

# GENERAL GRADING POLICY

## UNIVERSITY DECISION

It is the policy of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio to maintain a grading system in conjunction with the six schools, calculate GPAs based on those grades, and to delineate methods by which a grade change on a student's permanent academic record may be accomplished.

## PERTINENT INFORMATION

The health science center must ensure the privacy and integrity of student grade records and also provide students an orderly and a logical process to appeal final course grade decisions. The student's official transcript reflects actual grades from the time they were assigned and should not be changed or removed without specific justification and approval.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Audit

This is a method of class attendance that allows for student observation in a class environment. The grading basis for an audited course is simply "audit," and carries no GPA weight. Audited courses do not satisfy degree requirements. (For more information, see the Policy on Auditing Courses (<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/policyonauditingcourses/>) in this catalog.)

### Remediation by exam

A student may be afforded the opportunity to remediate a failing grade by successfully completing an exam determined appropriate by the academic department. The exam is often a nationally-distributed, standardized exam. Upon successful remediation, the failing grade remains on the transcript but the grade is excluded from GPA calculation.

### Remediation by repetition

A student may be afforded the opportunity to remediate a failing grade by repeating a course in its entirety. Upon successful remediation, the failing grade remains on the transcript but the grade is excluded from GPA calculation.

### Incomplete Grades

The assignment of an "I" grade indicates that the student failed to complete requirements for the course due to unexpected and extenuating circumstances, such as illness, family emergency, or other non-academic and urgent matters. A grade of incomplete "I" is not acceptable as a temporizing measure in situations of substandard academic performance. The outstanding work must be completed by the designated date issued by the faculty but no later than one year of the issuance of the "I" grade. When the course is completed, the qualitative grade issued by the instructor will be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar using a Change of Grade Form. If the coursework is not satisfactorily completed within the designated time, the "I" grade will be changed to an "F" grade. Incomplete grades should not be confused with failing grades of "F," in which a student failed to complete requirements without proper notice to the instructor.

### In Progress Grades

The assignment of an "IP" grade indicates that the course is in progress, and may for logistical reasons span two or more grading periods, whether

contained within one semester or spanning two or more semesters. These grades are replaced with iterations of the final grade once it is earned; or, in some schools, the final grade is issued in the term in which it is earned, and the previous IP grade remains on the transcript.

### Letter Grades

These are awarded as "H" (for Honors), "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F," although not all schools use all these letters. Grading details are printed on a separate sheet of paper.

### Withdrawal Grades

A student who has been withdrawn, granted a leave of absence or been dismissed will receive a grade of "W", according to the school's grading system and as deemed appropriate by the department. Students returning from a leave of absence to the same courses must re-register for the course and pay tuition associated with the hours, along with any course fees.

### Academic Year

This is marked by the start and end of the year for a given program. In some cases, the academic year may commence with a summer semester, and in other cases, it may commence with the fall semester. In the case of the School of Dentistry and School of Medicine, the academic year begins in the summer months but is not formally or officially marked by any semesters within it.

### Calendar Year

This is marked by the months January through December.

### GPA

A grade point average is calculated by assigning the following numerical weight to each letter grade:

**A** = 4

**B** = 3

**C** = 2

**D** = 1

**F** = 0

When courses are repeated for credit, previous grades for the same courses are excluded from GPA calculations, whether or not they were failing, and whether or not they were better than the grade ultimately earned.

### Term GPA

This is the grade point average calculated for one semester or, as is the case for the School of Dentistry and Long School of Medicine, for one academic year.

### Cumulative GPA

This is the grade point average calculated across a student's education within an academic career.

### Academic Career

At the health science center, this refers to a student's general course of study, including one of the following:

Dental School Post-Professional

Dental School Professional

Dental School Undergraduate

Graduate School Graduate

Health Professions Graduate

Health Professions Undergraduate

Medical School Graduate

Medical School Professional

Nursing School Graduate

Nursing School Undergraduate

Public Health Graduate

## UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE

All schools must follow strict procedures when grading students. These include the accurate and timely entry of grades for student review and access, as well as the proper recording and transmission of any grade changes to minimize the possibility of error, omission, or unauthorized alteration.

### Grade Changes

When an instructor or school designee discovers that an erroneous grade was reported for a student, he/she shall immediately submit the corrected grade for processing.

1. The currently adopted Change of Grade Form must be used for the purpose of correcting grades on a student's transcript record.
2. The reason for changing a grade recorded in a student's permanent academic record must be provided on the Change of Grade Form and must be signed by the instructor and the associate dean. If the instructor of record is no longer employed by the university, the associate dean may sign the change of grade.
3. When a grade is changed on a student's permanent academic record, the student will be notified by the school.
4. A copy of the Change of Grade Form submitted shall be stored in the student's academic record at the Office of the University Registrar for audit purposes.
5. Any grade change must be made within one year of the issuance of the grade.

