

GRADING

I. Policy Section

7.0 Instructional Materials and Methods

II. Policy Subsection

7.10 Grading Procedures

III. Policy Statement

The college must have a student grading system to effectively record and rate students' classroom, lab and other learning. This policy outlines the grades faculty will issue for student work and the process for students to grieve their 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 **and** W, grades are not included in the grade point average calculations.

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.

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)

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.

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 will indicate 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 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. 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.

F. 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 on the College website at www.grcc.edu/grievance

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 via registered mail, 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.

The length of term for the Chair of the Grade Appeal Committee shall be 2 years.

The Chair of the Grade Appeal Hearing committee shall:

1. **Convene the committee and preside over the meeting(s).**
2. **Appoint equivalent substitute (e.g. faculty to faculty) as need arises and determine length of substitution**
3. **Ensure there is student representation**

4. **Ensure minutes of the meeting are recorded**
5. **Ensure adherence to the policy.**
6. **Report committee activities annually to Dean's Council and to AGC**

In a case where any member of the AGC Grade Appeal Hearing Committee (faculty member, student, or administrator) is involved in the grade dispute at hand or is otherwise unavailable, an appropriate substitute member will be appointed by the AGC Executive Board to the Committee for that case. The Educational Support Professional working with the academic administrator serving on the Hearing Committee shall serve as Recording Secretary (a non-voting position) for the Committee Hearings are not open to the public.

Both the student and the instructor shall be invited to attend the Hearing Committee. If either the student or the instructor fails to appear before the Hearing Committee, a decision will be made based upon the information that is presented at the Hearing and evidence already submitted during the grievance process.

The Hearing Committee will present its written decision to the student (via **registered** mail), course instructor, and appropriate **Associate** Dean within **5 school days** of the hearing.

If the Hearing Committee finds in favor of the student, it shall ask the instructor and, if necessary, the appropriate Associate Dean to submit a Change of Grade Form to the Registrar's Office within **5 school days** of the written notification. The decision of the AGC Grade Appeal Hearing Committee is final and binding.

***For Students in Health Programs:** When the appeal involves a grade awarded or an expulsion from the component of a health course or program (Nursing, Dental, Radiologic Technology, and Occupational Therapy Assistant), the student will follow that program's specific grade grievance process. The Student Handbook for each program contains the grade grievance process and can be found on Blackboard.

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

XI. Forms

Grade Change Forms (obtained at Student Records)

Incomplete Grade Form

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

XIV. Policy Review/Revision Date

18/19 Academic Year