

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### **Academic Standing**

#### **Student Classifications**

For purposes of class standing, requirements, eligibility, and the like, degree-seeking undergraduate students are classified as follows: as **FRESHMEN** upon admission with proper high school credentials until the completion of 24 semester hours; as **SOPHOMORES** upon earning at least 25 semester hours and until the completion of 54 semester hours; as **JUNIORS** upon earning at least 55 semester hours and until the completion of up to 85 semester hours; as **SENIORS** upon earning more than 85 semester hours and until the completion of degree requirements.

#### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty, expected of every student, is essential to the process of education and to upholding high ethical standards. Cheating or any other kind of unethical behavior may subject the student to severe academic penalties, including expulsion.

All work submitted for evaluation in a course, including tests, term papers, and computer programs, must represent only the work of the student unless indicated otherwise.

Material taken from the work of others must be acknowledged properly. Materials submitted to fulfill requirements in one course may not be submitted in another course without prior approval of all of the instructors involved.

Concerns about the propriety of obtaining outside assistance or acknowledging sources should be referred to the instructor of the course before the work commences.

Penalties, appropriate to the severity of the infraction, may include a grade of zero for the assignment, possible failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university. Abuse of computer privileges may result in their restriction and possibly in more severe penalties. Instructors may indicate specific penalties for academic dishonesty in their course syllabi.

Any appeal by a student is to be made first to the instructor. If disputes of interpretation arise, the faculty member and chairperson will attempt to resolve the difficulty with the student. If this does not lead to resolution, the academic dean normally will rule in the matter.

If a penalty is imposed for academic misconduct, a written report of the incident may be sent to the academic dean. The dean will review the case and determine if, in light of other information and records, further disciplinary action is warranted.

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### **Policy and Procedure for Appeal of a Course Grade**

**Policy.** The instructor has both the professional competence and the jurisdiction to determine grades; the student has the right to appeal a course grade that the student believes to be in error. The only basis for an appeal is whether the grade has been determined fairly within the grading system adopted by the faculty member.

Thus every student has the right to know at the beginning of any semester how the final grade for any particular course will be determined. This means knowing what percentage of the final grade the assignments (tests, quizzes, papers, class participation, etc.) will comprise.

For this reason the instructor has the obligation to present this information to the student at the beginning of the semester as part of the syllabus. Once the semester begins, an instructor should not make substantial changes in the grading system and should inform the students of even minor changes. If an instructor does not provide such information, the student has the right to seek redress.

**Procedure: Step 1.** The student who wishes to contest a course grade should first make an effort to discuss the matter with the instructor and attempt to resolve the problem concerning the disputed grade. (If the instructor is away from the university during the period of the grade appeal, the student may proceed directly to the department chairperson.)

**Step 2.** If there is no satisfactory resolution at this level and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student must initiate a formal grade appeal within a specific time period. (A disputed course grade from the fall semester must be appealed by the end of the sixth week of the spring semester. A disputed course grade from the spring semester or one of the summer sessions must be appealed by the end of the sixth week of the fall semester.) The appeal must be made in writing to the instructor and a copy sent to the department chairperson, who will then schedule a meeting with the student and the instructor.

**Step 3.** If the department chairperson cannot resolve the dispute in a manner satisfactory to the parties concerned, the chairperson will notify the dean of the school in which the course is taught. The dean will then attempt to resolve the problem.

**Step 4.**

- A. If the dean judges that the appeal is without sufficient basis, the dean can so rule and the case is closed.
- B. If the dean is in doubt or thinks it possible that the grade should be changed contrary to the wishes of the instructor, the dean will request the Faculty Service Committee to provide a list of the names of nine faculty members, randomly selected, from which the dean, the involved instructor, and the student will choose three to consider the matter. (If agreement on all three cannot be reached, the dean will fill any remaining spots on the committee from the names on the list.)

C. Both the instructor and the student will present their cases to the committee. (The appeals committee will make no effort to establish whether a grading system is academically sound; rather it will attempt to establish whether an instructor's grading practices and procedures were followed consistently, fairly, and accurately according to the standards set forth in the syllabus and other course directives.)

D. The committee will then decide by majority vote to recommend that the grade be changed and notify the dean of its decision. The committee shall provide the dean with a written summary of the main reasons for their recommendation. The dean will make the final decision after carefully considering the recommendation of the committee. If deciding contrary to the recommendation of the committee, the dean should explain the reasons for the decision in writing to the committee.

