

# Splash slashed: Cornell drops swim test amid pandemic

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Cornell University will not conduct its 115-year-old swim test this fall due to the pandemic.

The Ivy League school confirmed Wednesday it was waiving the requirement for those seniors graduating this fall and spring who had yet to complete the test. The move comes as colleges everywhere retool their operations amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The test, designed to reduce the number of drownings, had been canceled this past spring for the first time. The test is usually taken at student orientation and involves ["a continuous 75-yard swim using front, back, and optional strokes."](#) according to the school.

Cornell adopted the swim test in 1905, following in the wake of military service academies. Former ROTC commandant Col. Frank Barton had said, "In view of the fact that recent wars have conclusively demonstrated that a soldier who cannot swim is so much dead timber in the command," [according to the Cornell website.](#)

Women began taking the test in 1920.

Students who do not complete their swim test during their freshman year typically have to pay a \$100 test fee. Cornell said that late fee is being waived this year for incoming freshmen.

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