

## GRADING

I. Policy Section

7.0 Instructional Materials and Methods

II. Policy Subsection

7.10 Grading Procedures

III. Policy Statement

The College has a student grading system to effectively record and rate students' performance. This policy outlines the grades faculty will issue for student work and the process for students to grieve their final course grade if needed.

IV. Reason for Policy

Student grading is essential for the transfer of student work to other institutions and to inform students on how they performed in their class(s).

V. Entities Affected by This Policy

Students, Faculty and Staff

VI. Who Should Read This Policy

All College Staff

VII. Related Documents

GRCC Catalog  
Academic Governing Council Issue Papers

VIII. Contacts

Student Records  
Deans  
Provost

IX. Definitions

Grades & Honor Values

*GRADE HONOR POINT VALUE GRADE HONOR POINT VALUE*

A 4.00 C 2.00

A- 3.67 C- 1.67  
B+ 3.33 D+ 1.33  
B 3.00 D 1.00  
B- 2.67 D- 0.67  
C+ 2.33 E 0.00  
I-Incomplete  
V-Audit  
W-Student Initiated Drop  
X. Procedures

**A. Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation**

The number of credit hours granted for a grade of “E” or higher is indicated in the description for each course. Each hour of credit is valued in honor points according to the grade received. I, W, and DR grades are not included in the grade point average calculations. E grades are worth no credit.

To determine grade point average, multiply the number of honor points of each grade received by the number of hours of credit for that course, then divide the total number of honor points by the total number of credit hours earned.

Students are advised that many colleges and universities compute grade point average differently. Upon transfer to one of these institutions, the student’s grade point average might be recomputed and thus be lower than the GRCC grade point average.

Students are reminded that a 2.0 grade point average is required for graduation from Grand Rapids Community College. No grade can be changed other than the “I” grade after the end of the semester during which the grade was earned unless an error occurred.

This covers credit courses, not non-credit courses.

**B. Audit (V Grade)**

Students may choose to receive a grade of “audit” (V) for classes in which they enroll. Students may audit a class for enjoyment, for personal exploration, for gaining insight into a new subject, or for other reasons. Audit status does not count toward full-time enrollment. The course will appear on the student’s transcript.

Students pay full tuition for classes they audit and are expected to participate in all class activities. However, they are not compelled to take tests or examinations or to write term papers, but they may do so voluntarily.

Students must declare their audit status to their instructors during the first 25% of the class. Credit status may not be changed to audit status after this time limitation. Students may make arrangements on an individual basis with their instructors to

change from audit to credit status. If they expect to do so, they must take all tests and examinations and write all assigned papers.

C. Withdrawal Process (W, DR)

Students may withdraw from a course and receive a W grade until the 70% date of course completion (as noted on the class roster) through the Online Center or at the Enrollment Center. After the 70% date, students may not initiate a course withdrawal or receive a W grade and the final course grade (A, B, C, D, or E) will be assigned based upon all graded and missed assignments. Instructors may not assign a W grade. However, during the last 30% of a course, students who have a documented extenuating circumstance such as an illness or injury, or the illness, injury or death of a significant other or family member can apply for a Hardship Withdrawal through the Office of the Associate Dean of Student Success and Retention. Students may apply to withdraw from a single course or multiple courses. There is no impact on the student's GPA for receiving a W grade in the Grand Rapids Community College grading system; however, other institutions may have different policies governing the impact of W grades on transfer student acceptance and/or their calculated GPA. In addition, W grades may have a negative impact on financial aid eligibility.

A DR may be assigned by the Registrar's office if a student ceases to attend a class in accordance with the Attendance Policy, or, other instances as determined by the Registrar's office where an administrative withdrawal is required. There is no impact on the student's GPA for receiving a W or DR grade in the Grand Rapids Community College grading system; however, other institutions may have different policies governing the impact of W or DR grades on transfer student acceptance and/or their calculated GPA. In addition, W or DR grades may have a negative impact on financial aid eligibility.

D. Incomplete Grades (I Grade)

An incomplete (I) grade can be temporarily assigned in the event of extenuating circumstances such as illness, injury, birth of a child, death of a family member, jury duty or other situations that are beyond the control of the student and prevent completion of the course requirements during the semester. The following requirements must be met in order to receive an incomplete (I) grade:

1. The coursework up to the time of the absence has been satisfactory and in the instructor's judgment, the student can complete the required work without repeating the course or attending any class sessions in subsequent semesters.
2. Approximately 90% of the course time has elapsed or coursework has been completed as determined by the instructor.
3. An incomplete form has been completed. This form is available in the Office of Student Records and indicates the actions the student will take to finish the course, when those actions will take place (not to exceed one year), and the grade the instructor will submit (A, B, C, D, or E) should the work remain incomplete after the allotted time. Both the student and instructor will make

every effort to sign the form and submit it to the Office of Student Records; a copy will be provided to the student and the instructor's Department Head/Program Director.

Once the coursework is completed or the allotted time lapsed, the instructor will submit an official grade change within 10 business days. If the course work is not completed and/or the instructor does not submit an official grade change, the incomplete (I) grade will default to a grade of "E" one year from the end date of the class. In the event of further unforeseen, extreme or unusual circumstances, a written appeal for an extension can be made to the Associate Dean of Hiring and Evaluation of the School where the course resides.

