

Policy on Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, and Final Assessments

(This policy statement supersedes PS 09-07 and PS 12-03; it complies with all relevant Executive Orders.)

This policy was recommended by the Academic Senate on November 4, 2021,
and approved by the President on December 13, 2021.

1.0 Final Course Grades.

1.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply to final course grades assigned in all undergraduate and graduate courses:

1.1.1 "A" - Performance at the highest level, with mastery of the relevant course standards.

1.1.2 "B" - Performance at a high level, with above average proficiency of the relevant course standards.

1.1.3 "C" - Performance at an adequate level, with satisfactory proficiency of the relevant course standards.

1.1.4 "D" - Performance less than adequate, with partial proficiency of the relevant course standards.

1.1.5 "F" - Performance such that minimum course requirements have not been met, with little or no proficiency of the relevant course standards.

1.1.6 "CR/NC" - In some courses, the university permits students to select evaluation on a "Credit" or "No Credit" basis. These grades are defined as follows: "CR" is usually equivalent to an "A," "B," or "C;" and "NC" is equivalent to a "D," or "F" (defined below). In two circumstances a final course grade of "CR" reflects work at the level of "B" or better, and a final course grade of "NC" reflects work at the level of "C," "D," or "F." Those two circumstances are:

1. In certain professional preparation courses, providing that the students are notified of such a policy both in class materials and in the catalog course description; and

2. For graduate students in all courses at the 300, 400, 500, and 600 levels. Special regulations and procedures governing the “CR/NC” grading system are described below in Part 2.0.

1.2 GPAs

1.2.1 California State University, Long Beach uses a 4.0-point scale to determine grades and Grade Point Average (GPA).

1.2.2 Grades shall be used in the calculation of grade point average as follows:

- A = 4.0
- B = 3.0
- C = 2.0
- D = 1.0
- F = 0.0

2.0 Administrative Grading Symbols.

The following apply to administrative grading symbols assigned in all undergraduate and graduate courses:

2.1. “AU” - “Audit.” Enrollment as an auditor is subject to permission of the instructor, provided that enrollment in a course as an auditor shall be permitted only after students otherwise eligible to enroll on a credit basis have had an opportunity to do so.

2.1.1. Auditors are subject to the same fee structure as credit students and regular class attendance is expected. It is the responsibility of the student to request from the instructor what is meant by regular class attendance. The symbol “AU” is posted to the student’s permanent academic record unless the student fails to attend a sufficient number of class meetings. In these cases, the instructor will request that the student be administratively withdrawn from the course.

2.1.2. Once enrolled as an auditor, a student may not change to credit status unless such a change is requested prior to the last day of the third week of instruction. A student who is enrolled for credit may not change to “Audit” after the last day of the third week of instruction.

2.2. “I” - “Incomplete.” The symbol “I” indicates that a clearly identifiable portion (normally no more than one third) of required course work has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified, reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. The incomplete provides students an extended period of time to complete course requirements.

2.2.1. An “I” grade may be assigned, **at the discretion of the instructor**, when the student has successfully completed a **substantial majority** (approximately two thirds or more) of the course requirements.

2.2.1.1. If the completed work does not meet the 2/3 guideline, faculty are encouraged to consider extenuating circumstances such as but not limited to medical issues,

distribution of course assignments, and frequency of course offerings when determining the appropriateness of an incomplete.

2.2.2. An “I” must normally be made up within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which it was assigned. However, instructors may assign an earlier deadline for completion. This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment. An extension of time may be granted for extenuating circumstances approved by the instructor.

2.2.3. It is the responsibility of the student to be mindful of the completion date and submit the remaining work to the instructor as specified by the “Incomplete Grade Agreement” (see Section 2.2.6).

2.2.4. If a student does not satisfy the requirements of the “I” grade, the student may not re-enroll in or retake the course until the “I” grade has been converted to the grade indicated by the instructor. This does not apply to classes where the student is allowed to take the same class multiple times for additional units; taking the class for additional units does not clear the original “I” grade.

