

# GRADE INFORMATION

## Grading System

The following grading system applies to graduate students:

### Grade Definitions

Grade	Quality Points	Interpretation
A	4.00	Superior graduate attainment
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	Satisfactory graduate attainment
B	3.00	
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	Attainment below graduate expectations
C	2.00	
C-	1.67	
F	0	Failure
Z	0	Failure
IP		In Progress
NG		No Grade
W		Withdrawal
Y		Administrative Withdrawal
AU		Audit
M		Military Withdrawal

The grade assigned to the student must reflect the percentage equivalent of the plus, minus, and straight grades earned in a course.

West Chester University does not recognize a grade of D for graduate study. Therefore, any grade below a C- in a graduate course is considered a failure and carries zero quality points.

- IP (In Progress) is given to indicate work in progress and will be used only for protected courses (theses, practicums, internships, recitals, and research reports); see "Removing 'In Progress' Designation."
- NG (No Grade) is given when a student fails to complete course requirements by the end of a semester and a time extension is granted by the instructor; see "Removing 'No Grade' Designation."
- W (Withdrawal) is given when a student withdraws from a course between the end of the first and the end of the ninth class week of the semester or the equivalent in summer sessions.
- Y (Administrative Withdrawal) is given under appeal when there are nonacademic mitigating circumstances, and there is documentation that the student never, in fact, attended class.
- M (Military Withdrawal) In accordance with PA House Bill No. 1460: A grade of "M" will be given for military students and spouses who have to withdraw due to military obligation. PA National Guard and other reserve components called to active duty (for reasons other than for training) and their spouses will receive a grade of M when unable to complete classes due to activation for military obligations. Students are required to notify the Registrar's Office to receive a non-punitive M grade and will be required to provide appropriate documentation.
- Z Grade A grade received when a student stops attending a course and fails to officially withdraw from it. The grade is counted the same way that an F would count toward the cumulative average and Academic Standing.

### Special Grade Notations:

^ = Academic Forgiveness. Course credits are earned, course isn't counted in GPA.

^^ = Academic Renewal. Course credits are earned, course isn't counted in GPA.

\* = Remedial. Course credits are not earned, course is counted in GPA.

\*\* = Accelerated Program Transfer Credit = Course credits are not earned, course is counted in GPA.

## Removing "No Grade" Designation

NG grades will be given when a student fails to complete course requirements by the end of a semester and a time extension is granted by the professor. Students must complete course requirements as stipulated by the professor and not later than the end of the 14th week of the subsequent semester or the NG grade will convert to an F at the end of the semester.

## Removing "In Progress" Designation

IP grades indicate work in progress and will be used only for protected courses (theses, practicums, internships, recitals, and research reports). Students must complete course requirements as stipulated by the professor and not later than the end of the 14th week of the *second* subsequent semester or the IP grade will convert to an F. An IP grade may not be replaced with a NG.

## Change of Grade Policy

Course grades are awarded by the professor of record and reported to the university registrar. These grades, other than NG or IP, are considered final, but may be changed at the discretion of the faculty member within 9 weeks from the start of the subsequent Fall or Spring semester. Any change submitted after that date requires approval of the Provost or their designee. Appropriate justifications for changing a final course grade include, but are *not limited* to:

1. Computational error
2. Completion of course work missed during the semester
3. Other

## Deadlines for NG and IP Grade Changes

### NG Grades

1. For undergraduate classes, NG grades must be replaced by a final grade by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> week of the subsequent Fall or Spring semester, or they will automatically change to an F.
2. For graduate classes, NG grades must be replaced by a final grade by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> week of the subsequent Fall or Spring semester, or they will automatically change to an F.

### IP Grades

1. For undergraduate classes, IP grades must be replaced by a final grade by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> week of the equivalent semester in the following year.
2. For graduate classes, IP grades must be replaced by the final grade by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> week of the equivalent semester in the following year.

## Cumulative Grade Point Average

### Purpose and Scope

This policy defines the cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) and identifies which grades it includes. It also clarifies the conditions under which a student's GPA is sealed upon completion of degree attempts.

### Policy Statement

The cumulative GPA, also called the cumulative index, includes letter grades assigned during a student's enrollment. The cumulative GPA is determined by dividing the total quality points (the numerical value

of the assigned grade) earned for courses by the total credit hours attempted. The following example is based on a single semester:

34 (*total quality points earned*) divided by 15 (total credits) equals a GPA of 2.267.

The GPA excludes the following:

- Grades of Pass, Audit, No Grade, and In Progress;
- The original course grade when a course is repeated (see Course Repeat Policy);
- Grades for courses transferred from other institutions.

A student's GPA for an undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral credential program is considered sealed when that credential is conferred, and the student's grades and GPA cannot change. A new GPA calculation will start when the student begins a new credential program at a higher level (e.g. a master's degree after completing a baccalaureate degree) or a second credential at the same level (e.g. second baccalaureate degree or certificate). Once the GPA is restarted it will run for subsequent credentials (e.g. a third baccalaureate or master's degree) at the same level.

## Grade Reports

Grade reports are available to graduate students soon after the end of a semester or summer session on RamPortal (<https://experience.elluciancloud.com/wcuop/>). Students are reminded to check their reports against grade requirements and other regulations, as well as for accuracy, and to have their grade reports available when consulting with advisors.

## Grade Appeals

### Scope of the Policy

The Grade Appeals Policy applies only to questions of student evaluation. Since appeals involve questions of judgment, the Grade Appeals Board will not recommend that a grade be revised in the student's favor unless there is clear evidence that the final grade awarded for the class was based on prejudiced or capricious judgment, or was inconsistent with official University policy. Please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy for cases where the grade appeal involves a grade given for academic dishonesty. Grades are awarded by the faculty member of record and can only be changed by said faculty member, unless the Provost directs otherwise following the procedure outlined below.

