A. CONSTRUCTUNG THE EXAM

1. You Must Draft an Original Exam Each Semester. All prior exams are posted for students on the Library’s webpage. If you submit a feedback memo, model answer, or “best” answer, that also will be posted on the Library’s webpage. The faculty, therefore, must draft all original exam questions each semester.

2. Do Not Change Your Exam After the Add/Drop Period. Students expect to know the rules for the exam at the beginning of the semester. If you determine that you might like to change from an in-class to a take-home exam or vice versa, wait until the next time you teach to make that change. Students rely on the exam information provided in the course schedule. If changes are made outside of the add/drop period, students are not able to make necessary adjustments in their schedules.

3. Open/Closed/Limited Open Book Exams. Many faculty members offer an open book exam. Closed book exams are also administered and, depending on your pedagogical goals, a closed book exam may be best for your students. Keep in mind that closed book exams cause students undue anxiety, so you may consider an open book exam. We recommend that you give your students plenty of notice if the exam will be closed book so that they will be able to prepare accordingly. Limited open book exams are very difficult for the Registrar’s Office and the exam proctors to administer, and we discourage the use of that type of exam. With limited open book exams, students have proven that they are confused by what they are allowed to bring in (i.e., their textbook, the rules/statutes, a single page of notes, their outlines, commercial outlines, etc.) and what, if anything, they are allowed to view online (i.e., course materials they saved on their computers, rules/statutes). It is very difficult for proctors to monitor what is on a student’s computer screen during an exam.

4. Exams on Computers. Students may type or handwrite their exams. Nearly every exam that is administered at Georgetown Law is typed. The Registrar’s Office will send to all professors who are scheduled as offering an exam a template of exam instructions that includes laptop instructions. With the laptop instructions, professors state whether or not they will allow students to access their hard drives and the internet or nothing outside of the exam template. If students are not allowed access to their hard drives, students may have course materials stored electronically that they will have to print for the exam. If students are not allowed to access the internet, they will also have to print in advance on information they may be allowed to use during the exam (i.e., statutes).
5. **Test What You Covered.** We hear sometimes from students who feel that the test did not cover what was taught and discussed in the class. In drafting your exam, consider which hypothetical problems you covered in class. You could also start with your syllabus for a list of issues to cover. Some faculty start recording potential exam questions at the beginning of the semester. As they cover material in class, they consider what might be a good exam question. This, of course, makes it easier to draft a full exam at the end of the semester.

6. **Time.** Consider what you are asking on the exam and how much time you will allot. Students often complain that they could not fairly accomplish their answers in the time allotted.

7. **Guidelines for Students.** Some faculty include page limits on their exams. This is helpful for take-home exams to give students a sense of your expectations, especially if you give your students a longer period of time than you think they need to complete the take-home exam. For in-class exams, many faculty are not inclined to have a page limit since students are already fairly time-constrained.

B. **GRADING EXAMS**

8. **In General.** Exams are graded anonymously. Students are given a different exam number for each of their exams, and they use their exam number (rather than their name) on their exam. Once you enter the exam or “raw” scores or letter grade online in MyAccess—and once you have entered in all of the raw scores—the system will reveal the students’ names. The online grading system has two steps: raw score and final grades. The raw scores are the exam grades. Faculty can adjust the final grades (for class participation, other assignments) and must submit the final grades in MyAccess. Note that submitting raw scores alone is not sufficient.

9. **Think About Grading When Drafting the Exam.** If you ask open-ended policy questions, you may find it difficult to grade or distinguish the answers to those questions. An example of a broad policy question is, “How do you think the ERISA system should be revised?”

10. **How to Grade Exams.** Faculty grade their exams in different ways. Some faculty grade each exam question by question. Other faculty choose to grade the same question in each exam first (i.e., grade Question #1 in each exam and then go back to grade Question #2 in each exam). You may even consider reading the exams in a different order for each question (i.e., read all Question #1s and then shuffle the pile of exams so that you are reading all Question #2s in an order different than how you read Question #1). You should choose a method that will work for you and will eliminate any expectations (e.g., eliminate a pattern of reading a bad exam, a good exam, and a bad exam). You may consider using scoring sheets. This will allow you to combine your notes and scores on one page of notes that you can keep. Some faculty do not put notes or scores on any
exams. This allows them to look at their notes and internal scoring if students come to them later to ask questions about how the professor allocated points or determined a particular grade.

