exams*
- 17 to 21 August (CW 34) – written exams
- 24 to 28 August (CW 35) – written exams
- 31 August to 4 September (CW 36) – oral exams

(*Calendar week 33 overlaps with the school summer break. The Faculty Council has taken into consideration the fact that it is unlikely that any large events will be permitted to take place before the end of the summer break.)

As a rule, all examinations will be held during the postponed examination session. Exams that should have been held in the last week of the semester will also be moved to the examination session. It is not compatible with the principle of equal opportunities for all students if the exams for the same semester/year group are held almost three months apart for no compelling reason and this was not known when the modules were booked.

As already announced, special solutions for individual modules – especially oral exams to be held by video conference that have been brought forward – are only permitted if special reasons apply; specifically, if module participants will no longer be in Switzerland in August or September. In such cases, all participants in the affected module should be treated as equally as possible. Further information about the requirements and processes will be provided soon.

2. Marking Period; Continuing Your Studies in Fall Semester 2020



The Faculty Council has decided to grant the chairs a marking period of six weeks, which will be a big extra burden for them as they will also be preparing for the upcoming Fall Semester at the same time.

All students will be able to continue studying without interruption in Fall Semester 2020, at least at the Faculty of Law – this is subject, however, to the resolute condition that they meet the relevant requirements. If it subsequently transpires that a student has failed certain exams, any bookings for modules that he or she is not eligible for due to the failed exam will be canceled.

3. Two Graduation Dates for Spring Semester 2020

It has become necessary to schedule two graduation dates for the current semester. For students who only have to complete their Master's thesis or take an oral exam that has been brought forward, the original graduation date (30 September 2020) will be maintained.

However, a second graduation date must be set for the large majority of students, i.e. all those who will be taking exams in the postponed examination session. This date will be 28 October 2020. After they are issued by the chairs, the grades have to be registered. This is then followed by the assessment of the applications to graduate, the preparation and printing of the graduation documents, and the resolution by the Faculty Assembly. So that it does not lose time by waiting until the next Faculty Assembly on 11 November 2020, the Faculty Council has decided to conduct the latter process electronically by means of circular resolution.

4. Reversal of Module Cancellations

After the Executive Board of the University announced the suspension of classroom teaching on 13 March 2020, just over 200 students from our Faculty canceled module bookings. As the cancellation deadline expired before the postponement of the examinations could be announced, the students in question might have decided differently had they known about changed circumstances. All of them will therefore be rebooked to the modules concerned and informed accordingly. If they do not wish to be booked onto these modules, they can cancel the modules again in the extraordinary cancellation window from 4 to 17 May.

5. No New Module Bookings



A number of students have expressed a desire not just to cancel modules during the extraordinary cancellation window in May but also to be able to book new modules. This is understandable given that the learning period has been extended by two months. However, the Faculty Council has decided not to permit new module bookings – primarily in light of the Executive Board of the University’s decision to cancel failed attempts. The risk is too high that this would trigger a surge in the number of students taking exams. The additional strain created would have a very negative impact on everyone involved, and the period for marking the exams would have to be extended.

6. Suspension of Deadlines for Papers; Postponement of Submission Deadlines

The suspension of deadlines for the submission of papers (case studies, Bachelor’s and Master’s theses) to the chair introduced on Monday, 16 March 2020, will be maintained for the time being. The deadlines for submitting grades to the Office of the Dean will also be deferred by the duration of the deadline suspension. Students are still free to submit their papers during this period should they wish, however.

7. Auditor and Legal Trainee Positions, Internships

In a letter of 6 April 2020, we informed the President of the Court of Appeal of the Canton of Zurich, the chief public prosecutor and the President of the Zurich Bar Association of the postponement of the exams and asked them to pass on our request to the Zurich courts, the public prosecutor’s offices and the law firms that they react flexibly to the extraordinary circumstances with regard to auditor and legal trainee positions and internships. The President of the Court of Appeal has informed the president’s and HR offices of the Zurich courts accordingly. The chief public prosecutor’s office has also notified us that it has decided to cancel the eight-week taster auditing internship this summer. The Faculty of Law will continue to keep as many potential employers of its graduates as possible up to date with the measures that have been or will be taken in order to make the graduates’ transition to professional life as smooth as possible in these difficult circumstances.

We hope that this information helps to further clarify any unanswered questions you may have and ask for your understanding with regard to the measures we have taken. As we have done to date, we will inform you promptly of further developments and decisions by the Faculty Council.

Sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Brigitte Tag, Dean
Prof. Dr. Alain Griffel, Vice Dean of Studies