**Step 5.** The dean will then notify the instructor, the department chairperson, and the student of the decision, ordinarily by the end of the semester during which the appeal arose.

### **Academic Reports**

Academic reports of final grades are sent directly to students at the end of each semester. Reports are not to be represented as official transcripts. Authenticated transcripts will not be released until all financial obligations to the university have been fulfilled.

Mid-term grades are given to freshmen for all courses in which they are enrolled, but only grades of C- or lower are reported for other students at mid-term. None of these grades become part of the permanent record.

Students who wish their academic reports released are asked to submit written requests for release of transcripts. Forms for this purpose are available in the Registrar's Office and in the Student Service Center. The university reserves the right to make judgments regarding the release of grades to government agencies or others making bona fide requests for information.

### **Course Standing**

Courses in which a C-, D+, or D grade is earned may, with the appropriate dean's permission, be repeated only once, and the permanent record then includes the grades of both attempts. For the purpose of computing academic standing, both attempts are counted, but credit toward graduation is given only once.

### **Dean's List**

Only students who are in good standing and have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of regularly graded course work (i.e., exclusive of Pass/Fail course work)

within a semester with a quality-point average of 3.50 or higher will be eligible for the Dean's List.

### **Academic Warning**

Students are placed on warning whenever their semester average drops below 2.0 while their cumulative average remains above this minimum, or when the cumulative average is above the levels for probation, but below 2.0. Such students receive notice of academic warning and may be excluded by their dean from certain extracurricular activities.

### **Academic Probation**

Academic Probation is the status of any student whose cumulative average falls below these standards:

0-12	earned hours	1.75	25-47	earned hours	1.90
13-24	earned hours	1.80	after 48	earned hours	2.00

Probation is imposed by the appropriate dean at the end of any semester when the cumulative average is below these standards and continues for at least one semester until the required average is earned. Students on probation are subject to the following restrictions:

1. They may not register for a course load greater than that they carried during the semester immediately preceding notice of probation. Normally registration is limited to 12-13 semester hours; in no case may a student on probation register for more than 15 semester hours.
2. They may not engage in varsity or club sports.
3. They may not pledge a fraternity or sorority, or join other campus organizations; hold any elective or appointive office on campus; or serve on any student committee.

### **Freshman Privilege**

Freshman Privilege is intended to help students recover from major-direction choices that turned out not to match their real interests or talents. As a result, such students may have done poorly (D, F) in courses **required** by those intended programs. Yet they very often can be successful in a new and different major program.

**NOTE:** Petition for Freshman Privilege under these provisions must be approved in writing by the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences before the student begins the next term after completing 40 earned hours.

To improve their chances of success, these students may petition the dean in writing for the privilege of having such courses excluded from the calculation of their overall

Quality Point Average (QPA). If granted, this exclusion is made on the assumption that the student will no longer pursue a major program in the same area. Thus, for example, the student would normally change from pursuing a major in science to one in liberal arts or business, or from attempting a major in business to one in science or in liberal arts. The student's previous course work is then re-evaluated, omitting the pertinent deficiency grade or grades and credit (if the course was passed) from inclusion in the QPA. (Note, however, that repeating the course or courses for which the privilege may have been granted will nullify the privilege, and restore the deficiency grade or grades in the student's QPA.) **Courses for which the privilege has been granted remain listed on the student's permanent record (transcript) with the designation FP.**

In general, the following courses are not privilegeable: (1) those required for the completion of all undergraduate degrees, *e.g.*, First-Year Seminar, CO 100, EN 103 or 111 or 114, EN 112 or 116, courses in one of the languages, PL and RL courses required for completion of the University Core Curriculum; (2) those not required for the completion of any undergraduate degree, *e.g.*, AR, CE, FA, MS, PE. Other courses normally taken for Core are also not privilegeable.

### **Dismissal**

Students are subject to dismissal for academic deficiencies by the appropriate dean if they are placed on probation for two successive semesters or if their grades decline while on probation status in any semester, or if they fail more than one course in any semester. Students who have been academically dismissed may not apply for reinstatement until at least one full semester and one summer have elapsed. (For conditions of reinstatement, see pages 23-24.)