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# WHO NEEDS *FINALS*?



**Lauren Lustgarten**  
*A&E Editor*

**T**his point in the semester is just about the roughest it gets. Back from the biggest tease ever (Thanksgiving break) and still trying to find motivation to end the semester strong is never easy. I am in my fourth and final year and I still haven't figured out a way to master that. The only thing standing in the way of a nice, long break from classes is the most dreaded week in the world... finals week.

I'm sure we have all asked ourselves along with our professors the question of "why do we have to have a final exam?" The answer is always something different, but it never seems to satisfy us. We just all think "let's have a project and then

get out of here." Unfortunately, we, for the most part, never get our way.

I have had maybe just a hand-full of classes in my college career thus far where we just had another exam. It wasn't a "final" and it wasn't the word no student enjoys hearing: "cumulative." It was just another exam on the last couple of chapters of the course. What all professors should give their students, right?

Not right. Finals week is torture and all, but lets weigh our options here. We either have a final exam or we have creative projects/presentations. There are plenty of pros and cons to both. The logical answer here is "duh, nothing at all," but we both know that we don't live in a fantasy.

For me, I've been thinking logically about this. What does having a cumulative exam really measure at all about me? I have been a living and breathing example of the fact that your grade on a cumulative exam truly measures nothing about you or your success throughout the year. Sure, I already know I don't have a photographic memory, but I do study when I need to.

It has happened to me three times throughout my college career. Throughout the

whole semester I do great. Get A's on all of the exams. But then here comes finals week. I stress out about all of the other exams I have to study for and all of the other papers I have to write that things just don't register like they did earlier in the semester. So, I take the exam, prepared or not and I end up not doing great on it resulting in my overall grade in that course dropping. Not because I didn't know the material. Clearly I did because I did well all semester with that same material, but because my brain just simply cannot memorize a whole semesters worth of information. Especially when I have to attempt to memorize information for more than one class.

Considering final exams prove nothing about ones intelligence, why have them? Instead, professors should make students take part in creative projects or presentations. Something that actually shows ones creativity and that can actually successfully measure ones knowledge on the subject. At least projects and presentations get you ready for the real world post graduation. Cumulative exams filled with details we learned months prior will not help us in life down the road.