### Grading Practices

1. A close relationship exists between student evaluation and graduation requirements.
  - a. Evaluation and grade reporting should reflect the skills, knowledge and/or competencies which can be directly associated with validated task inventories or competency lists. Thus, a close correlation between the evaluation, course objectives and task inventories should be present in the curriculum and instructional materials.
    - i. Performance levels are defined by the instructional program and may include a variety of learning activities and learning outcomes, which will determine students' level of achievement in the specific skills, knowledge and competencies associated with each course.
  - ii. Learning activities may include but are not limited to:
    1. Individual and group projects
    2. Reports or presentations
    3. Hands-on demonstrations
    4. Participation in class discussions
    5. Exercise or lab assignments
    6. Homework assignments
    7. Quizzes and tests
  - b. The minimal performance level accepted at the health science center in a student's major courses should relate closely to the minimal or basic requirements associated with the respective school's accreditation requirements. This level of performance varies by school, but may be a D, C or P.
  - i. It specifies that the student has demonstrated the acquisition mastery of skills and knowledge or competencies that particularly support the field for which the program is designed.
  2. The grading followed by instructors must be appropriate for each student's situation, particularly in the cases of withdrawals, dismissals, and voluntary or administrative leaves of absence. Such situations may include the following:
    - a. *Leaves of Absence:* Students approved or mandated to take a leave of absence after the official first day of class and before the administration of final exams will receive grades of "W" in all classes for which they registered but did not already receive a final grade via the student information system.
      - i. Students must re-register for any dropped courses required for attainment of the degree sought in the next possible semester following return to the university.
    - b. *Withdrawals:* Students who voluntarily withdraw from the health science center after the official first day of class and before the administration of final exams will receive grades of "W" in all classes for which they registered but did not already receive a final grade via the student information system.
    - c. *Dismissals.* Students who are dismissed from the health science center after the official first day of class and before the administration of final exams will receive grades of "W" in all classes for which they registered but did not already receive a final grade via the student information system. Dismissed students seeking to register for subsequent semesters must reapply for the program of interest and satisfy all requirements anew, including application fees. Admission to dismissed students or any other former students is not guaranteed.
    - d. *Incomplete Grades:* When an "I" grade is assigned, a student must complete the coursework by a date specified by the course instructor.
      - i. The date cannot exceed one year from the end of the term for which the "I" grade was issued.
      - ii. Upon completion, the instructor should submit a Change of Grade Form to the Office of the University Registrar.
      - iii. If coursework is not satisfactorily completed, the "I" grade will be changed to an "F" one year following the end of the term in

which the "I" was recorded. This is an administrative change in grade that occurs by way of an electronic process managed by The Office of the University Registrar.

3. The criteria, standards and performance grade must be specified for each course by the instructional program.
  - a. These may likely include cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains, but should reflect proportionately what is found in the educational practice.
  - b. Faculty members may consider student participation in specific learning activities when determining final grades, provided students are informed of the required activities at the beginning of the course.
  - c. Regular class participation is necessary for satisfactory achievement. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the student to participate in lecture and laboratory sessions in accordance with requirements of the course as established and communicated by the faculty member.
4. Faculty members cannot drop or award grades of "W" for students based on non-participation. Students who fail to meet performance requirements for the course within the allotted time frame will receive a grade of "F."
  - a. Student performance will be regularly monitored and students will be notified when they fail to meet performance levels.
  - b. Students will be advised of options for improving performance or withdrawing from the course(s).
  - c. Students opting to withdraw from the course must follow established procedures.
  - d. Students should remain aware of the penalties that dropped courses may have on their academic studies and financial aid, including, but not limited to, assessment of non-Texas resident tuition. See the Excess Hours Policy (<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/excesscredithourspolicy/>) in this catalog for more information.
5. Student grades are reported upon course completion and are available at times other than at end of term.
  - a. Each student shall be evaluated and a grade reported in the student information system for each course according to the established grading deadlines.
  - b. A current status of grades and course completion shall be obtained by students in My Student Center (<https://students.uthscsa.edu/>).

to be borne by the student. Processes for grade appeals are also located under each school's catalog section.

## **GRADES and GRADE APPEALS**

Grading standards, symbols, grade point scales and other considerations regarding the quality of work of students are the prerogative of the faculty of the programs, as are issues of promotion and advancement. More details regarding school-specific grading symbols and scales can be found under their respective sections. The student requesting a change of grade bears the burden of proof in establishing the appropriateness of any grade change requested. Thus, the responsibility of providing sufficient input to justify the change of grade requested by the student is