### Grade Appeals Procedure

1. (a) A student must initiate an appeal in writing within 20 class days from the date of the decision or action in question. In case of an appeal of a final grade, the appeal must be filed no later than the first 20 class days of the term following the one in which the grade was received. This written appeal should be sent to the instructor who awarded the grade in question. The appeal shall be reviewed by the student and the faculty member. They shall mutually attempt to resolve the appeal within five class days from the receipt.  
(b) If the appeal is based on an interpretation of departmental or University policy, the student's academic advisor also may be present during the review process. In such case, there shall also be a limit of five class days in which to resolve the appeal.
2. An appeal not resolved at Step 1 shall be referred in writing by the student within five class days after the completion of Step 1 to the chairperson of the department offering the course. If there is a departmental appeals committee, the problem shall be referred directly to it. The department chairperson or the departmental appeals committee shall normally submit a written response to the student within 10 class days following receipt of the written statement of the problem. A copy of this response also shall be provided to the instructor.
3. If no decision satisfactory to all parties (faculty member, student, and department chair or department committee) is reached at Step 2, the student may submit a written appeal to the dean of the college or school in which the problem originated. Such an appeal shall be made within five class days following the receipt of the written response of the department chairperson or the departmental appeals committee. The dean shall investigate the problem as presented in the written documentation, review the recommendation and provide, in writing, a proposal for the solution of the problem within 10 class days following its referral.
4. If a mutually acceptable resolution to the problem is not achieved at Step 3, the student may file an appeal with the Grade Appeals Board within five class days of the receipt of the written proposal from the dean. The request for an appeal must be submitted to the Vice Provost or, if appropriate, to the Dean of The Graduate School, who will convene the Grade Appeals Board as soon as possible, but no later than 15 class days after the receipt of the written request.

## Grade Appeals Board

### Membership on the board will include the following:

1. The Dean of The Graduate School (or their designee) who serves as the nonvoting chairperson.
2. A faculty dean not involved in the appeals process.
3. Two faculty members. At the beginning of each academic year, the Office of the Senior Vice Provost shall accept volunteers from each academic department in order to constitute the pool. Two faculty members from different departments will be selected from this pool for each Appeals Board.
4. Two graduate students recommended by the president of the Graduate Student Association (GSA). Such students will be appropriately trained in procedures relating to this policy and the need for confidentiality in all aspects of the case. It is presumed that the selected students have no academic or social connections with student making the appeal.

## Attendance

1. Both parties (faculty member and student) shall have the right to be assisted by advisors, who may be attorneys, and who may be present at hearings. The board chair must be notified in advance of the hearing who the advisors will be. The advisors may only consult and interact privately with their advisees and may not address the board. Advisors who are disruptive to the process will be asked to leave the proceedings, and the matter will go forward absent their involvement.
2. Witnesses may be called on behalf of either the faculty member or the student.
3. Resource persons or expert witnesses may also be called at the request of the board. In the event that the decision to be rendered by the board involves knowledge of a particular discipline, the board shall be required to utilize at least one resource person from that discipline to serve as an expert advisor(s) to aid them in making an informed recommendation.

## Procedure

1. Preparation for the Hearing - All parties must be informed of the complaint in writing by the chairperson of the Grade Appeals Board (hereafter referred to as "chairperson"), normally within five class days after the receipt of the complaint. Copies of documents and correspondence filed with respect to the complaint shall be provided to the interested parties through the chairperson. Thereafter, neither new evidence nor new charges shall be introduced before the board. The chairperson shall notify in writing the interested parties of the exact time and place of the hearing and shall provide existing University and/or Commonwealth policies relevant to the appeal at least five class days before the beginning of the proceedings. Throughout these proceedings, the burden of proof rests upon the person bringing the appeal.

2. Hearing Procedure - During the hearing, both the faculty member and the student shall be accorded ample time for statements, testimony of witnesses, and presentation of documents.
3. Recommendation of the Appeals Board
  - a. The Grade Appeals Board shall deliberate in executive session and render a recommendation by majority vote within three days of the close of the hearing. The chairperson may participate in these deliberations but not vote.
  - b. The chairperson of the Appeals Board shall notify, in writing, the student, the faculty member, and the chair of the department offering the course of the recommendation within three class days of the board's final action. The notification shall include the basis upon which the recommendation was based.
  - c. The chairperson of the Appeals Board shall also transmit the decision, in writing, to the provost or their designee. If the board recommends that a grade be changed, thus supporting the student's appeal, it will forward that recommendation to the Provost and Academic Vice President, who makes the final decision to accept or reject the recommendation of the Appeals Board. *Only* the Provost and Academic Vice President has the authority to direct the registrar to change an existing grade.

### Other

1. A written statement of the decision and relevant materials shall be placed in the student's academic file.
2. A written statement of the decision and relevant materials shall be placed in the faculty member's file subject to the provisions of official Commonwealth policy governing personnel files.

### Notes

1. Both the faculty member and student are entitled to the "right of challenge for cause" of any member of the Appeals Board or student advisor with the sole exception being the chairperson of the Appeals Board. In the case of a challenge at the Appeals Board level, the chairperson of the board will adjudicate the challenge. One challenge at each level is permitted.
2. A "class day" is defined as any day when classes are officially in session, in fall or spring, at West Chester University.
3. If the course in which the grade dispute occurred is offered under the auspices of a unit of the University other than an academic department, the program director/coordinator, head of that unit, and/or the department chairperson will function in Step 2 of the procedure. In Step 3, the appeal should then be made to the vice provost rather than the dean of the college.
4. If the professor is not on contract or in residence on the campus, they shall have the right to appoint a faculty proxy.