**E. Repeated Coursework**

A repeated course is a course that a student enrolls in and attempts more than once. Each attempt is recorded on a student's transcript. For courses that may only be taken once for credit the attempt with the highest grade will be used when calculating GPA and earned credits on a student's academic transcript. A student may attempt a course up to three times, or two additional attempts after the first. If a student has not successfully completed a course within three attempts they are required to meet with an advisor if they wish to register for a fourth attempt at the course.

Courses that permit additional repeats for credit are identified within the curriculum database. Programs with specific admission requirements may have additional restrictions on repeated coursework.

Students using financial aid should also view the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Credit Hour Students to understand the impact of repeated coursework on future financial aid eligibility.

**F. Grade Reports**

Grade reports are available to the student at the end of each semester and at the end of the Summer session and are accessible through the Web site:  
[www.grcc.edu](http://www.grcc.edu).

**G. Grade Grievance Process**

This process is to be used only for disputes regarding final grades. A student who perceives an individual grade received during a course to be unfair must resolve the matter informally with his or her instructor. Only when an individual grade has impacted a student's final grade, or when a student perceives a final grade to be otherwise unfair, may the student invoke the formal grievance process noted below.

### **Informal Process**

**Step 1:** The student shall contact the instructor within 15 school days\*\* after the posting of a perceived unfair final grade to try to resolve the matter informally.

*\*\*School days are Mondays through Fridays, while classes are in session.*

**Step 2:** If the grade dispute is not resolved at Step 1, the student has 5 school days to contact the appropriate Department Head or Program Director to try to reach a resolution that is mutually agreeable to the student and instructor. A written description of the grievance may be requested by the Department Head or Program Director. The student must provide documentation that an attempt to contact the course instructor was made within 15 days.

If the grievance involves a Program Director or Department Head, the student has the option of initiating the formal process directly with the Associate Dean.

### **Formal Process**

**Step 3:** If the issue is not resolved at Step 2, the student has 5 school days\*\* to initiate the Formal Grade Grievance Process by completing a Grade Appeal Form and delivering it to the Associate Dean of the academic department responsible for the course.

Grade Appeal Forms are available in all Associate Deans' offices. For Arts and Sciences courses, contact Associate Dean Christopher Johnston, 310 Main, 616-234-2214, [christopherjohnsto@grcc.edu](mailto:christopherjohnsto@grcc.edu); for Workforce Development courses, contact Associate Dean Jimmie Baber, 161 ATC, 616-234-3724, [jimmiebabber@grcc.edu](mailto:jimmiebabber@grcc.edu); for CLS courses, contact Associate Dean Raynard Ross, 347 Student Center, 616-234-4839, [rross@grcc.edu](mailto:rross@grcc.edu).

The appropriate Associate Dean has 15 school days\*\* from receipt of the Grade Appeal Form to discuss the situation with the student and instructor, and, if necessary, Department Head/Program Director, and make a written decision to:

1. deny the request for a change of grade, or
2. move forward with the Formal Grade Grievance Process by convening the Academic Governing Council (AGC) Grade Appeal Hearing Committee.

The Associate Dean may deny a request for a change of grade and decline to refer the grievance to the AGC Grade Appeal Hearing Committee in the following instances:

1. When the instructor has followed the guidelines set forth in his or her syllabus.
2. When the instructor has followed College policies and procedures that would impact the student's grade.
3. When the student provides no evidence that he or she was treated in a partial or otherwise unfair manner.
4. When the student provides no evidence that a grade was miscalculated.
5. Other cases may exist in which an Associate Dean may deny a grade change request.

Written notification of the Associate Dean's decision and rationale will be sent to the student as well as to the course instructor, and appropriate Department Head/Program Director.

The Associate Dean's decision at this stage is final and binding. However, cases in which a student's final grade results in expulsion from a program progress from the Associate Dean to the AGC Grade Appeal Hearing Committee, if the student so requests and if the student has followed all the steps of the Informal and Formal Process.\*

*Step 4:* If the Associate Dean's decision is to convene the AGC Grade Appeal Hearing Committee, its Chair shall do so within 10 school days.

The Grade Appeal Hearing Committee shall be a standing committee of the Academic Governing Council. The Committee shall be comprised of 5 members and shall include 3 faculty members, 1 academic administrator, and 1 student.

The Chair of the Hearing Committee shall be an appointed faculty member. The student shall be a student of good standing.

XI. Forms

Incomplete Grade Form (Obtained from Student Records)

Grade Appeal Form

XII. Effective Date

May 2013

XIII. Policy History

Adopted—1991 Revised—

December, 2007

Revised & Adopted: section 7.0 subsection 7.3 (Grading, Key to Transcript & Academic Grievance Produced Student)—December, 2006

Reviewed/Revised-2012- 2013

Reviewed/Revised-2013-2014 to clarify the "I" and 70% limit for students to drop

Reviewed/Revised by AGC on 10/10/17

Reviewed/Revised by AGC on 04/09/19 - Effective Fall 2019

Temporary modification of the Grading Policy Procedures due to COVID-19 as outlined in the Grading Policy 7.10 (Temporary Modifications to Definitions and Procedures) [Decision Paper](#).

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

2023-2024 Academic Year