

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11/17/2023

TO: UA Academic Advisors, Student Support Personnel, and Students

FROM: Abbie Sorg, Assistant Registrar, Academic Catalog & Policy

RE: Amendments to the Grades and Grading System Policy

In the spring of 2023, under recommendation from the University Academic Advising Council and the Graduate College, the Office of the Registrar proposed several updates to the Grades and Grading System Policy. The proposed changes included both substantive changes and minor clarifications of the existing policy.

Summary and justification/rationale of changes:

- **Removed the 18-unit withdrawal (W grade) maximum for undergraduate students:** Few students reached the previous maximum; some of those that did felt pressure to withdraw from a full term in order to avoid a failing grade in a single class. This change reduces unnecessary administrative changes and allows students and their advisors more flexibility in determining the correct course of action based on the student's situation.
- **Removed eligibility restrictions on the use of the Pass/Fail Option for undergraduate students:** Since the Pass/Fail Option can only be used for elective coursework, there is a natural limit on how many courses a degree-seeking student can take with this grading basis. This natural limit renders the additional eligibility restrictions (sophomore standing, 2.0 GPA, enrollment in 12+ units of regularly graded coursework, and only 2 Pass/Fail Option courses at once) unnecessary. Undergraduate students now have more flexibility to choose when to use the Pass/Fail Option.
- The previously separate **Grade-Point Average (GPA) policy has been combined with Grades & the Grading System** due to the related and overlapping nature of the policies. The grade points associated with each grade (or a note specifying that a grade is not included in GPA calculation) are now included in this single policy.
- The previously separate, grading **basis policies for the JD and MD academic programs have been combined** within the same policy, so all grading information is now included in this single policy.
- **The MG (missing grade) notation has been created:** This notation will be placed on a student's transcript when an instructor does not assign grades to a class. Previously, the policy stated that students not issued grades were given an administrative grade of E until the instructor entered the final grade. The MG notation will more accurately reflect the student's grade status than an E in this case.
- Instructors and students are now required to use the **Report of an Incomplete Grade** to document requirements for completing an incomplete course. Previously, policy language only encouraged this documentation. Consistent documentation of incomplete courses will ensure that instructors and students have a shared understanding of what is required to complete an incomplete course.

Minor clarifications of existing policy:

- Co-located Pass/Fail Option definitions and limits on use in a table for ease of comprehension.
- Clarified that instructors must assign an S/P/F grade for thesis/dissertation units completed during each term the student is enrolled.
- Removed references to course types no longer offered.

- Replaced duplicative content with links to the appropriate Change of Schedule and Complete and Retroactive Withdrawal policies.
- Replaced usage of “semester” with “term” for consistency with other policies.

The updated policy was approved by the Undergraduate Council, Graduate Council, Undergraduate College Academic Administrators Council, Graduate College Academic Administrators Council, and the Faculty Senate during the spring and fall of 2023.

The updated policy is effective immediately and can be read in full online.

Questions about the updates to the Grades and Grading System policy should be addressed to the Office of the Registrar at catalog@arizona.edu.