



The Branford College Dean's Extension Handbook

Dear Branfordians,

Feeling sick? Have a varsity athletic event? Family emergency? Wondering if you qualify for a Dean's Extension?

Please keep the following guide handy: it tells you *how* to ask, *when* to ask, and what to expect!

And as always, if you are not sure if you qualify for a Dean's Extension or not, please reach out to me. I am always happy to discuss your situation with you and find an appropriate course of action.

With warmth,
Dean G.

1) What is a Dean's Extension?

A Dean's Extension is an electronic form signed by the residential college dean that authorizes the postponement of written work or exams during term-time (i.e. until the end of reading week).

Remember that instructors have *the primary authority for postponing work or exams at Yale College*. An instructor may postpone work for any reason; a residential college dean has limited authority to grant postponements.

2) When can Dean G. grant me a Dean's Extension?

As your dean, I am only able to grant Dean's Extension s in certain circumstances, which are outlined in the Academic Regulations of Yale College, here: <http://catalog.yale.edu/ycps/academic-regulations/completion-of-course-work/>.

The circumstances in which I can approve a Dean's Extension are limited to the following:

1. Incapacitating illness or incapacitating condition of any kind
2. Death of a family member

3. A comparable emergency*
4. Observance of religious holy days
5. Participation in varsity athletic **competitions** (NB: **not** practice/team events, or club sports)

* “A comparable emergency” refers to a significant, disruptive event. Unsure if what you are experiencing falls into that category? Come [talk to me](#), or shoot Jen an email (jennifer.dellacamera@yale.edu) /give Jen a call (203-432-0520).

3) Do computer and technical issues, travel disruptions, or a very heavy workload/ extracurricular week qualify for Dean’s Extensions?

The short answer is: no, even though all of the things above can be a genuine source of stress. Computer and technical issues are **not** considered a valid reason to request a Dean’s Extension; it is your responsibility to back up all your work and to resolve all IT issues with the help of ITS. I also cannot grant Dean’s Extensions for other types of disruptions in your week (though your instructors have the authority to grant an extension for any reason they think is appropriate).

I am *always* happy to brainstorm with you about how to talk to your instructor or about how to achieve a more comfortable balance between your activities and your wellbeing. For the second type of conversation, the [Academic Strategies Program](#) and the [YC3 Wellness Specialists](#) are also a great resource.

4) First stop?: (Often) your instructor

During term time, course instructors may give students permission to make up late or missed work, provided that such work is submitted before the end of the term. (NB: This means that regular coursework assigned during class time must be handed in by the end of reading week.) They may also grant students permission to postpone an exam.

While instructors may require that students obtain a Dean’s Extension to postpone an assignment deadline as part of their individual course policies, they also have the authority to grant a postponement themselves.

If, for some reason, you are not comfortable divulging the reason you require a postponement to your instructor, you should always feel free to come talk to me.

It is important to be aware of instructors’ authority to postpone work during term time, since a Dean’s Extension can be issued only in the event of one of the circumstances listed above in Point 2.

5) Ask yourself: “Can it be postponed?”

It is important to know that Dean’s Extensions can only extend deadlines: **they cannot excuse absences, whatever the reason.** If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to notify your instructor as soon as possible. There is no formal mechanism for excusing absences at Yale College:

just be as straightforward with your instructor as you can be, and let them know if you know you are going to miss a class for any reason, or have accidentally missed a class.

6) A special note about problem sets and essays

If you have an athletic event or a religious holiday that falls on a day when you are expected to hand in an essay or problem set, please note that you are expected to work ahead, and hand in the assignment ahead of time. **I generally cannot write Dean's Extensions for assignments which can be completed ahead of time for conflicts that you were also aware of ahead of time.** The expectation is that you know your schedule, and you should juggle your assignments and responsibilities accordingly to complete work on time. If you are missing in-class work, such as an exam or quiz, then that is a different matter (which would qualify for a Dean's Extension).

7) "Compelling" reasons may not qualify

Your time at Yale is going to provide many fantastic opportunities that may, unfortunately, become obstacles for handing in work on time. Participation in dramatic events, singing groups, and non-varsity athletics will in many cases compete for time that might otherwise be used for studying, writing, or attending classes. In addition, every year many students must attend interviews for jobs, internships, graduate school, etc., and these commitments may also interfere with class work. It is precisely in such circumstances that you should be aware of the authority of your instructor to postpone work: it will be your **only** means for turning in late work without penalty in these cases, as no matter how compelling the circumstances may be, I cannot write Dean's Extensions for reasons that do not fall into the categories outlined in the YCPS.

8) Be aware and plan ahead

Remember, certain times of the semester (such as midterms and finals) will often place heavy demands on your schedule. It is essential that you anticipate and plan for these difficult periods. Again, the peer mentors at the [Academic Strategies Program](#) and the [YC3 Wellness Specialists](#) can support you with this planning.

Be especially careful of situations in which an instructor may say, "It's fine with me, as long as you get a Dean's Extension." You will know under what circumstances you will be able to receive one, so you may have to resolve the issue on the spot by letting the instructor know that you know I cannot grant Dean's Extensions in the circumstances they are outlining.