11. Grades Are Final Once They Are Posted By the Registrar’s Office. Faculty may not change grades unless there is demonstrable clerical error in grading. Please check your math before you submit your final grades. If you believe that there may be a case in which there is demonstrable clerical error, please contact the Registrar’s Office before discussing any potential grade change with a student. The policy for not changing grades is for protection of the faculty and for the integrity of the grading process. Once you submit your final grades in MyAccess, the Registrar’s Office will hold them until the grading deadline. If you would like your grades posted earlier (which releases them to students), please email the Registrar’s Office to confirm that you would like your grades posted.

12. Grading Deadlines. The grading period will seem short. In May, there is a big concern over grades for graduating students because, if a grade is not submitted by the deadline, a student may be at risk for not graduating or receiving their diploma at the Commencement ceremony. The May grading deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to Commencement (which is early Sunday afternoon). Additionally, the Registrar’s Office must have all graduating students’ grades in order to calculate honors, which must happen on the Saturday prior to Commencement so that the honors can be processed on to the diplomas in time for the Sunday afternoon Commencement ceremony. In January, the concern over getting grades in on time is focused on supporting the students in their job searches. For LL.M. students, their fall grades are the only grades on their transcripts.

C. PROCEDURES

13. Deadline for Submitting Exams to the Registrar’s Office. The Registrar’s Office will send you a general email to you with templates for exam instructions for you to edit and adopt and the deadline for you to submit your exam to their office. The Registrar’s Office requests each exam to be submitted no less than 4 business days from the date of administration. If you offer a take-home exam that students may pick up on the first day of the exam period, please be certain to provide the exam no less than 4 business days in advance. The Registrar’s Office administers hundreds of exams during the exam period. Your cooperation is essential in their success in administering every exam and in getting grades in on time.

14. Exam Deferrals. All exam deferrals are completed by the Registrar’s Office. You may want to remind your students that they should contact the Registrar’s Office with requests for exam deferrals as the exams are administered on an anonymous basis and the professor should not know which student, if any, are seeking a deferral. The Registrar’s Office schedules make-up exams for students
who have more than one exam scheduled within 24 hours and for students who have an emergency or extenuating circumstance. The Registrar's Office does not take deferrals lightly. In order to maintain anonymity, the Registrar's Office will hold back 1-3 additional exams from students who took the exam on time and will deliver the deferred and held exams together.

15. Questions From Students Re: Exam Logistics. Send all questions regarding logistics from students to the Registrar's Office.

16. Communications About the Exam. Consider putting all communications with students about the exam in writing. Avoid sending out late communications to prevent a situation where a student does not review their email and misses your communication. You want all of your students to have all of the same information going into your exam. You may not communicate with students once the exam is being administered or (in the case of take-home exams) is available for students to pick up. Communications between the students and the faculty will be handled by the Registrar's Office.

17. Be Accessible By Telephone During the Administration of Your Exam. The Registrar's Office will ask for a telephone number at which they can reach you during the administration of your exam in the event a question about the exam is brought to the proctor's attention and can be addressed while the students are taking the exam. Of course, we strongly encourage you to carefully proofread your exam to avoid any possible confusion. This will make things easier on you when you grade the exams.

18. Return the Graded Exams to the Registrar's Office. The policy voted in by the full-time faculty requires you to return the graded exams to the Registrar's Office. There are exam review periods during which students may request their exam and may review it and contact the professor to discuss it. Note that the Registrar's Office does not keep photocopies of the exams. The student picks up the original exam.

19. Feedback. While it is not required, we strongly encourage faculty to provide feedback memos that describe what you were looking for or to designate a "best" exam. You can also use a model answer. Students can learn a lot from their previous exams and your information about what you wanted.