2.2.5. The conditions for removal of the “Incomplete” shall be documented by the instructor in an “Incomplete Grade Agreement”.

2.2.5.1. This agreement shall include, at minimum, a description of:

1. A justification for the “Incomplete”;
2. The final grade that the instructor will assign if no additional course requirements are met before the deadline of the “Incomplete Grade Agreement”;
3. The course requirements that the student needs to complete and how completion of that work will impact the revised final course grade.

2.2.5.2 This agreement may require the student to attend a portion of an offering of the course in a subsequent academic term to complete the specified course requirements.

2.2.5.3. This agreement shall be recorded by Enrollment Services and shared with the student at the time final course grades are submitted; the student shall then have 30 calendar days to sign the agreement.

2.2.5.4. When the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated, a revised final course grade will be assigned by the instructor. If the instructor is not available, the chair/program director may assign another instructor to evaluate the completed work. When this evaluation is complete, the chair or program director assigns a grade. If some of the course requirements are met by the deadline of the “Incomplete Grade Agreement” with any approved extensions, the instructor may submit a revised final course grade. Otherwise, the “I” will be replaced by the final grade from 2.2.5.1.2.

2.3. “RD” - “Report Delayed.” This symbol is used exclusively by Enrollment Services to permit processing of all final course grades when the final course grades for an entire course section have not been reported by the instructor. The symbol does not imply any academic evaluation. Individual instructors may not assign an “RD.”

2.4. "RP" - "Report in Progress." The "RP" symbol is used in connection with courses requiring multiple semesters of enrollment (i.e., that extend beyond one academic term). It indicates that work is in progress but that assignment of a final course grade must await completion of additional work. Re-enrollment is permitted prior to assignment of a final course grade provided the cumulative units attempted do not exceed the total number applicable to the student's educational objective. Work is to be completed within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which an "RP" was assigned, except in the case of graduate theses.

2.5. "W" - "Withdrawal." Students must complete all courses in which they register or withdraw from courses that they do not intend to complete. Application for withdrawal from CSULB or from a class must be officially filed by the student with Enrollment Services whether the student has ever attended the class or not. See the Policy on Withdrawal for complete information.

2.6. "WE" - "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances." The symbol "WE" indicates the student withdrew for reasons clearly beyond the student's control. Withdrawals for extenuating circumstances will not count toward the limits on withdrawal. The symbol "WE" is not a grade and does not alter a student's grade point averages. See the Policy on Withdrawal for complete information.

3.0 Course Grading Option.

3.1. A course can have the grading option designation of letter grade ("A," "B," "C," "D" or "F") and/or Credit/No Credit ("CR/NC").

3.1.1 The grading option designation for a course is determined by the department and college curriculum committees.

3.2. When a course is designated for "CR/NC" grading only or for "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grading only, mention of this fact shall be incorporated in the catalog course description.

3.3. Course grading option for undergraduate degrees.

3.3.2. When the choice exists, an undergraduate student may elect "CR/NC" grading in no more than a total of 24 units, of which no more than twelve may be upper division units. No more than eight units per semester may be taken for "CR/NC" grades. Exemptions from these limitations are:

1. Courses graded "CR/NC" taken at another institution,
2. Course credit earned by examination, and
3. Courses in which "CR/NC" grading is the only form of grading.

3.3.3. If CR/NC is an available option for a course, a student may elect "CR/NC" as the grading option for a course by the last day to add classes. However, the student must obtain the appropriate authorization from the student's major advisor and from the department/program in which the course is offered. The authorization must be filed with Enrollment Services. The

decision to register for a course on a "CR/NC" basis remains in effect unless a change is requested prior to or on the last day to add classes.

3.3.4. The only exception to this rule applies to students who declare new majors after the last day to add classes. If the newly declared major requires letter grading for the course in question and the student has elected "CR/NC" grading, then the student may request "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grading for the current course. Such a change must be requested no later than the last day of instruction.