Be very careful about assuming you will get a Dean's Extension in instances where you ran out of time because you are overscheduled or did not plan well, because you may ultimately find yourself in a difficult situation. I am always happy to talk about how to tackle this, but I won't be able to provide a DE.

9) If you do qualify, you must be timely with your request

Students need to request Dean's Extensions in a timely manner. **Timeliness is actually one of the most important factors when it comes to determining whether or not I can grant a DE.** You must let me know you are sick as soon as you are able, or if you foresee any challenges completing your work that pertain to the five reasons above.

If you reach out to me days or weeks after you missed an assignment, I will likely not be able to issue a Dean's Extension. I do understand that sometimes an illness or other issue can mean you are delayed in getting in touch with me. If the circumstances of what you are experiencing genuinely prevent you from reaching out to me while it is happening, then simply reach out **as soon as you are able**, explaining why you weren't able to reach out in a timely manner, so that we can have a discussion.

If you do know you will need a Dean's Extension because of a varsity event or due to religious observance, please request one as soon as you are aware of the conflict. Likewise, if you are sick and unable to do work (but able to send emails), please do not wait to contact me if you think you will need a DE.

IMPORTANT:

Please note that although it is expected that students **request** a Dean's Extension as soon as they are able and ideally before the deadline for the assignment passes, Residential College Deans may **approve** these requests even following the assignment deadline (if the student **requested** the DE in a timely fashion), and instructors must honor the extension. Therefore: **if you email in the evening or over the weekend, please be patient.** I do not live in a box in the office, but I will review your request as soon as I am back *in* the office, and you will not be penalized for the fact that I didn't see your email right away, as long as you made the request before the assignment was due.

Finally: I know sometimes it's not easy to reach out well in advance, and you may find yourself asking for a DE much closer to the assignment deadline or the exam date than you'd like. I know this can be stressful, but please remember that **your delay in reaching out does not mean that the situation is an emergency.** If you are so sick that you are unable to walk to an exam room, you qualify, so you do not need to worry if you do not hear from me before the exam takes place. If it's a less clear-cut situation, *the earlier you reach out, the earlier we will be able to figure it out together.*

10) End-of-term extensions

One last but essential remark about postponing work: at the end of term (i.e. during reading week and final exam period), everything changes.

Only residential college deans can authorize extensions for outstanding work or make-up examinations after the close of the teaching term.

I will circulate relevant information about extensions for end-of-term work and make-up final exams by email at the end of the semester. For now, please note that, after the close of regular term time, without **written** permission from me, you will not be able to postpone a final examination or any

other end-of-term project, or regular course work that was due during the term itself, **regardless of whether the instructor gives you permission to do so.**

11) I don't qualify for a Dean's Extension, but things are looking tight and I'm very stressed. Now what?

Come talk to me. Please do not worry in silence. I may not be able to give you a Dean's Extension, but I will be able to listen and help you come up with a game plan for how you can get back on track. I may not be able to grant a DE, but that doesn't mean I am not concerned about your wellbeing, or not available to help you think through the situation: please reach out.

12) And finally: How do I actually request a Dean's Extension?

1. First, if you feel comfortable doing so, contact your instructor to request an extension, and then follow up by requesting a Dean's Extension from me if needed.
2. If you find yourself in one of the five situations listed above and require a Dean's Extension:
 - a. Fill out the DE form, which you can find on the Branford website (<https://branford.yalecollege.yale.edu/deans-office/deans-extensions-policies-and-requests>) or [here](#).
 - b. If you have not provided details on the form, please **email me** explaining the circumstances
 - c. Finally, make an appointment with me (through [Calendly](#), or by contacting Jen (jen.dellacamera@yale.edu, 203-432-0520), or drop by my Zoom drop-in hours during the week (advertised in the weekly Dean's Notes), so we can discuss this.

You can complete these actions in any order, depending on your circumstances and the due date of the assignment or date of the exam.

The residential college dean is the only recipient of the Dean's Extension request form, so your reason for the Dean's Extension does not get passed on to your professors. However, you do not need to add any sensitive or confidential information to the dynamic form if you are uncomfortable doing so: it is sufficient to write on the form that you will have/have spoken with the Dean about your situation.

Once I have received the form and we have met, I will either approve or deny the request. If your Dean's Extension request is approved, an auto-generated email will be sent to your instructor, with a CC to you, containing details about the postponed assignment, including the original due date and the new deadline.

Please note: if the work being postponed is an exam or in-class quiz, you will be responsible for coordinating with your instructor on a new exam time (the form will outline the new due date as "by arrangement with the instructor"). **It is your responsibility to reach out to the instructor promptly.**

It's also good practice to send a personal note thanking professors for their understanding for any Dean's Extension, as the message they receive is automated and comes from me, rather than you. In order to continue building your relationships with your instructors, it's always good to keep them in the loop: you do not need to provide any details that you don't feel comfortable sharing.