3.4. Course grading option for graduate degrees.

3.4.1. Graduate-level courses that use "CR/NC" for the final course grade may not fulfill graduate degree requirements, with these exceptions:

3.4.1.1. The final course grade of "CR" may be permitted for master's theses or projects (to a maximum of six units) when the individual department has specifically designated "CR/NC" grading for the thesis/project course in the department.

3.4.1.2. The final course grade of "CR" may be permitted for fieldwork, practicum, research, or internship courses (also to a maximum of six units).

3.4.2. The option of "CR/NC" grading for graduate students in undergraduate courses is subject to specific regulations of the individual departments. Otherwise, no limitation exists as to the number of courses taken by graduate students under this policy.

3.5. The Provost (or designee) may approve the use of "CR/NC" as an alternative grading option in extenuating circumstances (natural disaster, pandemic) that preclude normal academic operations.

4.0. Final Assessments.

Every course shall have a final assessment appropriate to the course. Departments and programs may determine what constitutes an appropriate final assessment for a course.

5.0. Assignment of Final Course Grades.

5.1. The course instructor has the exclusive responsibility and authority to assign final course grades to all students in that section, subject only to the following exceptions:

1. In the event the instructor is unable or unwilling to complete this task. In this scenario, the department chair or program director, following notification of the instructor when possible and with the approval of the college dean, may appoint another qualified instructor to complete the assignment of final course grades;

2. In the event of a successful grade appeal (detailed below in Part Six: Change of Final Course Grades).

5.2. Final course grades shall be based on at least three, and preferably more, demonstrations of competence by the student. In no case shall the grade on any single demonstration of competence count for more than one-third of the final course grade. Exceptions require the college dean's approval. This does not prohibit options, such as dropping or replacing exam/assignment grades or making other adjustments that allow for student grades to be improved.

5.2.1 A faculty member retains the right to assign a course grade of "F" for an act of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or falsification of information, or other form of academic dishonesty in a single assignment.

5.3. At the start of the course and in keeping with PS 11-07 (Course Syllabi and Standard Course Outlines), instructors shall include in the syllabus the types and sequence of assignments and basis for assigning course grades.

5.4. Instructors, departments, or programs shall keep a record of students' scores on each of the demonstrations of competence on which the final course grade is based for at least five years after the conclusion of the course.

5.5. Instructors shall provide students with an opportunity for demonstration of competence, relevant to the determination of their final course grade in the course, as early as is reasonable and no later than the midpoint of the term.

5.6. Instructors shall promptly record and inform students of their grades and scores. Students may review each of their demonstrations of competence with their instructors.

5.7. If materials submitted for a demonstration of competence are not returned, these materials must be retained for at least one year after course completion by the instructor. Materials shall be made available upon request, for grade appeals or other grading matters. In the absence of the original instructor, the department chair/program director may appoint an instructor with appropriate qualifications to review the demonstration(s) of competence with the student.

5.8 Materials submitted for demonstrations of competence remain the intellectual property of the student.

5.9. Grades reported to Enrollment Services are considered to be official and final course grades.

6.0. Change of Final Course Grades.

6.1. Changes of final course grades or grading symbols can be made only on the basis of an error, a successful grade appeal (detailed in the separate policy statement on grade appeals), or resolution of an "Incomplete" ("I"). Original final course grades may also be replaced after Enrollment Services receives a late report of final course grades for which the symbol "RD" was substituted pending receipt.

6.2. Final course grades or administrative grading symbols must be recorded for all students who are enrolled beyond the census date.

6.3. Except for changes of final course grades resulting from grade appeals, all changes of final course grades must normally be filed within one year from the date of the filing of the first final course grade, whether or not a student maintains continuous enrollment. Only as the result of a successful grade appeal or the correction of an error will a final course grade be changed after the award of a degree or credential or certificate.

6.4. All requests for change of a final course grade shall carry the recommendation of the instructor (except as provided for in the grade appeals procedures) and the department chair/program director and the approval of the college dean.

EFFECTIVE: Upon the commencement of the Spring 2022 semester.